

# FARM TO FOOD TRUCK

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student guide



# FARM TO FOOD TRUCK CHALLENGE

## Identify a Problem

Americans enjoy an affordable and abundant food supply thanks to farming and ranching families. The families involved in production agriculture make up 2% of the U.S. population. Farms and ranches come in all different sizes and with different production practices. Farm and ranches across the country provide safe low-cost products for American consumers. "One U.S. farm feeds 168 people annually in the U.S. and abroad." The future of farming is a growing concern in America as the average age of farmers increases, the number of individuals entering the farming occupation decreases, and the global population dramatically increases causing a higher demand for food produced annually. Through this challenge, students will become more informed about food production and sourcing.

## Response to Problem

With the challenge of the general population being disconnected from where their food comes from, your team has been selected to design a food truck that addresses the journey of food from farm to food truck.

## This system must address the following needs:

- Track where the food for your menu comes from.
- Provide a cost analysis for food items.
- Understand labeling and marketing of food items.
- Emphasize sourcing local ingredients when possible.

## Success will be determined by

- Construction of a food truck menu of three to five items based on a selected food truck theme.
- Creation of a budget for all items needed for the menu.
- Providing an analysis of the farm to food truck journey for all ingredients in one menu item.
- Producing a marketing campaign that advertises the foods sourced in your food truck business.



# 1. IDENTIFY

## PURPOSE OF STEP

Define the problem around the disconnect between people and food and how it is affecting life globally, nationally, and locally. Research and consider how others have approached solving the problem. Describe why this problem needs a solution. Determine constraints of the project (e.g., time, resources, etc.).

## STUDENT PROMPTS AND GUIDING QUESTIONS

- How are agricultural products processed?
- Why is farming an important occupation?
- Why is there a potential for food sources to run out globally?
- What would happen if Americans ran out of food?
- Why is it important for food sources to be sustainable?
- Why are Americans curious about where their food comes from?

## SIGNS OF STEP COMPLETION

Present a description of the problem to the facilitator. Be sure to include how this problem affects communities globally, nationally, and locally. The description should also include ways in which others have addressed finding a solution and constraints to be considered (e.g., time, resources, etc.).



# 1. IDENTIFY REFLECTION

Important discoveries during this step:

Impact to the global, national, and local community:

Plans for the next step (e.g., knowledge to gain, questions to answer, preparations to make, etc.):



## 2: IMAGINE

### PURPOSE OF STEP

Brainstorm solutions to the problem. List all of your ideas – don't hold back! Discuss and select the best possible solutions.

### STUDENT PROMPTS AND GUIDING QUESTIONS

- Are you curious about where your food comes from?
- Where does your food come from?
- What types of food do you eat from countries outside of the U.S.?
- What kinds of foods grow in the local community?
- How does food travel from farms to your community?
- How do growing seasons for crops impact the availability and affordability of food?
- How are food products marketed?
- What type of information can we find on the packaging of a food product?
- How are food labels beneficial to consumers? How could they be misleading?

### SIGNS OF STEP COMPLETION

Present a list of possible solutions to your identified problem to the facilitator.



## 2: IMAGINE REFLECTION

Important discoveries during this step:

Impact to the global, national, and local community:

Plans for the next step (e.g., knowledge to gain, questions to answer, preparations to make, etc.):



## 3: DESIGN

### PURPOSE OF STEP

Brainstorm ideas for a food truck based on a theme of your choice. List three to five possible food truck menu items based on your selected theme. Choose one menu item to analyze the ingredients path from farm to food truck. Think of ways to advertise, market, and brand your food truck.

### STUDENT PROMPTS AND GUIDING QUESTIONS

- How does cost influence what products consumers purchase?
- How can I identify the journey a food product takes to get to me as a consumer?
- How do restaurants or food trucks determine what products to purchase?
- How can a restaurant or food truck keep production costs down?
- How does buying local ingredients directly impact agriculture production?
- Why is maintaining a food budget important for an emerging restaurant or food truck?

### SIGNS OF STEP COMPLETION

Develop the start of a business plan for a successful food truck. Based on a selected theme, identify three to five food items to include on your food truck's menu. There should be an emphasis on locally sourced ingredients, if possible. Select one menu item to outline the farm to food truck process for all ingredients. Have ideas developed for your potential marketing tool for your business plan.



## 3: DESIGN REFLECTION

Important discoveries during this step:

How did you select the three to five menu items to include in your food truck?

How much will your food truck menu items cost to purchase or prepare?

Plans for the next step (e.g., knowledge to gain, questions to answer, preparations to make, etc.):





## 4: CREATE

### PURPOSE OF STEP

- Develop the budget for your food truck, including a cost analysis of items needed.
- Design a flyer or advertisement for your food truck.
- Provide a flow chart of the journey that highlights each step in the process of getting the food products from farm to food truck for all ingredients for one menu item.

### STUDENT PROMPTS AND GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What steps must you take to create the budget for your food truck?
- In what ways can you advertise your food truck menu?
- What are the different ways you can map the journey food products take to get to you?
- Consider the parameters of the challenge and what needs to be accomplished for it to be successful.

### SIGNS OF STEP COMPLETION

Present a first draft of your business plan for review to the facilitator.



## 4: CREATE REFLECTION

Important discoveries during this step:

Impact to the global, national, and local community:

Plans for the next step (e.g., knowledge to gain, questions to answer, preparations to make, etc.):



## 5: TEST + IMPROVE

### PURPOSE OF STEP

Discuss your business plan with a group of your peers for review. Get feedback on changes and improvements that could be made, any missing components, and decide how recommendations can be used to modify and change your business plan, if needed.

### STUDENT PROMPTS AND GUIDING QUESTIONS

- How successful was the business plan in addressing the Farm to Food Truck challenge requirements?
- Were there any missing project components from the business plan?
- How successful do you feel the food truck menu provided was supporting the chosen theme?
- In what ways were local ingredients used to develop the menu?
- Was the Farm to Food Truck process complete? Did it highlight the one menu item selected?
- Were the sources of the one menu item ingredient identified accurately?
- Was the food truck budget calculated accurately?
- Based on their marketing/advertising tool, would you purchase the food truck menu items?
- What suggestions do you have for improvements to their business plan?
- What changes will you make to your design, based on feedback from your peer reviewers?

### SIGNS OF STEP COMPLETION

Make any changes and provide your facilitator a list of improvements made to your business plan. Begin to develop the final presentation of your business plan for the Farm to Food Truck challenge.



## **5: TEST + IMPROVE REFLECTION**

Important discoveries during this step:

Impact to the global, national, and local community:

Plans for the next step (e.g., knowledge to gain, questions to answer, preparations to make, etc.):



## 6: SHARE

### PURPOSE OF STEP

Communicate what was learned. Share your business plan and discuss the ways in which consumers can become more familiar with where their food comes from.

### STUDENT PROMPT AND GUIDING QUESTION

- Develop a presentation of your final business plan, food truck design, improvements made throughout challenge, and menu cost analysis.

### SIGNS OF STEP COMPLETION

Present what was learned through the design process. Share how your business plan addresses the problem as well as key aspects of your food truck design and menu items.

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## REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup>U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. (2016). *Food security in the U.S.: Key statistics and graphics*. Retrieved from <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/key-statistics-graphics/#foodsecure>