



TRAINING

Day 3 **We Are What We Eat**

Purpose: Get participants thinking about how food production affects both our individual health and that of our ecosystem

Objective: Participants will

- Learn about our ecosystem and why it is important to maintain
- Identify some differences between conventional and sustainable agriculture
- Identify at least 3 agriculture health-related problems affecting farmworkers

Materials:

Flip Chart
Markers
Paper, sticker papers of different colors
Group Agreements
Happy Dairy Cow Info
Healthy lettuce Info
Video Clip of health harms of conventional agriculture on farmworkers

Time: 120 minutes

Procedure: Facilitator will ask participants to define the word 'ecosystem' and share with the group. Students will then be given a sentence about the relationship between ecosystems, agriculture, and food and will be asked to identify the components of ecosystems that make up our food supply. The facilitator will describe a healthy food ecosystem and an unhealthy one. By pointing out that we are what we eat, the idea is to engage students in caring about the wellbeing of the ecosystems that make food available.

Time	Activity
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| 5 Min | Welcome/Framing <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Go over Agenda/Purpose▪ Train the Trainers framing▪ Review Agreements |
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10 Min

Group Check-in

Ask group to introduce themselves and say what they like about the rain or what they dislike about the rain. Facilitator reminds participants about the group rules posted on the wall.

15 Min

What is an Eco System?

Group Activity: Divide participants in pairs. Ask them to come up with a definition for

“Eco System” Ask the groups to share their answers and write them on flip chart paper.

Ahead of time: On a flip chart paper, break the word Eco-System into two parts :

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Eco” refers to ecology and the natural environment. **“System”** means complex relationships among the many parts in a physical environment. **Ecosystem:** *Is a complex relationship among the living resources in one area. It includes, plants, trees, animals, fish, birds, microorganism, and people. When an ecosystem is healthy it is sustainable.*

15 Min

Food is rooted in an eco-system Activity

Facilitator breaks the group into pairs. Distribute small sticker papers to write down the component of an ecosystem. They will have 3-5 minutes to complete the activity. When they are done bring the group back together and ask a member to post their answer in a big poster paper. Participants should be encouraged to write or draw the elements of the ecosystem. Some of the answers might include: *crop plants, livestock, water, insects, soil, climate, sunlight, humans*

35 Min

Healthy Ecosystem – Animals -Happy Cow Activity

- Break participants into groups of 3. Provide group with sheets of paper and markers. Give two minutes have them draw what the day in the life of a happy dairy cow looks like.
- When groups are done, ask them to share the picture with the larger group.
- Gather back the group. Using some of the visuals, remove each of the various aspects of the happy cow life. Ask participants their opinion about how is the quality of food affected when we removed the aspect of the happy cow life. Share some examples: Normally, cows are ruminants – they eat grass. If we replace the grass for grain what happen? Cows get ulcers and need antibiotics.
- How does this affect milk cows produce? How does it affect you?

Compare and Contrast –Happy Cow (approximately 10 minutes)

- Show a visual of a Happy Cow who under natural circumstances **lives** in a healthy ecosystem where diseases are controlled through fresh air, natural and healthy foods
- Healthy Cows live in an open space to graze and eat in wide-open pastures and sustain themselves by eating grass
- Cows sustain the grass providing fertilizer for it. The wild grass takes up nutrients in through the soil, the cow eats the grass, and the cow re-distributes the nutrients back into the soil through excretion.

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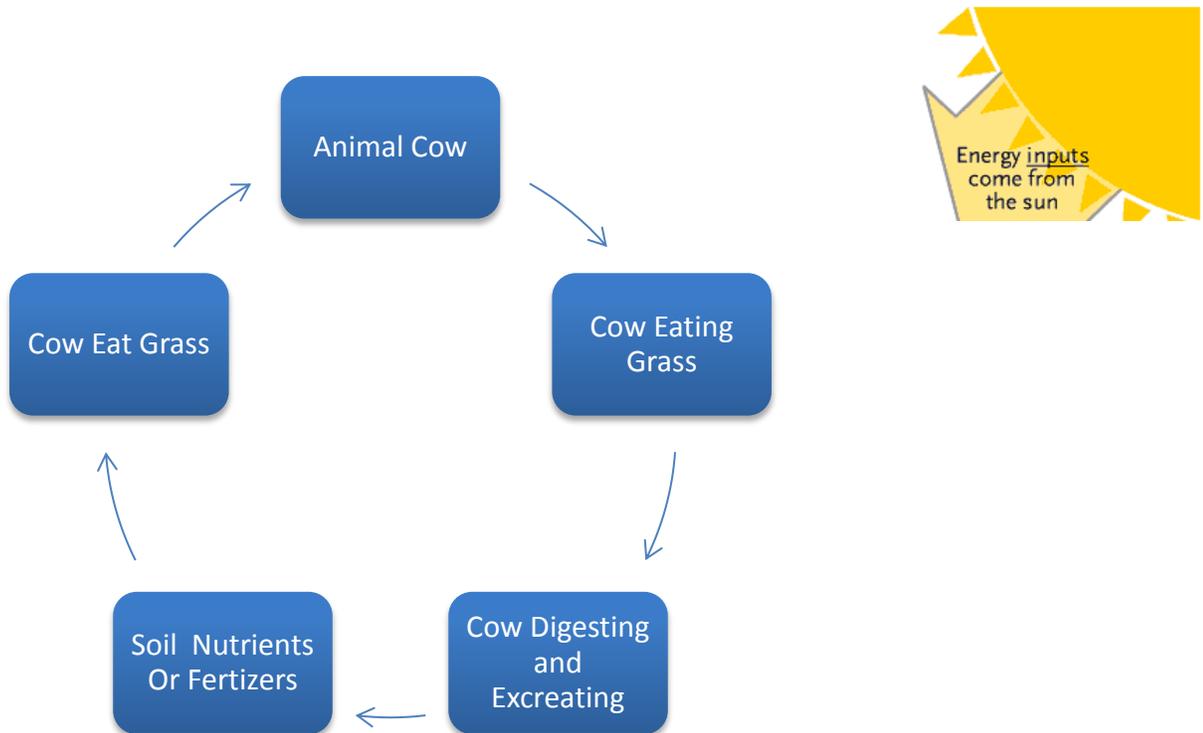
- This process repeats itself when decomposers (bacteria and fungi) break down the poop into a chemical form that can be then taken up by the grass. It is a complete and closed system that requires little to no external inputs.

In Contrast- Unhappy Cow

In feed production cows are confined in small spaces and fed un-natural diets of soy and corn. This system is unhealthy for the cows without any natural systems.

- What do you notice about these cows? (confine in small space and given processed food)
- Given antibiotics to maintain cow's health
- People eat meat with residues of antibiotics

Natural ecosystem is not completed



Compare and Contrast –Healthy Lettuce

In a healthy lettuce farm, habitat is maintained for “good bugs,” the insects that prey on the pests. For example, many flowering plants provide habitat and food for good bugs, which greatly decreases the population of pests; therefore, no pesticides are used and the soil and water are kept clean.

Unhealthy lettuce (CREATE VISUAL):

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In an unhealthy lettuce operation, pests have no natural competition. It is a field of free food for pests, and their populations rise greatly because of it. This is why conventional agriculture requires the use of pesticides. The ecological checks and balances on pests in a healthy ecosystem are missing, so unnatural pesticides must be used. These cancer-causing chemicals end up in the water, soil, and on the food we eat. Review with the group: After overviewing the different practices of healthy and unhealthy ecosystem, the facilitator will inform students that the healthy ecosystem is referred to as sustainable farming and that the unhealthy ecosystem is known as conventional farming. How food is produced affects both the health of the ecosystem that produces it and the health of the consumer.

20 Min

Video: Huichols and Pesticides (03:24 – 09:46)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-5k7Xg8JuMI&feature=em-share_video_user

We have seen how food production, or agriculture, affects the environment and the consumer or eater. Ask the group who or what else it affects? If it is not mentioned, share with the group that it also affects the health of people growing our food, or farmworkers. Show short video clip showing health harms of conventional agricultural practices on farmworkers.

Discussion:

- How did it feel to watch this video?
- What effects did pesticide use have on the farmworkers?
- Why should we care about the health of farmworkers?
- What can we do to promote healthier ecosystems, better public health, and the health of the people who grow our food?

15 Min

Evaluation

Thank the group for their participation. Remind them that this is a pilot process and we are looking to improve the training. Create a list for both strengths and areas of improvement.

5 Min

Check-out

UNHAPPY COW

