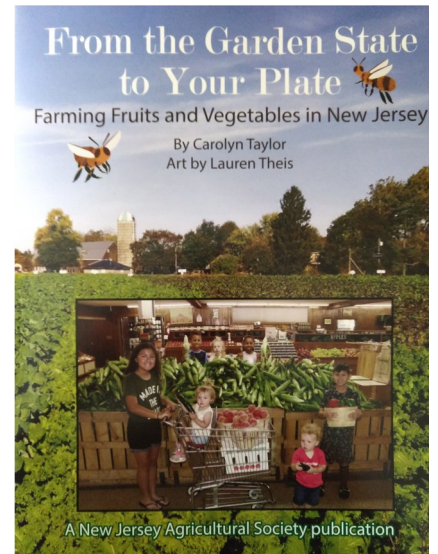


From the Garden State to Your Plate

Farming Fruits and Vegetables in New Jersey

OVERVIEW: The children's book *From the Garden State to Your Plate* is designed to introduce children to agriculture, New Jersey's third largest industry. The book highlights 10 important fruit and vegetable crops grown in New Jersey and includes a map showing the counties in which these commodities are grown. A two-page spread on each fruit or vegetable explains where, when, and how it is grown, plus gives nutrition information. The book also includes information on beekeeping in New Jersey, machines that New Jersey farmers use, and a section on where to find locally grown fruits and vegetables. There are many photos of New Jersey farms.



OBJECTIVES: The student will be able to:

- Recognize agriculture as New Jersey's third largest industry.
- Identify some of New Jersey's top 10 crops and describe how they are grown.
- Locate on a New Jersey county map where some of the top 10 crops are grown.
- Describe the nutritional value of the fruits and vegetables grown in New Jersey.
- Explain the importance of bees to farming in New Jersey.

GRADES: 3-5, can be modified for younger grades

PROCEDURE: Teachers read *From the Garden State to Your Plate, Farming Fruits and Vegetables in New Jersey* to the class or students read the book individually or in small groups. Students can also read parts of the book in small groups and report the key information to the class.

For younger students: Teachers can read and discuss one section of the book at a time.

A DIGITAL VERSION of the book *From the Garden State to Your Plate* is available on the New Jersey Agriculture in the Classroom website <https://newjersey.agclassroom.org>, under New Jersey Agricultural Resources on the home page and under Teaching Resources, Social Studies.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES:

Class Discussion:

As a whole class or in small groups, ask the students to discuss what they learned in the book.

What surprised them?

What did they already know?

Do they have questions about agriculture in New Jersey?

What might they want to learn more about?

Play the New Jersey M-Ag-nificent Agriculture Quiz Bowl:

Divide the class into two teams or have two classes of students play against each other. Randomly select four students to be the first quiz masters for each team and four more to be the second quiz masters. The teacher reads the first statement to the first student quiz master. (See quiz bowl statements below.) The student must say if the statement is true or false. The quiz masters ask their teammates whether they think the answer is true or false. Teammates may not speak, but show a thumbs up if they think the question is true and thumbs down if they think the question is false. The quiz master then answers the question. The teacher reads the next statement to the opposing team and so on until all statements have been read. When all four quiz masters have answered a question, they sit down among their teammates and the second group of quiz masters comes up to answer questions.

Investigate additional agricultural topics:

Divide students into small groups to research additional topics about agriculture in New Jersey. Here are some suggested topics, but the teacher may assign topics based on student responses in class discussion about questions they had after reading the book.

What other types of farming is done in New Jersey? The book explores fruits and vegetables grown in New Jersey, but there are many other types of agriculture, including:

- *Aquaculture:* farming fish and shellfish,
- *Eggs*
- *Dairy*
- *Horses*
- *Turf:* grass for golf courses, football fields, lawns
- *Nursery and greenhouse:* trees, shrubs, and plants for landscaping, greenhouse growing of plants for commercial farmers and retail customers

Research additional information about the nutrients found in fruits and vegetables:

What are vitamins, antioxidants, and minerals, and what do they do for your body?

Investigate farming in your county: Where are the local farms and what do they grow?

Invite a local farmer to talk to your class.

Research other sources of New Jersey produce: Do your local supermarkets sell produce grown locally? Does your cafeteria use produce that is grown nearby?

Research other fruits or vegetables grown in New Jersey: Have students choose a favorite fruit or vegetable not described in the book and investigate if or how it is grown in New Jersey.

Why are some fruits and vegetables not grown in New Jersey? Ask students to research a favorite fruit or vegetable that isn't grown in New Jersey. Why can't it be grown here?

EVALUATION:

Students can demonstrate what they have learned about New Jersey agriculture by:

Writing a paragraph or essay about what they have learned about agriculture in the state.

Small groups can read portions of the book and present what they have learned to the rest of the class.

Students can present what they have learned about New Jersey agriculture to other classes.

Students can write short pieces on facts about New Jersey agriculture for the class or school newsletter or website.

EXTENSIONS:

Arrange a class trip to visit a New Jersey farm so your students can observe first-hand how their food is grown.

New Jersey Learning Standards

Science: 3:LS1.B 4:LS1.A 5:LS2.A

Social Studies: 3-5:6.1.5.GeoPP.2, 6.1.5.GeoSV.2, 6.1.5.GeoHE.2
6.1.5.EconEM.1, 2, 4; 6.1.5.EconNM.4

English Language Arts: 3:RI.3.1,2,4, W.3.2.A-D, W.3.4,8
4:RI.4.1,2,4, W.4.2.A-E, W.4.4,8
5:RI.5.1,2,4, W.5.2.A-E; W.5.4,8

New Jersey M-Ag-nificent Agriculture Quiz Bowl

1. There once were a lot of farms in New Jersey, but today farming is not an important industry in the state. F
2. Blueberry farming was invented in New Jersey. T
3. Most New Jersey tomato plants start their lives in a greenhouse, not in a field. T
4. Sweet corn is eaten by people and animals. F
5. Cranberry bogs are flooded during the harvest because cranberries will float. T
6. Spinach grows well in New Jersey's hot summers. F
7. Most people don't eat soybeans because they are not very nutritious. F
8. Squash plants are tricky to pollinate because they have both male and female flowers. T
9. Cucumbers are 96% water. T
10. New Jersey's state insect – the honey bee – is not native to New Jersey or the continent of North America. T
11. Peaches grow better in weather that is warm all year. F
12. Some New Jersey farms let you pick your own fruits and vegetables. T
13. A farmers market is a place where farmers buy their seeds. F
14. Compared to other states, New Jersey is not very crowded. F
15. Farmers plant bell pepper seeds into their fields. F
16. An acre is about as big as a football field. T