

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project wants to make participants aware of the importance of food in our lives. As half of our population over 30 is too fat and gradually more and more become overweight, especially among our youth, it is clear that all efforts must be made to try to stop this development. Our project aims at contributing to this goal.

Many do not know that obesity also is a risk for diabetes and coronary heart diseases. There is a correlation between low grades of education and unhealthy diets. We believe that in this project we have a chance in educating on this. Certainly since most partners in this project are from socially, economically problematic areas.

Alcoholism will be addressed and the effects of advertisements and the sometimes misleading information in commercials and in labels on food products; modern versus traditional farming and animal friendly production.

We will challenge our students to start cooking themselves, compose European dishes, invent new and healthy recipes, reintroduce traditional food, vegetables and herbs, apply new food and to reject sweets, junk and fast food, engage in sport and an active life style and to spread the project in their local community.

Our products will be booklets, videos on European recipes, healthy dishes, good restaurants, new and healthy snacks brought onto the market and new lesson material.

Food fraternizes students preparing dishes together, listen to stories on food and enjoy cultural events around dinners at our European meetings. Students will teach students.

Results will be disseminated via the web, DVD, local press, project magazines, school project corners, and events where partners, press and parents are invited.

MOTIVATION FOR THIS PROJECT

*Importance

Statistics has shown that lower education corresponds with unhealthier diets and lower life span expectations. So we think we here have a task. Therefore we want to tackle this issue in this project.

Because many of us are situated in regions of poor economy and teach students of a low or middle social class this project obviously is important.

The schools in this project from the South and East of Europe of socially disadvantaged areas will be able to profile themselves by their participation.

*Healthy Ageing

We expect that after this project our students will be much more aware of the importance of a healthy diet and spread their new attitude towards those in their private circle.

Food determines our growth, intelligence, health and aging. It takes a large part of our budget. So what to choose in order to become and stay healthy within a certain limited budget is a matter of teaching.

*Implementation into the curriculum, improved literacy and knowledge of science

Be beautiful! Strong! Healthy! These things are so appealing for our pupils that it will be easy to teach all of them basic knowledge on nutrients like proteins, vitamins, fats, sugars minerals and water in such a way that it will be enjoyable and shared with students abroad. Pretty leaflets and videos on these matters will be produced which will be included into the school's curriculum for both general education or vocational education on food, laboratory, hotellerie, tourism and printing. Students will become able to read the labels on the food industrie's products and be better able to distinguish if they are fooled and become less easy prey for the seduction by commercials.

*Enhanced sports engagement

Much attention will be paid to sports and the effect it has upon the onset of diseases like diabetes, osteoporosis and especially obesitas. The effect of food upon sport achievements, muscle growth and muscle pain will be adressed by inviting students actively engaged in sports and fitness to take a leading role, encouraging them to teach their peers. The (non)sense of food supplements also is a theme in this subject of great interest for the youth. We expect a healthier life style of many pupils as a result of our project.

*Entrepreneurship

Students will produce a new and healthy snack, a booklet for the youth on food, a European recipe book, an itenary of good and healthy restaurants with the aim to bring these products on the market in cooperation with existing companies. In either case of failure or success they will learn a lot and certainly how the European market functions and the rules and regulations under which it operates.

*ICT and language skills

For many of the pupils of our respective schools English is an important part of their professional asset. But many lack the necessary proficiency, afraid to speak another language or coming from lower income families who have a hard time mastering the required skills. This project aims at increasing their skills by exchanging lesson material and recipes in English, project meetings in which students have to make presentations in public, meet and host other students from abroad and exchanging videos about their life and life styles.

ICT will play an important part in this project, such as using Power Point, DTP, videomaker, a project Website and we will use Moodle to organise internet classes.

*Psychology and self esteem, obesitas, bulimina and anorexia

Many of our young struggle with a negative self image and are easy victims of the ruthless advertisements in modern society. A more positive self image may help them to become less vulnerable and we want to help them with this in this project. Thus we intend to help prevent the dire yearning to slim to the extreme. Since 10% or more of our population tends to be overweight, obesitas becomes a real problem for our society. We will show effective means to slim by healthy diets and an active life style.

*Alcohol

"Coma drinking in the weekends" among the young, the onset of cancer, liver and brain diseases, the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, damage to veins, addiction and aggression due to (excessive) drinking confront society with an increasing problem.

In our project we will do a lot on teaching the young on this point since some of these aspects are not well known among our students.

*School canteens

The offer of food in school canteens is a source of great concern as it usually offers unhealthy snacks which do not only harm health but also induce wrong habits. We must change this as soon as possible. And this is one of our objectives. We ourselves must be among the first to set the right example!

*Culinary heritage in contrast to junk and fast food

Eating is important as a vessel for social interactions and is part of our history and culture.

Respect for and restoration of traditional food together with fresh fruit is another means to counteract the unhealthy food culture that has caught our youth today.

The use of spices and herbs merit special attention but are oft forgotten by the youth buying fast foods flavoured with artificial colours and aromas produced by the chemical industries.

We want to make the students of the North of Europe get acquainted with the rich culinary traditions of the South and East of Europe and reciprocally. Pay attention to fish and traditional meat preparations. We want to get the richness of our culinary European tradition brought to the surface by student's competitions on national dishes during our project meetings.

*New sorts of food

Are algae, seaweed, locusts and other insects and worms nice alternatives for food shortages and an enrichment for our diet? Recipes and applications already exist and some are already very popular for instance in Korea and Japan. Students will examine these too, experiment and report about it.

*Food supply and awareness

The global unequal distribution of food and agricultural resources is an important aspect for teaching the new generation. Fair trade is an important initiative in that sense and we want to support that in our project.

Genetic modification of our food resources is a theme of strong debate. The cutting of rainforests for crops of monocultures – most of them meant to produce cattle food - threatens our climate and biodiversity, which can become a good argument for a vegetarian diet, also since the production of 1 kilo of meat protein is much more consuming and expensive than 1 kilo of vegetable protein.

Small but vital elements in our ecosystem tend to be overlooked like the bees who take care of the pollination of plants, fruits and vegetables. The decline of these little creatures already caused a 14 billion euro damage in Europe and without them we will die from starvation. So 2012 has been declared “the year of the bee” and we will include that into our project too.

Animal friendly breeding also is a part of enhancing awareness among our students. Most of them are not interested in animal welfare until you confront them with the harsh reality. Here we have an important issue for our project. Slaughtering animals in conformity with certain religious rites is another topic of debate.

Why are antibiotics used in cattle breeding? What are the implications for our health? Is it the cause of bacterial contaminations on food that we cannot cope with anymore?

Topics that will be included into lessons of economy, law or social science, which are part of all of our partner’s curriculae.

*Commercials, food additives and supplements

What are food additives? Are they necessary and what can they do to your health? Are food supplements necessary or just a source of income for the industries? Can we save our pupils from buying expensive but unnecessary products?

What kind of food is healthy, what kind is not? Can I remain fit and young on a certain diet? Will certain ingredients fatten me up or will I get all sorts of diseases? What is the ideal food combination?

All these questions often can’t even be answered by experts. Therefore there is insecurity among persons who want to live a healthy life. Nowadays with the immense information flood it becomes more and more difficult to get reliable data about a healthy diet.

This uncertainty is utilized by the food industry. However, the information given is quite often misleading and descriptions very unilateral.

In order to publish misguidance by the food industry, governmentally supported web pages have been constructed in several European countries (e.g. www.abgespeist.de). On these pages consumers can allude to nuisances which are checked by independent experts and published afterwards. With our students we will explore examples of these and thus increase their awareness on this point.

*Jobs

Food industries, food control, advertisement, hotellerie and catering are important job fields for many of our students in the vocational education.

This project aims at preparing them for their profession from a wider perspective.

INTEGRATION INTO ONGOING ACTIVITIES

Each team will show the results to the whole school and partner schools.

In each partner Institute the newly created lesson material, videos and brochures will become an integrated part of the curriculum in regular lessons on biology, chemistry, law & economy, commerce and physical education.

Each school commits itself to integrate the material into English classes as well and each partner uses the ICT lessons to make the videos, produce Presentations for the Web, make a mobileguide, use Twitter and be active on the internet class via Moodle.

During the project several "events" will highlight the theme like the "European Day", school's "Orientation Days", the project meetings, a week called "The school otherwise" and a final project manifestation in which students will present their activities to their schoolmates and visitors, followed by debates about connections between food and health as part of awareness campaigns about the negative effects of junk food.

Permanent Project Corners in each school will draw the attention all the time. Students will prepare handouts in order to increase awareness of foodconsciousness at these occasions.

In each school attention to a healthy diet and active engagement in sport will become an integrated and permanent part of its policy. We will change the schools' canteen offer and enhance possibilities for physical activity coupled with coaching.

Schools with specialisation or special conditions will work extra on:

- gardening and agriculture, Portugal (plant herbs and different types of apple trees and breed bees for kiwi plantation), Croatia (open lab, historical garden with medicinal plants and herbs, students will search for stories, legends and create messages for each plant on a mobileguide), Belgium (farming)
- food analyses, labels (Germany, Holland)

- advertisements and media (Poland)

- law and crime (Italy, Cooperating with Libera Terra - Agency for the Promotion of Cooperatives and of a Culture of Respect for the Law. Cooperatives and members of Legacoop have advanced the project "The Taste and Awareness of Lawfulness" and all sorts of producers of organic and high-quality food provide the staff. The Agency supports the development of coops working on the lands confiscated from the mafia. Visits to confiscated land will be part of the project and of meetings)

- tourism, creating interactive food routes (Italy, Bulgaria, Croatia, Turkey)

All products will be shared and distributed among partners equally.