




Getting hold of food?

Where does your food come from?



 **The UK imports 40% of its food. This can be good for our health – a more varied diet available more of the time. But it can be bad for climate change – food flown or driven to the UK contributes towards greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions.**

Scientists are looking at the entire production chain of vegetables to measure the environmental impacts and GHG emissions of growing, processing, transporting, selling and finally consuming them. This is called a Life Cycle Assessment (LCA). For some crops such as beans, more GHGs are emitted from African crops than UK-grown crops because transport aircraft release a large amount of GHGs. Whereas, lettuce grown in greenhouses in the UK release more greenhouse gases than lettuce grown outdoors in Spain and driven to the UK in trucks.



Activity

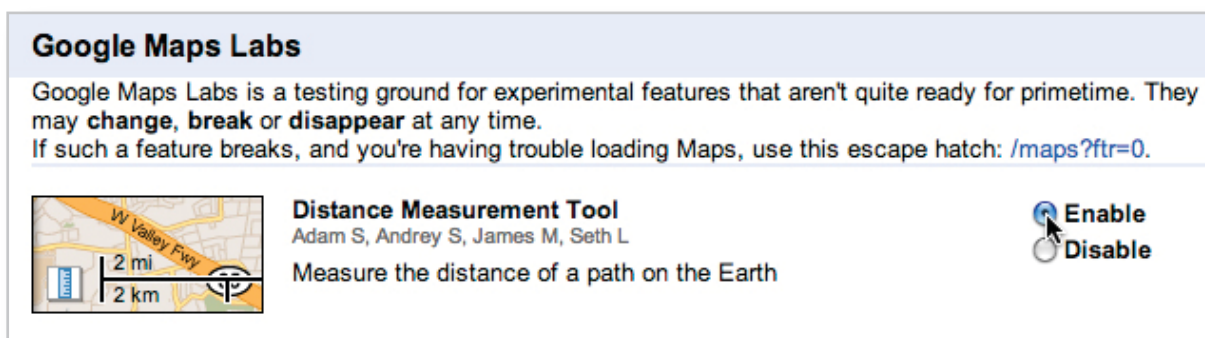
Find out how far your food travels using the internet

What you will need:

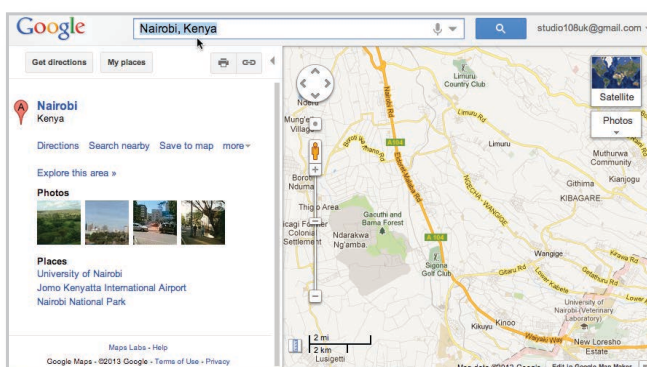
- A computer with access to the internet and a web browser.

What to do:

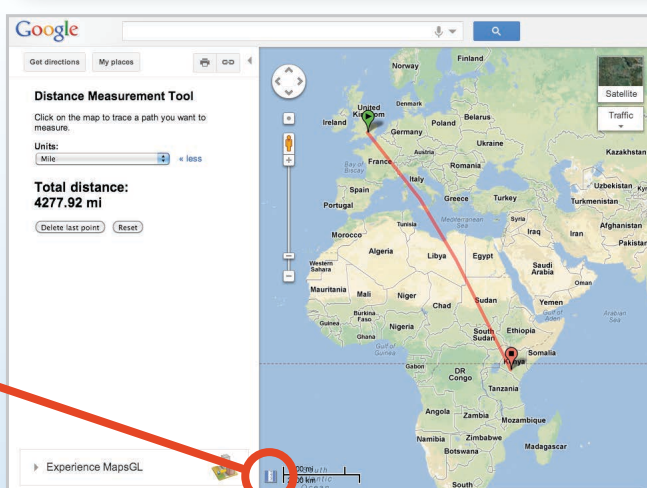
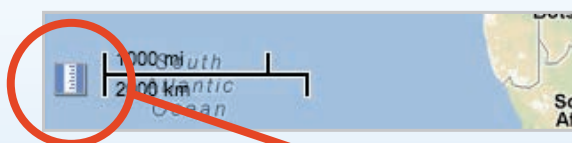
1. Go to Google Maps Labs and enable the distance measurement tool <http://maps.google.com/?showlabs=1>



2. Find your starting location.



3. Click on the small ruler icon in the bottom left of the map and then click on your start location.



4. Find your destination.
5. Click on the ruler again and then click on your destination.
6. The distance will be shown as the crow flies.

Kenyan Green Beans

Growing green beans provides stable livelihoods for farmers.

The regular income means that farmers can invest in local facilities and their communities – for instance improving health centres.

Each green bean needs one bucket of water to produce.

🚧 **How far is it from Nairobi to London as the crow flies?**

🚧 **How far is it to drive?**

English Sugar

By processing 3 million tonnes of sugar beet, British Sugar's Wissington factory makes 420,000 tonnes of sugar a year.

About 1200 mainly local farmers grow sugar beet for the factory.

The factory not only produces sugar but also creates animal feed, tomatoes, energy and more as 'co-products' to the process.

🚧 **How far is it from Wissington to London as the crow flies?**

🚧 **How far is it to drive?**

Welsh Lamb

Sheep farming is traditional on Welsh hillsides, which are not well suited to growing crops.

The sheep provide an income to farmers as they provide meat, wool and milk.

Welsh lamb faces stiff competition from New Zealand lamb. Some people have claimed that New Zealand lamb is more sustainable, for reasons including using fewer food supplements and transportation by ship.

🚧 **How far is it from Bala to London as the crow flies?**

🚧 **How far is it to drive?**

Argentinean beef

Argentinean beef is famous for its quality, tenderness and taste.

To produce 500g of beef uses 8000 litres of water.

Red meat is an excellent source of bioavailable iron an essential nutrient.

South American cattle ranches have been blamed for deforestation and the destruction of natural habitats.

🚧 **How far is it from Buenos Aires to London as the crow flies?**

🚧 **How far is it to drive?**

Scottish Potatoes

Potato is the world's fourth largest crop.

In Scotland over a million tonnes of potatoes are produced each year at a value to the economy of £150-200 million.

It has been estimated that, across the UK as a whole, as much as 15% of the potato crops is lost to pests and diseases each year, despite the use of pesticides costing over £100 million.

UK households waste almost 2 million tonnes of fresh vegetables and salads every year.

🚧 **How far is it from Edinburgh to London as the crow flies?**

🚧 **How far is it to drive?**

Vietnamese rice

Rice is the world's most important staple crop - around half the world's population rely on it.

As the population of the world grows the demand for rice could rocket.

Rice is productive in wet environments where most other crops would fail but cannot survive if submerged under water for long periods of time.

🚧 **How far is it from Ho Chi Minh City to London as the crow flies?**

🚧 **How far is it to drive?**

Spanish Oranges

To produce 80 oranges uses the amount of water in an Olympic-sized swimming pool.

Oranges are an excellent source of vitamins and count as one of your five-a-day.

Oranges aren't traditionally grown commercially in the UK because the climate isn't suitable.

🚧 **How far is it from Seville to London as the crow flies?**

🚧 **How far is it to drive?**