

A Day Without Ag

Grade Level: K

Approximate Length of Activity: One-two class periods

Objective

Teacher

1. Discuss agriculture.
2. Teach the importance of agriculture and show how much we depend on agriculture.

Students

1. Consider "What is agriculture?"
2. Discuss "What are some of the ways it affects my life everyday?"

Michigan Content Standards: (Social Studies) G5.0.1

Vocabulary

- **Agriculture**-the science or occupation of cultivating the soil, producing crops and raising livestock.
- **Farm**- a piece of land used for growing crops or raising livestock.
- **Fiber**- a slender and very long natural or synthetic unit of material (as wool, cotton, asbestos, gold, glass or rayon) usually able to be spun into yarn.
- **Grocer**-a dealer in food and household supplies, products.
- **Research**-careful study and investigation for the purpose of discovering and explaining new knowledge.
- **Tractor**-a vehicle that has large rear wheels or moves on tracks and is used especially for pulling farm implements.



Background

“Ag” is short for agriculture. When you think of agriculture you probably think of people growing crops or raising cows, pigs, sheep and chickens on a farm. But agriculture means much more than that. The people who work in factories to build tractors and other farm machinery play an important role in agriculture. People in universities who research new agricultural products and new ways to grow food and fiber are involved in agriculture, too.

The grocer must buy agricultural products to fill the grocery shelves. The restaurant owner must buy agricultural products to prepare and serve his or her customers. The clothes you wear and the furniture on which you sit were probably made from agricultural products. Did you know that hamburgers and fried chicken come from agricultural products?

One of the largest and growing kinds of agriculture in Michigan is growing and selling greenhouse and nursery plants. Forestry is another growing form of agriculture. Tree farmers plant, nurture and harvest trees. Then they sell the trees to companies that make paper products. The people who work in factories where they make paper and the people who sell it in stores are as much a part of agriculture as the farmer who plants the tree.

Think of all the ways in which agriculture touches your life. When you wake up in the morning, you might be laying on cotton sheets. Your pillow could be filled with down feathers from a goose. The frame of your bed is probably made of wood. These are all ag products, and you aren't even out of bed yet! When you do get out of bed, you may put your feet onto a rug made from the wool of a sheep or a linoleum floor made from soybean oil. The soap you use in the shower might contain cottonseed oil or lanolin, a kind of oil from the sheep's wool. The handle of your hairbrush might be made from the bones of a beef animal, and the bristles might be the bristles, or hair, of a pig. The towel you dry off with and the jeans and T-shirt you put on are made from cotton. Once you get to school you might pick up a crayon made from pig fat or soybeans. You've already used dozens of agricultural products, and you haven't even started eating yet! Just imagine a day without agriculture. Do you think you could survive?

Activity Outline

1. Have students bring agricultural products from home and pile them all in one area.
 - Invite another class, parents or the principal to view the display.
 - Have students explain the importance of agriculture.
2. Hand out “A Day without Ag” student worksheet, and have students list all the agricultural products that touch their lives in a day. Then have students share their lists.
3. Discuss the concepts of “want” and “need.”
 - Divide students into groups and have them go through their lists of ag products and decide which are needs and which are wants.
 - Have students share their findings during a class discussion.
4. What agricultural products are unique to Michigan? Talk about the different geographic properties that help these products grow.

Discussion Questions

1. Why do we depend on agriculture?
2. What is your favorite agricultural product?
3. Do you think you could survive without agriculture?
4. What agricultural products are unique to Michigan? What geographic areas do these products grow in?

Related Activities

1. Activities related to language arts
 - Read and discuss background.
 - Discuss the meaning of the word “agriculture”.
 - Practice spelling “agriculture” with the following activities: stomp, whisper and yell the letters.
2. Activities related to math
 - Have students divide their items on their lists into categories (animal products/plant products, things to eat/things to wear). Have them create their own categories.
 - Have younger students sort the pile according to the sound the items start with.
3. The lesson “Where Would We Be Without Seeds?” located in the science section of this curriculum guide.
4. The lesson “Here, There and Everywhere” located in the social studies section of this curriculum guide.

Book Resources

1. “If It Weren’t for Farmers” by Allan Fowler
2. “We Need Farmers” by Lola M. Schaefer

Acknowledgment: Adapted from “A Day without Ag” Oklahoma Agriculture in the Classroom.

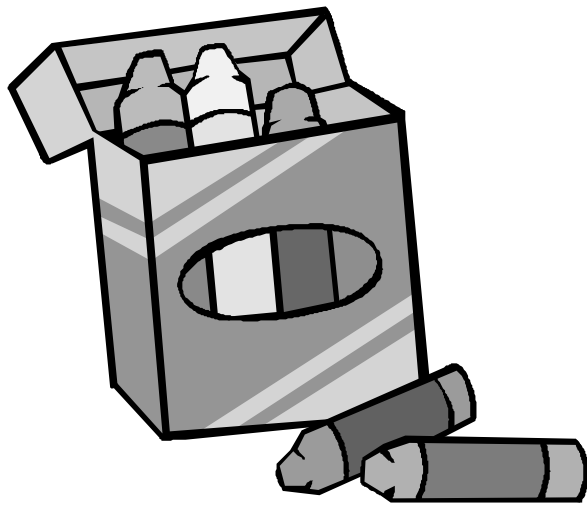


A Day Without Ag

Reading Page

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A Day Without Ag

Directions: Make a list of everything you can find in your home that has something to do with agriculture.

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|-------|-------|--------|-------|-------|
| Beans | Jeans | Soap | Chair | Rug |
| Bread | Shirt | Sheets | Meat | Grass |
| Eggs | Shoes | Bat | Gum | Bed |

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