

Our Recommendations for a Meal Together ...

1. Global learning does not offer simple solutions or positions for complex problems. The aim is to prompt the youths to think about their own trading, not to convert them.
2. Good preparations make the difference! Prepare a good didactical structure. The set-up of a bio-fair breakfast should closely correspond to the age of the children and young people.
3. Getting started: the students should assume the issue as one important for them personally. A current local reference helps here.
4. All senses involved! Use the opportunities that this special type of event brings: look, listen, smell, taste, and feel ... you could use pictures or something to get hold of, for example, in order to present the production of foods – such as cocoa – in their land of origin (for example an agricultural tool).
5. Make your own point of view clear and at the same time allow different points of view. Encourage the children and youths to express themselves and discuss this with each other. Provide them with opportunities to develop and express empathy with the producers, and to put themselves in their position (change in perspective). This actually happens very rarely.
6. A bonus point: If possible, invite people from countries in the Global South for reinforcement – they give a bit more authenticity than would ever be possible with second-hand reports. Avoid clichés and stereotypes here, too.
7. Don't forget the feedback! And not just whether it was tasty...

Further information and resources available for download (a small selection)

Upper Austria:

- Workshop "Bio-fair Breakfast" from Welthaus Linz: <http://linz.welthaus.at>
- Background information and teaching material in various languages to download: <http://schools.welthaus.at/>
- "Change the world fairly with methods" –Catholic Youth Vienna Diocese method files (Hg., 2009)
- www.fairtrade.at

Czech Republic:

- Information platform on global learning (with activities for schools): <http://globalnirozvojevzdelavani.cz/>
- Brochures with teaching material "Jak globalne vzdelavat. Ekumenicka akademie Praha, 2012" on the Ecumenical Academy Prague website: www.ekumakad.cz/cz/publikace

Germany:

- "The Climate Breakfast" – a workshop in Berlin, organised by KATE e.V.: www.kate-berlin.de/klimafuehstueck-de.html
- "Fair Lunchbox" – an initiative for Berlin primary school pupils, organised by GSE e.V.: www.gse-ev.de

Great Britain:

- "Global Footprints" – Lesson activities: www.globalfootprints.org

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Project "Awareness for Fairness"

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Bio-fair Breakfasts & Afternoon Snacks



Bio-fair for Breakfast

The idea

Can you talk about issues such as production conditions of food products, worldwide problems of distribution and hunger at a communal breakfast? How can you familiarize young people, who are not yet responsible for the weekly shopping, with the various important aspects for deciding what to buy, and helpfully prepare them for deciding their personal consumption of food? What choice do young people have in the school cafeteria or at the nearby supermarket?

At the beginning, we were very unsure whether a bio-fair breakfast for children and youths was a good idea. We certainly did not want to confront youths with a number of issues and complex problems – youths who probably hardly have a say when it comes to their daily food.

What individual proposals for solutions can we offer when there are hardly any realistic alternatives?

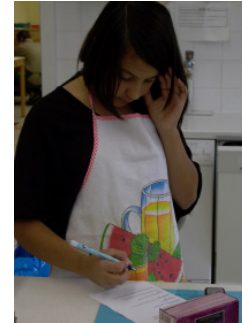


We wanted to be fair and not ruin the appetite of our young "audience", but rather really give them a taste of alternative products.

We wanted to present the bit of power as consumers as an attractive opportunity to them, in order to live in solidarity with people, who have committed themselves to values in the production of food, which they can also identify with:

- Maintaining biological diversity
- Sustainable use of water
- Climate protection
- Supporting small farmers
- Animal welfare
- Children's and human rights

We were repeatedly asked by teachers, whether we could go into the schools with a bio-fair breakfast. With this we were asked to develop a detailed concept for this type of event, which satisfies our ideas of approach and effect.



Three criteria for success

Good preparation of the students in the workshops and embedding in regular lessons

The implementation of a bio-fair workshop is associated with a big organisational and financial effort. For this reason we always prevent the event being booked as a gap-filler. The workshop should be used first and foremost to build on project work based on issues such as global justice, critical consumption or nutrition, using the bio-fair breakfast as a highlight. Failing this, more confusion regarding the many issues will arise, particularly for young students, than can be achieved through competent orientation in a complex area.

Knowing and recognising the students' living environment

Children and youths are confronted with the topic nutrition to different extents. In Upper Austria, we often work in rural communities, where students come from families, which produce and sell food themselves. There, living off regional products and speaking about food produced in the area has another meaning than for pupils in schools in an urban environment. There again, many students report on their experiences from their parents' and grandparents' home, the usual food habits there, or farming.

On the whole, the topic opens up an appreciation for the work and products, and it is for this reason that the pupils' personal approaches and experiences are the most interesting contributions to the presentation of problems, which we want to confront the pupils with anyway.

A large number of the students have, in some kind of form, their own association to cooking, farming or particular products like chocolate. It is also down to the workshop leader's skills to draw on these associations, rather than lecturing the school children or leaving their contributions to go uncommented.

The challenges facing the workshop leader in discussions with youths and his/her own point of view

The abundance of tasks within the two hour workshop requires a lot of organisation, experience in communicating about the most important topics, good ideas to illustrate these topics, humour, stamina and presence. A clear presentation, in which one's personal attitude in relation to the topic is clear, a comprehensible argument, and which allows other perspectives, is fundamental to an approach which will be adopted by students.

The extent, to which this can be challenged, for example in relation to pupils' own standards, is very different from class to class. Our most important aims here are to interest students long term, give them solid information, present them with good solutions, which can be tied into their daily life, and make them aware that they as (future) consumers are part of the huge food market, and that they have a say in the winners and losers of the trade.