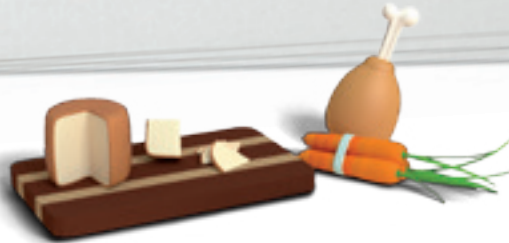




→ In this two-part food project you will be able to dig deeper into farming and the different steps it takes to produce our food.



## Part 1

Organise an excursion with your teacher. Identify three unique areas for gathering soil samples and analyse the specific characteristics of the soil sample in the science room. Discuss why it's important for farmers to know the pH and types of soil on their land.



Now it's time to **germinate some basil and lettuce seeds**.

Working in small groups cut empty plastic water bottles in two. Fill the bottom half with any standard moist compost and sow a few seeds of each type; use the top half of the plastic bottles as mini-greenhouses. Germination should occur within a few days if you keep your seeds moist and provide them with at least 12 hours of light each day. Keep a project diary so the different groups can report back on the growing conditions that work best.

From potting-up time you could continue to grow your seedlings indoors or in the school grounds. With good plant care each group will have a tasting session 5-6 weeks later!





## Part 2

**Organise a trip to a nearby horticulture or market-garden farm** which produces fruit and/or vegetables. Alternatively the class could **go to a local farmers' market**.

Before you go, brainstorm questions you'll ask the farmer about the crops grown and the challenges and rewards of being a farmer. Select volunteers to ask the questions.

Question headings might include: size of the farm, crops grown, buildings, machinery and technology used, crop rotation, fertiliser use and disease control, cost and water use (e.g. do you know how much it rains in your region each year?). Ask the farmer about the processing and packaging of his or her food produce and how they market their crops.

Also ask what happens to misshapen or 'wonky' vegetables (that are irregular or have an unusual shape and don't look like the produce we're used to seeing in our shops) as well as to vegetables or fruits that are not sold.

Take your cameras on the visit, take note of any sustainable farming practices you see, such as use of natural fertiliser and conservation of water, and ask the farmer how they contribute to protecting the environment.

Having sought permission, gather different pieces of information and farm items (e.g. leaves, a soil sample and photographs). When back at school use books and the internet to find out more about the information and different items gathered.

In groups, create a collage on an A3 board to describe some of the characteristics of the farm and the fruit/vegetables grown by the farmer and sold at the market. Present each collage to the class and then display in an exhibition in the school hall.

