

AG PAYS FOR YOU

Grades: 4-6

Subjects: Communication Arts, Career and Technology Education

Approximate Time: 45 minutes or two 30 minute sessions

Montana State Standards: Career and Technology Education 1; Communication Arts 1

Objectives: Students will become aware through research and discussions the various jobs available in the field of agriculture.

Materials Needed:

- Paper for each student
- Pencils
- Props if doing activity 6

Key Words:

Farmer
Rancher
Fabric
Forest

Brief Description:

Careers involving agriculture extend far beyond that of the farmer. A rancher may raise livestock until they are ready to be sold. A trucker is hired to transport the livestock to market. The buyer purchases the livestock at market. The buyer pays the rancher for the livestock (goods) and the rancher pays the trucker for his services. The meat packer purchases the livestock from the stockyard or from the rancher directly. The meat is distributed to grocery stores. The meat cutter at the grocery store makes smaller cuts of the meat and wraps it to be sold in the store. The meat is sold by the grocer to us, the consumers, and we use it to cook a meal in our homes.

Likewise, a farmer may grow a product such as potatoes, and pay truckers to transport their produce to a factory. The factory may then purchase the potatoes from the farmer and use the potatoes to make something such as French fries. Those fries may be packaged and distributed, transported by a trucker, to a chain of restaurants. The cook at the restaurant will prepare the French fries and a waitress will serve them to the consumer, who will pay the restaurant for the goods and the service.

Activity Procedures:

1. Divide the class into six groups.
2. Write the following 6 words on the board: trucker, rancher, farmer, packer, grocery store, restaurant, and you.
3. Ask the children to discuss which of those words might be related to agriculture. **Remind them that agriculture includes the five “F”s: farms, food, fabric, forestry, and flowers.** Encourage children to share their reasoning.
4. After sufficient discussion, ask each group to share their conclusions with the class.
5. As a class, discuss how each word on the board is related to agriculture.

6. Assign each group to represent one of the terms (excluding 6. “you”) written on the board. Have each child from each group write their title on a piece of paper. (You may also choose to involve “dress up” props if available.) Have the groups discuss briefly what their job might include and how it may be related to agriculture. Regroup the class so that each group includes one of each title.
7. Assign each group as farmers and ranchers a commodity, such as: potato, pig, beef cows, dairy cows, corn, peaches, wheat, cherries, etc.
8. Have the new groups come up with a scenario of how that commodity will involve each student’s role and end up with “you” the consumer.

Assessment: Grade each member of the group for participation, assess the effectiveness of each groups presentation, assess understanding of key elements.

Additional Activities:

1. Contact someone involved in each of the roles in your community. Allow students to write to a community member with the same role to which they were assigned. Students may write individually or as groups.
2. Invite members of the community involved in ag-related occupations to speak to your class or take a field trip to their places of business.

Adapted from “Innovations in Agriculture” produced by Illinois Farm Bureau.

Farmer: The production of food and fiber derived from plants and animals. Farmers must understand economics, business, mathematics, and the science involved in getting their crops and animals to market. The science involved in agriculture includes the knowledge of ecosystems, soil, water, weather, chemistry, and plant and animal biology.

Food: Made from the raw products taken from the farm. Some products, like corn, may be consumed in their “raw” state or processed into an entirely different product like corn chips, soda, peanut butter, detergents, or medicines. Some of our farm “raw” food products need to be processed into a more palatable and digestible form before they can be eaten. Wheat, for example, is the most important grain in the U.S. We would have to eat hundreds of “raw” or whole-wheat seeds to get the same nutrition we can get more easily from processing the wheat into flour and then baking bread. Bread is a more palatable able way to eat wheat. Flour, of course, is used in hundreds of other products: tortillas, pastas, doughnuts, muffins, pancakes, cookies, pie crusts, and pretzels, just to name a few. The food industry is the processing and distribution of food.

Fabric: Natural fibers are produced on the farm; the two most important fibers are wool and cotton. These fibers are made into thread or yarn and then knitted or woven into fabric or cloth, then finally made into gloves, socks, suits, coats, and other products including blankets, carpets, and curtains.

Forestry: Many forests are cultivated. Agriculturally, many private forests are grown to provide paper and other wood products.

Flowers: Flower and nursery crop production are part of the “green industry” which includes turf. The primary use of these “crops” is for aesthetics or beauty.

