|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| LEAF_LOGO.png | **Is Agriculture Important to Us?**  **Teacher Notes** | C:\Users\Toshiba\Desktop\LEAFEd_Logo.JPG |

**Introduction**

This activity is aimed at Key Stages 4 and 5 pupils.

The aim is to introduce the importance of agriculture and the challenges facing the industry both in the UK and globally.

The session could be adapted to suit a range of subjects including Global Citizenship, PSHE, Careers, Science and Geography.

**Slide 1**

Ask your pupils if they think agriculture is important to them. Don’t give them much time to think about it. You could do a quick show of hands, “yes” or “no”. Record the number of votes.

**Slide 2**

At this point check your pupils’ understanding of the word agriculture. What do they think it means / is? Discuss as a class.

**Agriculture**: the science or practice of farming, including cultivation of the soil for the growing of crops and the rearing of animals to provide food, wool, and other products.

Can we exist without agriculture?

**Slide 3**

Are there any challenges facing agriculture? In groups, can they make a list of any issues or challenges? Can they separate their lists in to those that affect:

* The UK
* The rest of the world
* Or both

**Slides 4 and 5**

If the groups are finding it hard to think of any challenges or issues, you may like to use these slides as laminated handouts to prompt ideas.

* Slide 4:
  + TB and badgers
  + Food safety / horse meat scandal
  + Flooding / climate change
  + Food waste
  + Large scale farming / “Super Farms”
  + Lack of young people entering the industry

* Slide 5:
  + Irrigation of crops
  + Plastic waste
  + Use of chemicals
  + Deforestation for crops
  + Production of palm oil and the loss of habitats
  + Fair Trade for Farmers

The above is not an exhaustive list and you may like to alter the pictures to reflect more local issues or current teaching topics.

**Slide 6**

Of the issues listed, what do the pupils feel is the most important issue?

Show them the following video clip:

Ted Talk; “The Other Inconvenient Truth” Jonathan Foley, from 14.23 mins to 17.10mins

<https://www.ted.com/talks/jonathan_foley_the_other_inconvenient_truth>

What issues are raised in this film clip? Do any of the issues raised match those identified by the pupils earlier?

**Slide 7**

In summary: world population is continuing to increase. These people need somewhere to live and to have a healthy diet. Agricultural practices worldwide have developed in order to produce food, and in some cases, this has had a negative effect on the environment. Practices are changing. Some countries, such as the UK, have made great steps in farming whilst protecting and even enhancing the countryside.

<https://leafuk.org/about-leaf/what-we-do>

But how do we continue to produce enough food for everyone in an ethical, sustainable and affordable way?

* Precision agriculture
* Research and development (technology, crop and animal genetics, animal welfare)
* Public awareness (food waste, food poverty, food equality)
* Recruitment of young people to the industry (scientists, geographers, engineers)

**Further Links**

* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qmla9NLFBvU&t=220s> “The Future of Farming in Agriculture”. 12.28 minutes long but very comprehensive. You may prefer to watch 1 or 2 sections (Introduction 0 – 0.57 mins, Arable 0.58 mins, Vertical Farming 3.07 mins, Livestock 4.37 mins, Fish Farms 5.51 mins, Alternative Proteins 7.23 mins, Genetic Technologies 8.52 mins)

**LEAF Education** <https://education.leafuk.org/>

**FaceTime a Farmer** <https://leafuk.org/facetimeafarmer>