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Local food products La Rioja



FUNDACIÓN
EROSKI

contigo



SCHOOL OF
NUTRITION



Energy to grow



Tix and Loy have taught us how important it is to eat a balanced diet as part of our everyday lives, eating all kinds of food in the recommended quantities.

But, do you think that food is the same all over the world?

The answer is no, because the things we eat vary a great deal depending on where we are.

The weather, geography and cultural and historical heritage of each region mean that each place on the map specialises in growing, making and eating specific types of food. These types of food are known as local food products. Have you heard of them? Tix and Loy are going to explain them a bit more.



1/ The advantages of local food products

Local food products are types of food which are produced, processed and distributed in a specific geographical region. They also have specific characteristics that set them apart.

Do you know the countless benefits of local food products? Here they are:

1. They are fresher, because the distances they have to be transported are shorter.
2. They keep their flavour and nutritional properties better.
3. Because they do not have to be transported very far, they mean we can cut costs and emit less CO₂ into the atmosphere.
4. Because they are top-quality products, they always taste good.
5. They allow us to get to know and enjoy the specific flavours of our land.
6. They encourage food tourism (between regions).
7. They help maintain customs and traditions from the past.
8. They allow us to get to know and establish a relationship with the environment in which we live.
9. The production of local food products helps develop the local economy.
10. They help enrich our community.

*Did you know...?
Thanks to the interest
shown by farmers and
consumers, flavours,
traditions and part of
the past of our food
culture are now being
recovered.*



Have you ever helped
collect the local
harvest?

Do you know anyone who works
making local food products?



2/ Protected Designations of Origin (PDO)

The current internationalisation of the market has harmed a lot of local food products.

Protected Designations of Origin (PDO) were created to protect and highlight the production of food of this kind.

Not all local food products have a PDO, however, **only those that meet certain requirements.**

Do you know how to identify products with a Protected Designation of Origin?



A product with a Protected Designation of Origin has a label that tells us that...

- ... the product comes from a specific region.
- ... it has specific characteristics because it comes from that region.
- ... it is entirely produced in that region.



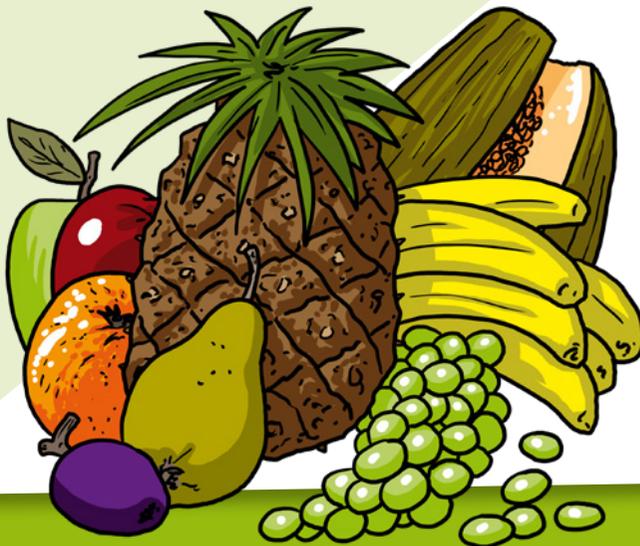
3/ Seasonal produce

This is food, mainly fruit and vegetables, which is eaten when it is at its optimum level of ripeness. The advantages of this kind of food over other kinds include:

1. More nutritional properties and better flavour because their properties remain intact.
2. Economic savings because larger quantities of the product are available.
3. They respect the environment because they defend the natural life cycles of products and help reduce the intensive farming of single products.

We can enjoy different kinds of seasonal fruit and vegetables over the year.

Like oranges for example. Although we eat them all year round, they are a winter product. In fact, the best months to eat oranges are from January to April.



Did you know...?
There are different protected designations of origin for different types of product.



If I ask you to name some typical products from La Rioja, could you name me any?

I'm going to tell you the names of some of our local products. Let's see if you've heard of them:

- Pears from Rincón de Soto
- Rioja wine
- Cheese from Cameros
- Olive oil from La Rioja
- Cauliflowers from Calahorra
- Chorizo from La Rioja



Pears from Rincón de Soto

These pears are sweeter and brighter green than other pears. One thing that makes them different is that they are russeted. Russeting is a natural form of oxidation which is highly appreciated on pears and, in La Rioja, it is produced by the mist that often forms in the area in which they are grown. As incredible as it may seem, mist is what makes these pears brown!

To ensure that the pears are large and tasty, the trees are “thinned” by hand. Thinning consists of removing 70% of the fruit from each tree by hand to allow the remaining pears to fill with nutrients and grow better.



Rioja wine

What a lot of things have changed since the Middle Ages! We don't ride from Pradejón to Calahorra on horseback any more and we don't brandish swords now either. But there is one thing that hasn't changed in La Rioja: **the way in which we look after and produce the best wines in the world.**

Although 90% of the wine produced is red wine, the Rioja Designation of Origin covers wines of all kinds: red, white and rosé. These wines can come from **vineyards in any of the three Riojas: Rioja Alta, Rioja Baja and Rioja Alavesa.** Each of these areas has a specific climate and soil which make these wines exceptional.



Cheese from Cameros

The goats living on the Sierra de Cameros have supplied La Rioja with cheese since the 13th century. The fact that 80% of what they eat is local vegetation is one of the reasons why cheese from Cameros has such a special flavour.

The marks on the outside of this cheese also make it unique and easy to recognise. These marks are made using a “cilla”, a plaited wicker mould used to shape the cheese and leave its marks on it. For people who like cheese, this cheese is a wonderful source of different flavours, because there are **4 types to choose from:** the milder versions, green cheese and soft cheese, and the stronger versions, cured and semi-cured.



Olive oil from La Rioja

Olives are grown and olive oil is produced in the La Rioja in line with a cultural tradition that dates back a very long time in our land. The oil is **fruity with a slightly bitter note and has a very peculiar aroma.** It is different from other kinds of olive oil because of the climate and type of soil found in the region. **It is perfect on toast, as a dressing for salads or vegetables and for frying.**



Cauliflowers from Calahorra

These cauliflowers **are grown, of course, in Calahorra, although they are also produced on the fertile banks of the Rivers Cidacos and Ebro.** Cauliflowers from Calahorra are **compact, like footballs, and white, do not have granules and smell nice.** To make sure they are always fresh, they are always cut and taken to the warehouse in less than 12 hours. When you do things right, things taste better.



Chorizo from La Rioja

The finest meat and fat are selected, ground and kneaded with 100% extra-quality paprika, salt and garlic. This mixture is then inserted inside animal intestines and cured to produce chorizos. **Firm and compact**, these chorizos have a strong, balanced aroma and the paprika and garlic provide, in addition to the smell, a strong, persistent, sometimes spicy flavour.



What have we learned today?

- Food products with Protected Designations of Origin are those which are produced, processed and distributed in our own community.
- We can recognise them in the supermarket thanks to their quality labels.
- The production and distribution of these products in our community contributes towards local economic growth.

Activities

Local food products - La Rioja

The following is from Guillermo de Torre, a Spanish writer, who made this in 1923. 95 years ago!

Una constelación pluricolor
Un sol de repetición arroja
El ventilador pirotécnico multi-
Los cohetes bramán sironas sobre la
Ciudad y el mar copulados
plica sus aspas deshilachadas.
y efimera topiza el cielo estuyi.
10000 proyectiles por minuto.

Here's another example:

CAER LEVANTARSE APRENDER
SOCIALIZAR DISFRUTAR QUERER
AMAR REIR LLORAR APLAUDIR
AYUDAR AL QUE LO NECESITE
VER COSAS NUEVAS NO RENDIRSE
DECIR SOLUCIONES NO PROBLEMAS
BAILAR COMO SI NADIE TE VIERA
CANTAR COMO SI NADIE TE
ESCUCHARA
NO RENDIRSE NUNCA

Since we have been learning a lot about the products of our region, we are going to create a calligram with them!

Here are some examples of food calligrams:



Activities

Local food products - La Rioja

Now it's your turn!

a) First, choose a product from our region. It can be a seasonal food. Think of something that inspires you and write a poem about that food.

b) Then it's time to make the calligram. Transform the poem into a drawing, that's shape reflects the theme of the poem; that is, the food that you have chosen.