



## SUSTAINABLE FARMING



'Treat the earth well.  
It was not given to you by your parents,  
it was given to you on loan by your children.'




Native American saying

1. Work with a partner and decide what this saying means. Name and explain an action that you could undertake to show that you care for the environment. Share your suggestions with the class.
2. Almost half of the territory in the EU is farmed. Farmers not only produce high-quality and nutritious food for us, they also protect nature and care for the environment while doing this. The EU helps farmers to become 'greener' and to farm in a sustainable way. Sustainable farming, such as organic farming, uses natural resources wisely and is essential for our food production and our quality of life — today, tomorrow and for future generations.





Can you finish matching the natural resources cared for by farmers in the list below and give a reason why each is a sustainable or 'greener' farming practice?

NATURAL RESOURCES	MANAGED BY FARMERS FOR US	REASON
Soil 	Rotating crops	<i>Protects soil structure from erosion and pests, adds nutrients</i>
Land and landscape 	Maintaining permanent grassland Leaving field boundaries uncultivated	
Air	Planting a range of crops and using certified seeds	
Plants 	Planting and maintaining trees	
Animals	Feeding on open grass pasture and moving the livestock between paddocks frequently	
Water	Reducing use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides Using organic, farmyard and green manures	
Minerals/nutrient (e.g. nitrogen and phosphate)	Creating ponds, avoiding run-off into rivers and streams from fertiliser and from livestock effluent	
Biodiversity and wildlife habitats	Maintaining hedgerows and not cutting during bird nesting season	



**3. Organic farming is a sustainable farming practice which protects the land, biodiversity and the environment. Hold an **Ask the experts** session to explore sustainable farming practices.**

Two or three volunteers from the class become sustainable farming 'experts'. The experts and the rest of the class run online searches for 15 minutes on the topic. The class concentrates on creating questions to ask the experts. After 15 minutes of research, the experts sit at the front of the classroom to answer the questions from the 'audience' and to discuss the issues raised.



A useful starting point for research might be [http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/index_en.htm)

Here are examples of questions that can be asked.

- ▶ What is organic farming?
- ▶ What are the top five countries for organic farming?
- ▶ What are the most common organic products?

**4. Having explored issues involved with sustainable farming, why not invite a local farmer into the classroom to talk about his/her work as well as sustainable farming methods in general and their role in protecting the environment?**

