



..... THIS MONTH
WE'RE HARVESTING

Pears!

In This Issue



AND MORE!



FALL

NEWSLETTER

Farmer Spotlight

SUSAN LAGRANDE - ROBERT GAYALDO FARM
FINLEY, CA



From blossom to harvest, growing pears is a year-round process. Susan LaGrande is part of Robert Gayaldo Farms in Lake County, California, where she helps with pear production while also managing the farm's business operations.

LaGrande comes from a farming family that raises rice, cattle, almonds, and other crops, so she is familiar with the hard work and rewards of farm life. "It's really hard work to farm pears. They're a very delicate crop, and almost everything requires hand labor," LaGrande says.

Pears are considered a permanent crop, meaning the trees remain in the orchard for many years and can produce fruit for generations. At Robert Gayaldo Farms, some pear trees were planted in the 1940s and are still producing today. That long-term commitment starts with caring for the trees year after year.

Pear production begins in winter, when trees are pruned to maintain their health and productivity. As temperatures rise in March and April, the trees' flower buds swell and open. Bartlett pears are self-pollinating, so growers do not need to bring in bees to transfer pollen between trees. Spring also brings the risk of frost, which can damage blossoms and the developing fruit. LaGrande and her family watch temperatures

closely, mowing the grass in the orchard and using wind machines to mix warmer air into the orchard when temperatures drop low enough to threaten the trees.

As the fruit develops, orchard workers monitor the trees for pests and diseases, including pear scab, insects, and blight. They also carefully manage irrigation to provide the trees with water as the pears grow. By late summer, the fruit is ready for harvest.

Harvest typically begins in August and lasts two to three weeks. For LaGrande, late summer is her favorite time in the orchard. "A lot of the work is complete, and you're out there looking at the trees and the fruit, watching it grow and seeing when it's ready to harvest," she says. "The hardest work is done."

Workers pick pears by hand, using tall ladders to reach fruit throughout the trees. They carefully select fruit based on size and place the pears into picking bags before gently emptying them into large bins. A specialized bin carrier transports six bins at a time to the loading area, where they are loaded onto trucks.

From the orchard, the pears travel to a processing facility, where they are canned as pear halves and slices or used in products such as fruit cocktail. These products make their way to grocery store shelves, allowing consumers to enjoy California pears year-round.

FOOD for FUEL



Every juicy bite of a pear contains nutrients your body needs to grow, move, and stay healthy.

HERE ARE SOME OF THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF INCLUDING PEARS IN YOUR DIET:

Happy GUT

The fiber in pears helps support healthy digestion and can help you feel full longer after eating.

Body DEFENDER

Vitamin C helps your body heal, supports healthy skin, and helps keep your immune system strong.

Heart HELPER

Potassium works behind the scenes to help your heart beat regularly and keep your muscles working smoothly.



CINNAMON PEAR CUPS

Pears are naturally sweet, juicy, and full of flavor. In this recipe, students will chop fresh pears and toss them with honey or maple syrup and cinnamon for a simple snack. Serve the pears on their own or add yogurt, granola, or raisins to create different combinations of flavors and textures.

Ingredients:

- 2 ripe pears
- 1 tablespoon honey or maple syrup
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 cup vanilla yogurt, optional
- 1 tablespoon raisins or granola, optional

Tools:

Cutting board, knife, large mixing bowl, measuring spoon, mixing spoon

Directions:

1. Wash the pears under running water.
2. With an adult's help, cut the pears into small cubes and place them in a large bowl.
3. Add the honey or maple syrup and cinnamon.
4. Stir gently until the pear pieces are evenly coated.
5. Serve the pear mixture on its own or spoon it over vanilla yogurt.
6. Add a sprinkle of granola or raisins for extra crunch and flavor, if desired.

Always check student information, especially allergies, before preparing or serving food to keep everyone safe.



CLASSROOM ★ Connection ★

Pear Variety Taste Test

which variety they prefer. Finally, students will survey their classmates to collect data about which variety is preferred. Students will record and organize their classmates' responses, then use the data to create and interpret a simple bar graph.

Materials: Worksheet (page 3), three pear varieties, paper plates, napkins, pencils, crayons or colored pencils, and a knife and cutting board for adult use.

Not all pears are the same! Different pear varieties can have different colors, shapes, textures, and flavors. In this investigation, students will observe and taste several pear varieties, record their observations, and choose

Objectives:

Students will observe, describe, and compare characteristics of different pear varieties. They will record observations, collect class data, and use a graph to compare the results.

California Standards: CC Math: K.MD.B.3, 1.MD.C.4, 2.MD.D.10; CC ELA: SL.K-2.1

Procedure:

1. Show students several pear varieties. Ask: "Do you think all pears look and taste the same?" Invite students to examine the pears and describe what they notice about their color, shape, and size.
2. Explain that pears come in many varieties. Different varieties can have different characteristics, including appearance, texture, and flavor.
3. Distribute the worksheet. Have students record their observations of each pear. Encourage them to use descriptive words, drawings, or check marks to describe characteristics such as color, firmness, juiciness, and flavor.
4. Cut small samples of each pear for students to taste. Remind students that people may have different opinions about the same food. Have students record which pear they liked best.
5. Create a class picture graph or bar graph showing students' favorite pear varieties. Have students add their own data to the class graph.
6. Analyze the class graph together. Ask students to compare the results: "Which pear received the most votes?" "Which received the fewest?" and "How many more students chose the most popular pear than the least popular pear?"

PEAR VARIETY TASTE TEST



Pears come in many varieties. They can look, feel, and taste different. Scientists make careful observations to learn how things are alike and different. Today, you will observe and taste different pears, record what you notice, and use your class's data to make a graph.



WORD BANK

PEAR OBSERVATIONS

Use words from the word bank to describe what you notice about each pear. You may use a word more than once.

COLOR

green
yellow
red
brown

SHAPE

round
long
wide
narrow

TEXTURE

firm
soft
smooth
grainy

FLAVOR

sweet
tart
no flavor

	PEAR 1	PEAR 2	PEAR 3
Color			
Shape			
Texture			
Flavor			



WHICH PEAR DO YOU PREFER?

Color it in:



CLASS DATA

Shade in a square for each vote.

PEARS	CLASS VOTES									
Pear 1										
Pear 2										
Pear 3										

MOST VOTES: _____ LEAST VOTES: _____



Meet Chuck Baker, a pear grower with Rivermaid Trading Company, who shares the story of his family farm in California's Delta region. Chuck reflects on the generations of his family who have cared for the land and grown pears, and the importance of leaving the farm in good hands for generations to come.



DIG DEEPER

These books, websites, and other resources will help you and your students learn more about pears.

BOOKS

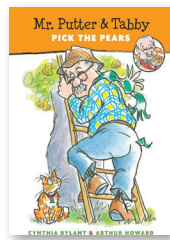


The Very Oldest Pear Tree
by Nancy I. Sanders (Grades PreK-3)
A beautifully illustrated historical picture book based on the real-life Endicott Pear Tree planted in Massachusetts in the 1630s, highlighting resilience and history.

**Mr. Putter & Tabby
Pick the Pears**

by Cynthia Rylant (Grades 1-3)

A gentle, funny chapter book about an older man, his cat, and a pear-picking adventure that requires some clever problem-solving.



Are We Pears Yet?
by Miranda Paul
(Grades PreK-3)

Staged entirely as a play, this clever, funny book follows two impatient seeds waiting to grow into pears. It is a great, engaging way to teach children about patience and plant growth cycles.



WEBSITES

calpear.com

Showcasing the flavor and benefits of California-grown pears, this site offers nutrition information, recipes, and educational resources for all ages. Visitors can explore different pear varieties, learn how pears are grown and harvested, and discover their health benefits.

learnaboutag.org

The California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom provides free resources to teachers. The resources highlight many of California's 350 agricultural commodities, including pears.

usapears.org

Dedicated to helping consumers learn about pears, USA Pears offers information on pear varieties, nutrition, ripening, storage, and recipes. Visitors can explore the unique characteristics of different pear types, discover the health benefits of pears, and find tips for selecting and enjoying pears.

RESOURCES

Lesson Plan: Pairing Up With Pears (Grades 1-3)

By Oklahoma Agriculture in the Classroom

In this lesson, students explore pears through creative writing, sensory activities, graphing, and a traditional folk tale. Students learn about pear varieties while using descriptive language, analyzing data, and exploring the cultural history of pears.

Science Project: Tree Fruits Flowchart (Grade 6-12)

By National Center for Agricultural Literacy

This three-page informational poster explores how tree fruits, including pears, are grown, harvested, and transported from the farm to the store. Students can follow the journey of pears from the orchard to the consumer while learning about production practices and nutrition.



A Teacher's Guide to Farm to School Partnerships

Great things happen when classrooms and cafeterias work together! Discover resources and a special guide packed with creative ideas for partnering with your school nutrition program.

Download today at learnaboutag.org/farmtoschool