



UNIT 1: PRODUCTION AGRICULTURE

Top Crops

Grade level: Upper elementary

Student Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Identify where their home state ranks in agricultural production.
2. List at least three leading agricultural commodities of their home state.

Time: 50 minutes

Tools, Equipment, and Supplies: Writing surface, copies of Activity Sheet 4:1

Key Term(s): Broilers
Cash receipts
Cattle and calves
Greenhouse
Dairy
Hay
Sorghum
Corn
Soybeans
Aquaculture
Barley

Interest Approach

Use an Eyewitness e-Moment® to introduce Top Crops.

Are you all ready for some fun today? Let's begin! In a moment all of you are going to be transformed into editorial newsmen. You may be asking yourself, "What is an editorial newsmen?" An editorial newsmen gives insight on particular topics that may be of interest to their viewers or readers. Today we are going to develop an editorial news report on our state.

When I say GO, close your eyes and start thinking about all of the things for which our fine state is known. Ready – Go!

Wait about 30 seconds.



NOTES

Now that you have thought about things for which our state is known, jot those items down on a sheet of paper.

Wait about one minute to allow students time to write. Following this, place students in groups of three using any method you choose.

Does everyone have a group? Good! Now we are going to develop our news report. Someone will be the writer. Every good news report has a writer. Who is your writer? Raise your hand if you are the writer. Good. We will also need a director. The director will make sure everything runs smoothly. Pick your director. Raise your hand when you have selected the director. Good. Lastly, we need a reporter. The reporter will have to take direction from the director and help the director and the writer develop the story and then deliver the editorial news report. Are we ready? When I say GO, start developing an editorial based upon what our great state is known for. Feel free to compare the notes each of you made before getting into your group. You have three minutes to complete the report. Ready – GO!

Make sure each group presents their report. Be sure to compliment each group. Monitor story development to help learners begin the thinking process.

Wow, those were great stories. Some of us even reported on agricultural goldmines in our state. Let's continue today by looking at the agricultural items that define our state.

OBJECTIVE 1: Identify how their state ranks in agricultural production.

We are going to look at some data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the federal government agency responsible for agriculture. Statisticians from USDA track all kinds of information about farming and ranching and make it available to the public.

The data sheet we will review provides the ranking of the agricultural production of each state as measured in **cash receipts**. That's the money paid for the sale of all these products from the farm. Second, the data sheet lists the top five crops (and other agricultural products) in each state, again measured by **cash receipts**.

Before we look at the data, let's think about what we know about agriculture in our state. We have mentioned some of the items in our news report. When I say GO, use a piece of paper to write down where you think our state ranks in agricultural sales—choose a number from 1 to 50. Ready – GO!

Wait no more than 10 seconds.



NOTES

Next, let's list at least three of our state's agricultural products that you think would be in the top five. Ready – GO!

Pass out the Activity Sheet 4:1, "Top Crops." Let students check their answers.

Explain some of the terms from the sheet that students may not know, especially if they exist in your state:

Broilers	Chickens grown for their meat
Cattle and calves	Beef cattle
Greenhouse	Landscape plants, cut flowers and indoor plants
Dairy	Milk from dairy cows
Hay	Grown for animal feed
Sorghum	Grown for animal feed
Corn and soybeans	Grown for animal feed and many other products
Aquaculture	Farm-raised fish
Barley	Used as animal feed, as a cereal and as a grain product

Have students discuss the data sheet with each other. Facilitate discussion.

OBJECTIVE 2: List at least three leading agricultural commodities of their state.

Let's determine how accurate our guesses were. Our state's top three crops are:

1. *(consult Activity Sheet and fill in appropriate response)*
2. *(consult Activity Sheet and fill in appropriate response)*
3. *(consult Activity Sheet and fill in appropriate response)*

Be sure to remember our state's top crops and tell your mom or dad they might want to pick some of that product up the next time they go to the store.



NOTES

REVIEW/SUMMARY

REFLECTIVE REVIEW QUESTIONS:

- Why do you believe we produce so much (list top five commodities) in our state?
- What is the most interesting commodity you saw produced in another state? Why do you like it?
- Why do you believe other states produce products/commodities that are so different from ours?

Use a Mother Goose e-Moment® to have students develop their own version of their favorite nursery rhyme reviewing the top crops grown in your state.

APPLICATIONS

APPLICATION 1: Ask students to use the state data on the activity sheet to develop a large bulletin board in your classroom or for the hallway outside your room so others can learn about the state's top crops.

APPLICATION 2: Students may extend Application 1 by developing a United States map as a large bulletin board and identifying each state's top crop.



ACTIVITY SHEET 4:1

Top Crops

Here are the top five agricultural products in each state, as ranked by cash receipts—the amount of money received from the sale of these products.

Rank						
Alabama	27	Broilers	Cattle/calves	Chicken eggs	Greenhouse nursery	Cotton
Alaska	50	Greenhouse/nursery	Hay	Potatoes	Cattle/calves	Dairy products
Arizona	29	Dairy products	Cattle/calves	Greenhouse/nursery	Lettuce	Hay
Arkansas	12	Broilers	Rice	Soybeans	Cotton	Cattle/calves
California	1	Dairy products	Greenhouse/nursery	Grapes	Almonds	Cattle/calves
Colorado	20	Cattle/calves	Dairy products	Corn	Wheat	Hay
Connecticut	43	Greenhouse/nursery	Dairy products	Chicken eggs	Aquaculture	Tobacco
Delaware	39	Broilers	Corn	Soybeans	Wheat	Dairy products
Florida	16	Greenhouse/nursery	Oranges	Tomatoes	Dairyproducts	Cane for sugar
Georgia	18	Broilers	Chicken eggs	Cotton	Peanuts	Cattle/calves
Hawaii	44	Greenhouse/nursery	Cane for sugar	Macadamia nuts	Coffee	Cattle/calves
Idaho	21	Dairy products	Cattle/calves	Potatoes	Hay	Wheat
Illinois	5	Corn	Soybeans	Hogs	Cattle/calves	Dairy products
Indiana	8	Corn	Soybeans	Hogs	Dairy products	Chicken eggs
Iowa	2	Corn	Soybeans	Hogs	Cattle/calves	Chicken eggs
Kansas	7	Cattle/calves	Wheat	Corn	Soybeans	Sorghum grain
Kentucky	25	Horses/mules	Broilers	Corn	Cattle/calves	Soybeans
Louisiana	32	Rice	Corn	Cane for sugar	Soybeans	Cattle/calves



Maine	42	Potatoes	Dairyproducts	Chicken eggs	Greenhouse/ nursery	Blueberries
Maryland	36	Broilers	Greenhouse	Corn	Dairy products	Soybeans
Massachusetts	46	Greenhouse/ nursery	Cranberries	Dairy products	Sweet corn	Apples
Michigan	19	Dairy products	Corn	Soybeans	Greenhouse/ nursery	Cattle/calves
Minnesota	6	Corn	Soybeans	Hogs	Dairy products	Cattle/calves
Mississippi	24	Broilers	Soybeans	Corn	Cotton	Aquaculture
Missouri	11	Soybeans	Corn	Cattle/calves	Hogs	Turkeys
Montana	34	Wheat	Cattle/calves	Barley	Hay	Dairy products
Nebraska	4	Cattle/calves	Corn	Soybeans	Hogs	Wheat
Nevada	45	Cattle/calves	Hay	Dairy products	Onions	Potatoes
New Hampshire	48	Greenhouse/ nursery	Dairy products	Apples	Sweetcorn	Chicken eggs
New Jersey	38	Greenhouse/ nursery	Horses/mules	Blueberries	Chicken eggs	Corn
New Mexico	30	Dairy products	Cattle/calves	Hay	Pecans	Greenhouse/ nursery
New York	26	Dairy products	Greenhouse	Corn	Apples	Cattle/calves
North Carolina	10	Broilers	Hogs	Greenhouse/ nursery	Tobacco	Turkeys
North Dakota	14	Wheat	Soybeans	Corn	Cattle/calves	Barley
Ohio	15	Corn	Soybeans	Dairy products	Chicken eggs	Hogs
Oklahoma	23	Cattle/calves	Wheat	Hogs	Broilers	Dairy products
Oregon	28	Greenhouse/ nursery	Cattle/calves	Dairy products	Wheat	Hay
Pennsylvania	22	Dairy products	Cattle/calves	Chicken eggs	Corn	Mushrooms



Rhode Island	49	Greenhouse/ nursery	Dairy products	Sweet corn	Aquaculture	Apples
South Carolina	35	Broilers	Greenhouse/ nursery	Turkeys	Cattle/calves	Corn
South Dakota	14	Corn	Cattle/calves	Soybeans	Wheat	Hogs
Tennessee	31	Cattle/calves	Broilers	Soybeans	Corn	Greenhouse/ nursery
Texas	3	Cattle/calves	Cotton	Dairy products	Broilers	Greenhouse/ nursery
Utah	37	Dairy products	Cattle/calves	Hay	Hogs	Greenhouse/ nursery
Vermont	41	Dairy products	Cattle/calves	Greenhouse/ nursery	Maple prods.	Hay
Virginia	33	Broilers	Cattle/calves	Dairy products	Turkeys	Greenhouse/ nursery
Washington	13	Apples	Dairy products	Wheat	Potatoes	Cattle/calves
West Virginia	47	Broilers	Cattle/calves	Turkeys	Dairy products	Hay
Wisconsin	9	Dairy products	Corn	Cattle/calves	Soybeans	Potatoes
Wyoming	40	Cattle/calves	Hay	Hogs	Sheep/lambs	Barley

Source: USDA ERS Data Sets, 2009 <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Data/FarmIncome/firkdmuxls.htm>