



UNIT 1: PRODUCTION AGRICULTURE

Where Is Agriculture?

Grade level: Primary

NATIONAL STANDARDS

NL-ENG.K-12.2

NL-ENG.K12.4

NL-ENG.K-12.11

NSS-USH.K-4.1

Student Learning Objectives

After completing this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Identify items in their lives that come from agriculture.
2. Define producer.
3. List the three basic human needs that are fulfilled through agriculture.
4. Explain how farmers are good caretakers of the land and animals.

Background Information

Production agriculture, or “farming,” is what most students think of when they hear the word “agriculture”. Farming is the actual production of raw commodities. Less than 2 percent of today’s work force in America is involved in production agriculture.

“Production agriculture” involves only those people typically categorized as farmers and ranchers—people who raise common crops and livestock. Production agriculture also includes a wide variety of specialties such as raising fish, timber, herbs and much more.

Many of the products students use every day come from agriculture. Agriculture provides our food, clothing and shelter. In fact, agriculture is the only industry people must have to survive.

As we depend on agriculture for survival, agriculture depends on natural resources—air, water and land. Farmers are good stewards of the land and care about animals. Today’s farmers are some of our nation’s most passionate environmentalists. They manage about 922 million acres of land in the United States. It is common for agricultural producers to return land from production to protect the environment and provide habitat for wildlife. Farmers provide food and habitat for 75 percent of the nation’s wildlife. (<http://www.ers.usda.gov/statefacts/us.htm>)

Time: 50 minutes

Tools, Equipment, and Supplies: Writing surface, copies of TM 1:1 and Activity Sheet 1:1

Key Term(s): Producer



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Interest Approach

Use a Descartes e-Moment® to introduce the lesson. Pose the following questions one at a time to focus learners' thinking. Answers will come fast and furious. Be sure to capture answers on the writing surface.

What do you absolutely know about agriculture?

Use clarifying statements, such as "Are you sure?" and "How do you know that?"

What do you think you know about agriculture?

Explain that you are asking for things you think you know about agriculture, but you just aren't sure.

What do you not know yet about agriculture?

Explain that it is okay not to know. Explain that this is the reason we are having this important lesson.

Summarize the responses that you captured on the writing surface, being sure to compliment students on their active participation.

Now that we have identified some of the things we know, some of the things we think we know, and some of the things we don't know about agriculture, we are going to focus on one more very important question.

The important question is "Where Is Agriculture?" Let's try to find the answer to this very important question as we listen carefully to a story about Maria and Cob.

Ask students to follow along with TM 1:1.

OBJECTIVE 1: Identify items in students' lives that come from agriculture.

Read TM 1:1 titled "Where Is Agriculture?" to students. Make a copy so students can follow along while you read.

Maria was surprised about all the things in her life that came from agriculture. Let's see if we can list them without looking back at the story.

Ask students to name the agricultural products that Maria learned about. Write their responses on the writing surface.



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Maria learned that lots of things come from agriculture. What about you? With your own paper and pencils, let's write down as many things as we can think of that come from agriculture.

After three minutes, begin calling on different students and asking them to share their lists. Ask them to explain how each item comes from agriculture if the connection is not clear.

OBJECTIVE 2: Define producer.

Way to go! We are learning so much about agriculture! Let's keep going. Let's answer some more questions.

Who are the people who raise or grow all these agricultural products?

Students will probably answer farmers or farmers and ranchers.

Yes, those are good answers. What do you think of when you say the word "farmer"?

Students will probably give answers similar to barns, corn fields, cows and chickens.

Did you know there are farmers who raise fish? Farmers who raise trees? There are even farmers who raise medicine. Because there are so many different kinds of things that come from agriculture, we will use the word **producer** to include anyone who produces any of the agricultural products that go into the food we eat, the clothes we wear or the products we use.

Producer – Anyone who produces any of the agricultural products that go into the food we eat, the clothes we wear, or the products we use.

Use a Choral Response e-Moment® to cement the definition of producer in students' minds.

When I say, "Who produces food?" you say, "A **producer**!" Ready – Who produces food? Great! Let's try another one. When I say, "Who grows products for the clothes we wear?" you say, "A **producer**!" Ready – Who grows products for the clothes we wear? Great! This is one sharp group! Let's do one more. When I say, "Who grows the trees for the pencils you use?" you say, "A **producer**!" Ready – Who grows the trees for the pencils you use?



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Great job!

You can do a couple more of these if students are having fun.

Now that we know what a **producer** is, we can concentrate on the most important things they produce.

OBJECTIVE 3: List the three basic human needs that are fulfilled through agriculture.

There are three very important things that all people need in order to survive! What do you think they are?

Listen to two or three responses from students. Comment on each response in a positive manner. Next, explain the following:

All people must have these three things. We need food, clothing and shelter.

Write these three words on the board.

Agriculture provides us with all our food, much of our clothing and some of the things used to shelter us. What are examples of agricultural products in each category?

Listen to responses and guide students to place them into the correct categories.

List the three important human needs that come from agriculture.

- Food
- Clothing
- Shelter

We are starting to understand how important agriculture is to each of us. Now let's see who else thinks agriculture is important.

OBJECTIVE 4: Describe how farmers are good caretakers of the land and animals.

Who do you think cares more about agriculture than we do?

Comment on responses.

You are really using your thinking caps today. Great job! Let's look at one of the most caring members of the agriculture family. That caring person is the **producer**.



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What or who do you think the **producer** cares about? Great answers! In addition to caring about us, **producers** also care a lot about their land and their animals. It is very important for us to understand that producers take very good care of their land and animals.

They do this by rotating crops (planting different crops so the soil doesn't wear out) to let the land rest. They plant trees to prevent soil erosion (washing away of the soil). They give their baby animals shots to prevent diseases and call the veterinarian as soon as an animal is sick.

What are other ways **producers** might take care of their land and their animals?

Answers might include washing animals, putting up fence, etc.... Respond to all comments positively.

REVIEW / SUMMARY

REFLECTIVE REVIEW QUESTIONS:

- What agricultural products are grown/produced in our local area?
- If agricultural **producers** are stewards of the land and animals, who are your stewards?

Hand out Activity Sheet 1:1 titled "Agriculture: The Big Picture." Have students draw a picture of Cob showing Maria something from agriculture that is important in their lives. Inform students that they have five minutes to draw their pictures. Also inform students that they may be asked to share their pictures with the rest of the class

We have learned a lot about how important agriculture is and where we find it. We have even learned about the caring nature of the American farmer. Let's make sure we share what we learned today with at least one member of our family tonight.



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APPLICATIONS

APPLICATION 1: Adopt a *producer*. Find someone involved in production agriculture to “adopt” your class. Students can correspond with the farmer or rancher’s family. This will allow students to practice their writing skills and learn more about the day-to-day operation of a farm or ranch. The family might send photographs or videotapes, grain or feed samples and other items from the farm. In turn, students can write to the family to ask questions about what they have learned. They might even draw pictures of how they envision the farm or ranch, and then send these and other creations to the family.

Before involving your students, work with the family to set clear goals for the exchange. Set up a schedule for when you will write letters. Perhaps the family could visit your classroom. At the end of the year, your students might be able to visit the farm or ranch. Contact the office of your county extension service, your state’s department of agriculture or your state’s “Agriculture in the Classroom” program to see how your class might be adopted.

APPLICATION 2: “A” is for Agriculture. This activity works well in class or as an assignment students can do with their families. Take a walk outdoors or in a building. For each letter of the alphabet, find an item made from an agricultural product that has a name that starts with that letter. Collect or take photos of as many items as you can. Make a display of the things your class collected.



TM 1:1

"Where Is Agriculture?"

Maria was sitting at her desk and feeling very frustrated because her paper on agriculture was due tomorrow—and so far she hadn't written a word.

"The teacher wants us to write about how agriculture affects our lives," she grumbled. "But I can't think of a single thing to write."

Suddenly, she heard a voice. "You're missing the real story," said Cob who was sitting on the top of her computer. "Agriculture is all around you," he said.

"Who - who are you?" Maria asked. Then she spoke up a little more bravely. "Who are you and what are you doing on my desk?" she demanded.

"I'm Cob," the little ear of corn said.

"Well, Cob, you're in my house. I didn't invite you in—and I'd like you to leave."

"Don't you know me?" Cob asked. "I am the most abundantly produced crop in the United States. I just came to help you with your report. But if you already know it all, I'll be glad to leave. Of course, if I go, I'll have to take everything that comes from agriculture with me."

"Agriculture?" Maria asked. "Oh, you mean farming. Well, we live in a city. That doesn't apply to us."

"That's what you think," Cob answered. "What about those blue jeans you're wearing?"

"What about them?" Maria asked.

"Well, you'd better get used to doing without them—because blue jeans are made of fibers from cotton plants."

"Did you take a shower this morning?" Cob continued.

"Of course," Maria replied.

"Well, the soap comes from agriculture, too. It's made out of oil from corn and soybeans and fat from cattle. And I suppose you're getting hungry for dinner. Well, you have agriculture to thank for that, too. Everything from the beef in your hamburger to the wheat in your bread to the milk you drink comes from agriculture."

Maria was still a little doubtful. "I can see how all those things are important," she admitted. "But I spend most of my day in school. Agriculture isn't important there."

"I wouldn't be so sure. Do you write your lessons on paper? That comes from trees,

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another agricultural crop. And the book you read may have been printed with ink made from soybeans. How will you get to school? The tires on your school bus are made from rubber—and rubber comes from trees. It's possible that even the gas that powers the bus might come partly from corn alcohol."

"Gee, Cob," Maria said. "I guess agriculture is pretty important in my life. You're welcome to stay as long as you like."

Then Maria looked at the clock. It was almost time for dinner. "But since you're staying, I need to ask you a favor. Do you think you could jot down a few of those good ideas while I'm eating dinner?"

Cob sighed. "Well, at least you realize that without agriculture, there wouldn't be any dinner for you to eat."





ACTIVITY SHEET 1:1

Agriculture: The Big Picture

Draw a picture of Cob showing Maria something from agriculture that is important in your life.