

“Ugly” Food Heros

Ugly food can help save the planet

It takes a lot of resources to grow food. In the United States alone, agriculture uses 10 percent of the total energy budget,⁶¹ 50 percent of all land⁶² and 80 percent of all freshwater. Despite all of this, 2.4 million tonnes (6 billion pounds) of fresh produce is left to rot in the fields every year.⁶³

Why? There are many reasons. It’s hard to harvest at exactly the right time and have enough workers to harvest the food. Food can get damaged by pests or bad weather. A whole crop is almost never ready for picking at the same time. Sometimes production or transportation is backlogged and food spoils. Strict aesthetic standards stipulated by grocery stores and their customers also mean that a lot of odd-looking produce doesn’t make the cut.

Ugly Food Heroes Media Project

Time: 30-60 minutes, or longer for more ambitious projects



Make a commonly wasted “ugly” fruit or vegetable the star of your story. Working on your own or with a group of friends, write a short story, cartoon or documentary about ugly food. You can design a hand-drawn comic, graphic novel, stop-motion animated short or prepare a documentary featuring a real-life hero who rescues misshapen produce to feed people. You may choose to feature the hard-working farmers and farm laborers that grow our food. Or, you can tell your own food rescue story. Here’s your chance to tell everyone that odd-looking produce is just as delicious.



Making it Happen:

Choose your style:

1. **Comic:** Create a comic featuring an ugly fruit or vegetable hero. If working in a group, consider collaborating to make a comic series. Don't forget to draw the cover!
2. **Animation:** Are you a whiz with computer graphics? Animate your comic. Check out [Wideo](#)⁶⁴ or [Powtoon](#)⁶⁵ for free and simple animation tools.
3. **Stop-motion:** Use your phone camera to string together hundreds of still photos to give your ugly fruit and vegetable characters the impression of movement—it's a fun way to turn everyday objects into animation. Turn your mobile phone into a stop-motion studio with the free [Pic Pac](#)⁶⁶ or [Stop Motion Studio](#)⁶⁷ apps. Use this [tutorial](#)⁶⁸ to get started.
4. **Documentary:** Want to capture the story of a real-life food hero on video or capture consumer shopping habits around ugly produce and food waste? Use these [documentary-making tips](#)⁶⁹ to get started.

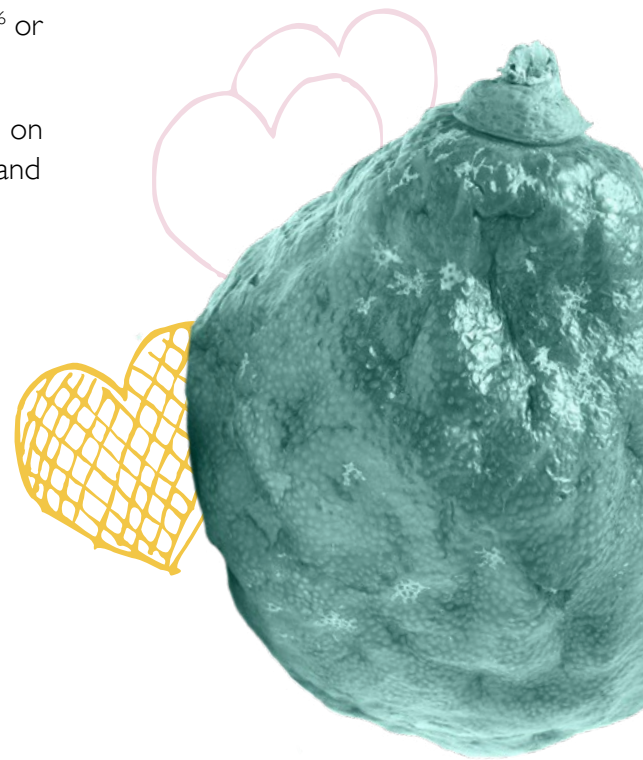
Share your media projects on Twitter or Instagram using #FoodMattersActionKit and add your profile at www.cec.org/FoodMattersActionKit.

Want to do More?

- Host a film screening to show your work.
- Submit your film to environmental film festivals. Don't be shy, many famous documentary makers started just like this!



Every year film festivals feature the best and brightest documentaries that bring important environmental issues into the public eye. This is your chance to raise awareness about food waste. To learn more about how to submit, visit the [Eco-film Festival website](#).⁷⁰



⁶¹Webber, M. (2012). How to Make the Food System More Energy Efficient. Scientific American Magazine. Volume 36. Number 1. Pp. 74–79.

⁶²USDA Economic Research Service (2002). Major Uses of Land in the United States, Pub. 2002/EIB-14, 2002.

⁶³Gunders, D. (2012). Wasted: How America is Losing Up to 40 Per Cent of Its Food From Farm to Fork to Landfill. National Resources Defense Council. <<https://www.nrdc.org/sites/default/files/wasted-food-IP.pdf>>

⁶⁴Wideo (2018) Getting Started: Creating and Sharing Animated Video. <<https://wideo.co/landing-learn/>>

⁶⁵Powtoon (2018) Create Awesome Videos and Presentations. <<https://www.powtoon.com/index/>>

⁶⁶Pic Pac Stop Motion and Time-Lapse App. (2018). <<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=tv.picpac>>

⁶⁷Stop Motion Studio (2018). Let's Make a Movie. <<https://www.cateater.com>>

⁶⁸Edu Puertas (2017). Free Stop motion Animation App (English). <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bVLOCmIHylA>>

⁶⁹Desktop Documentaries (2018). Making Documentaries Step-By-Step: How To Make a Documentary. <<https://www.desktop-documentaries.com/making-documentaries.html>>

⁷⁰Ecofilm Festival (2018). <<https://ecofilmfestival.org/en/ecofilm-festival-eighth-edition/>>