

AgriKids Farm Safety Ambassador



Theme 5: Healthy Eating & Wellbeing

Level: 3rd – 4th Class

Objective

In this theme we will be highlighting the importance of farmer health and wellness. How farmers must protect themselves against the elements, a healthy diet and the importance of staying fit and healthy and taking some time out! The topics are also relevant to non farmers and a great way to bring the importance of health and wellness to this age group!

Learning outcome topics

1. Protecting yourself against the weather
2. Healthy eating and a healthy diet
3. Feeling well and happy.

Tip: You can use the Farm Safety Workbook in conjunction with this discussion.

Topics

1. Protecting against the weather

The weather is both a farmer's biggest enemy and best friend. Sun, rain, wind and frost are important but needed at different times. Too much sun dries up the earth and nothing grows and too much rain causes the crops to rot in the ground. A little bit of everything is just right.

1. On the board write up the following types of weather.

A. Sunny day

B. A rainy day

C. A very cold day

D. Windy Day

2. Now ask the children what the farmer should do to stay well on these types of days. The prompts below will help you. Discuss what might happen if they do not protect themselves.

A. Sunny day - Be Sun Smart

To protect themselves, farmers must remember to cover up from the sun's damaging rays:

- Wear sun cream with a high SPF (Skin protection factor).
- Wear a hat to protect skin on their head
- Wear Long Sleeves
- Protect their eyes with sunglasses



B. A rainy day

Wearing wind and rain proof work wear protects the farmer from the harshness of wind and rain while also keeping them warm and dry. This will help them avoid getting a cold or flu.

- Waterproof overalls
- Wellington boots
- Jacket with hood
- Rain hat

C. A cold day

We know that wearing wind and rain proof work wear protects the farmer from the wind and rain so what happens when it is very cold? Remind the children what they wear to keep warm.

- A woolly hat
- Gloves
- An extra jacket
- A vest



D. Windy Day

Some wind is great during hay and silage season as a light warm wind helps to dry the grass before baling. However too much wind can spell trouble as crops get pushed over and any loose sheets on sheds and outbuildings can come away and cause damage.

For the farmer staying safe and well during high wind conditions should be pre-empted. So keeping any eye on the weather forecast is very important.

- Tying and securing any loose elements of the building
- Keeping animals sheltered or indoors in very bad conditions
- They themselves should also stay indoors
- Not undertake any work especially at heights or cutting trees, etc.

2. Diet and Exercise

Diet

Farmers spend their days producing the best quality food so it is important that their diet is equally good. We know too many sweets, chips and fizzy drinks can be bad for us and lead to problems such as obesity and diabetes.

Farmers can help prevent these things by:

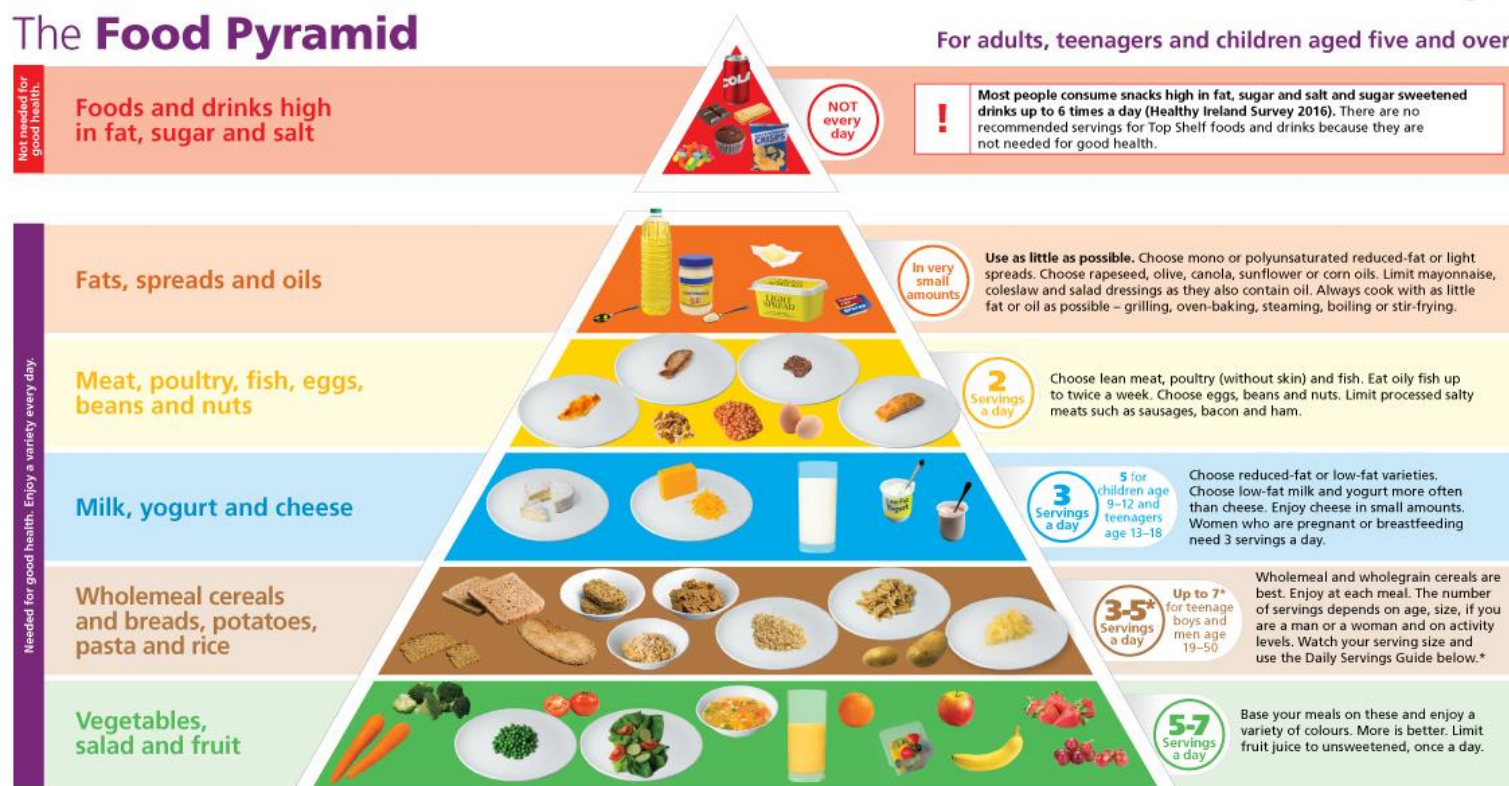
- Eating a balanced diet (the food pyramid is a great guide)
- Eating nourishing food at key mealtimes (think of a rainbow on your plate, the more colour the better)
- Choose healthy snacks, such as fruit and nuts.
- Drinking plenty of water (always have bottles of water in their tractors during busy times)
- Keep active! (Activities away from the farm can recharge the mind and the body)



Create a rainbow on your plate



The Food Pyramid



Exercise

As a group decide what kind of exercise a farmer might do as part of their work day.

- Walking in fields
- Carrying buckets
- Herding livestock

Now ask the class what other kind of exercise they could do that would help their mental wellbeing as well as helping to stay fit.

Eg.

- Joining local gym
- Playing football or other sports in local club or with friends
- Taking up swimming



Exercise is a great way to feel good and stay well.

Creating habits that are both healthy and social can really benefit our physical and mental wellbeing.

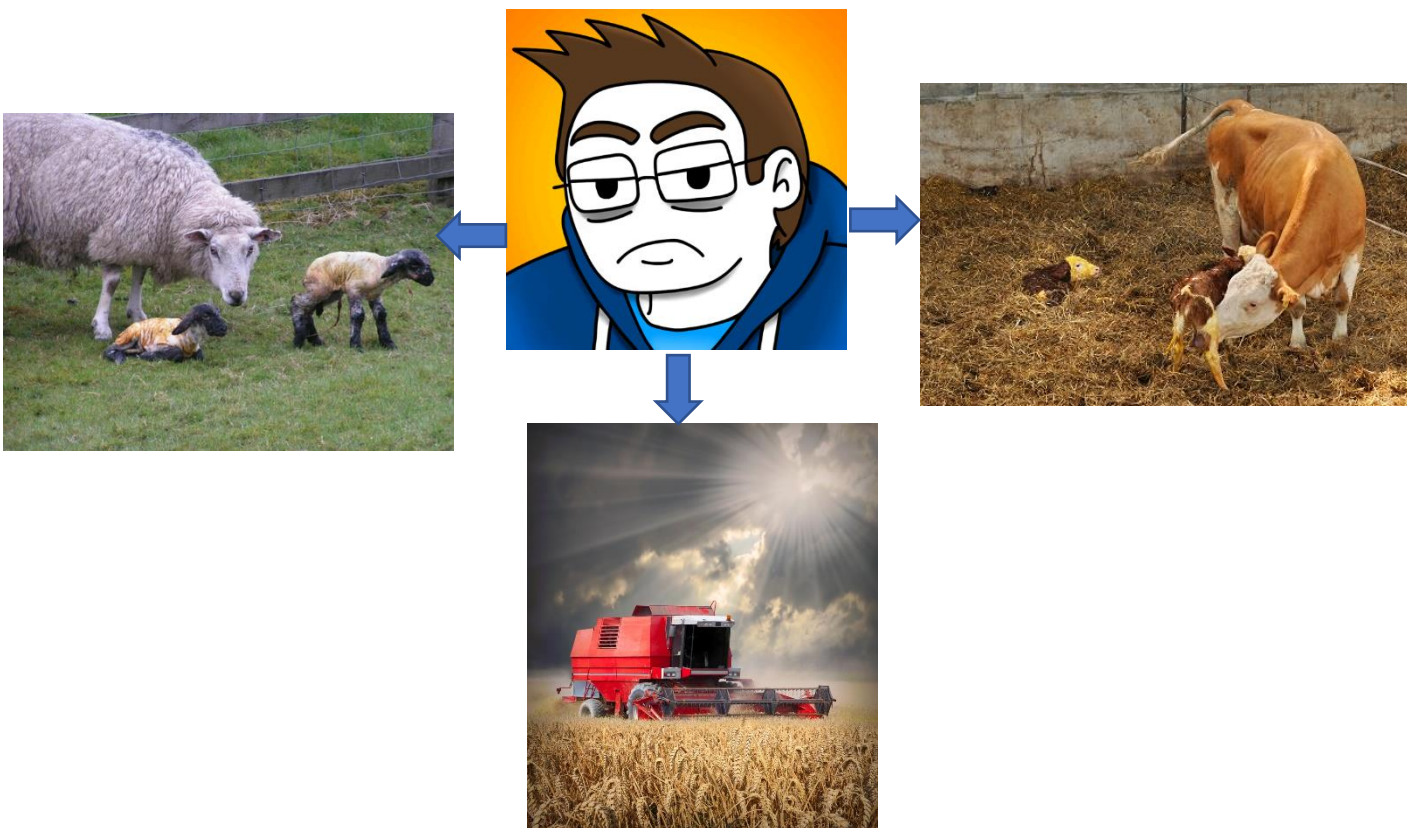
3. Rest & Wellbeing

Early mornings and late nights can take their toll. Especially during those very busy times, farmers must remember to sleep and take breaks. It can help them not only feel better but will help them work better too.

The times of the year when farmers are most likely to be busy and need rest are:

- Harvest time
- Calving time
- Lambing time
- Silage and hay

By getting enough rest we all can be at our very best!



Wellbeing

Even though they are doing something they love, many farmers (like everyone) can still have days where they feel stressed, worried and anxious. We all can work and relax better when we don't feel stressed so it is important that, as well as farmers we get into the habit of using relaxing techniques to keep stress and worries at bay.

What is stress?

Stress is described as 'a feeling of being overwhelmed, worried or anxious'. It is completely normal to feel this now and again, but feeling stressed regularly can affect your health and wellbeing. For example, stress can cause headaches, stomach aches and worry, and it can affect your ability to concentrate.

So what can we all do to help us feel better when stressed:

- Take a break
- Talk to someone you know and trust
- Take care of yourself with healthy eating, being active, getting a good night's sleep

For farmers it is important they take a break when they feel overwhelmed and make sure to have interests and hobbies away from the farm.

Follow up activities & projects

- Complete the activities in the workbook
- Check out our white board and PC games: Farm Yard Safety, Off to Work and Follow the Signs on agrikids.ie
- Create a food pyramid of your own – tip: check out Healthyireland.ie
- Download and fill in our 'Spot the Dangers' worksheets.
- Sign up for an AgriKids webinar
- Create an exercise calendar for the class - allocating 30 mins exercise each day.
- Invite a nutritionist or chef into class to explain to the children about healthy eating.
- Create a farming calendar for different times of the year when a farmer might be very busy.
- Study more about how farmers use the weather for their crops and the different ways they might forecast the weather. (Apps, news, etc).
- Why not make a healthy smoothie or soup in class.
- If you have a model farm in class add in an area for a slurry pit and put up the correct signs.
- Check out the PAWS the water safety programme from Irish Water Safety.
- Check out SunSmart on HSE.ie
- Have a class discussion on times when you might have felt worried or overwhelmed and discuss ways that would help reduce these feelings. Eg. Doing some mediation, having outdoor time