Environmental Impact Research Matrix

## Instructions

Analyzing the lifecycle of a product is one of the best ways to understand the impact of our consumption on the environment. In this assignment, you will research the series of steps that it takes to deliver a common product to the public and consider how consumers’ choices and behavior can contribute to or diminish environmental sustainability.

**Select** one of the following products: car, new cell phone, plastic grocery bags, food of your choice, a new 3-bedroom home, an online purchase of your choice, or another product of your choice with faculty approval.

**Research** the life cycle of your selected product using the internet, textbook, University Library, or other resources.

**Analyze** the environmental impact of the purchase or usage of the product you selected by completing the matrix below. Answer each question in the matrix with a 1- to 2-sentence response. Be sure to provide references for the sources you use. A partial example has been provided for you.

## Example

|  | **Name of Product/Process: Cup of Yogurt** |
| --- | --- |
| **Question** | **Answer** |
| 1. **How is the product/process obtained or created? What raw materials are required?**
 | Every cup of yogurt requires sugar, milk, bacteria, and water, but cow’s milk is the most common ingredient.The states that supply the most dairy in the U.S. are California (18.5%) and Wisconsin (14.2%). |
| 1. **How is the product processed or implemented?**
 | Many different types of milk can be used, but typically, each half cup of yogurt requires half a gallon of milk.Petroleum oil is used to make yogurt cups. |

**Sources:**

The California Dairy Press Room & Resources. (n.d.). Retrieved from<http://www.californiadairypressroom.com/Press_Kit/Dairy_Industry_Facts>

## Matrix

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Name of Product/Process: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |
| **Question** | **Answer** |
| 1. **How is the product/process obtained or created? What raw materials are required?**
 |  |
| 1. **How is the product processed or implemented?**
 |  |
| 1. **How is the product delivered or transported to you?**
 |  |
| 1. **How is the product disposed of?**
 |  |
| 1. **What kind of waste is generated? How can it be recycled?**
 |  |
| 1. **List any other observations or insights pertaining to the environmental impact of the product.**
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