

## **Virginia Farmers Fill a Healthy Plate**

My Virginia Plate provides a Virginia connection to the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) MyPlate icon. MyPlate and its supporting website, ChooseMyPlate.gov, encourage children and adults to make healthy food choices. By including food from each of the food groups on your plate at a meal, your body will benefit from a wide variety of vitamins and nutrients essential to good health.

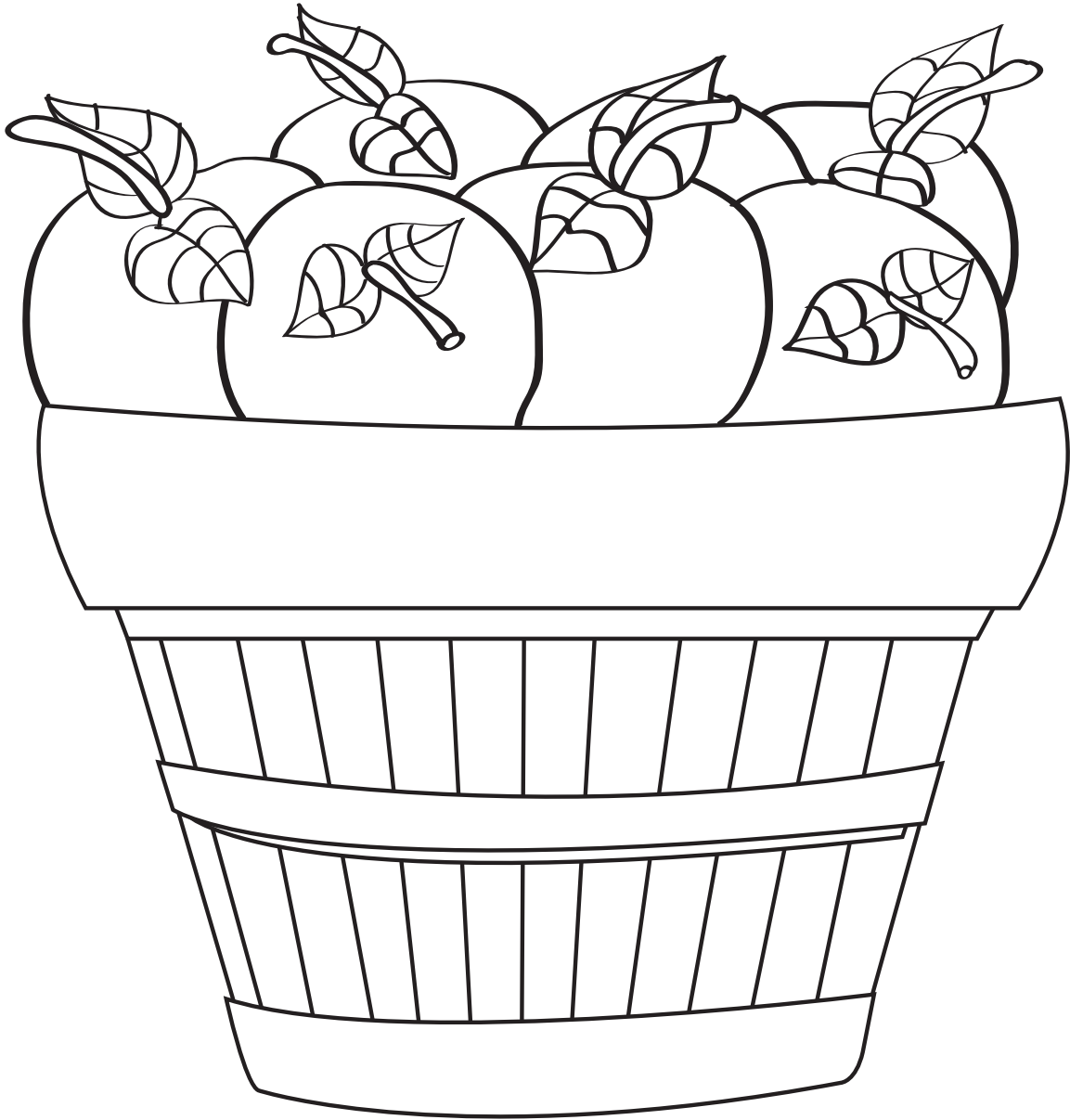
MyPlate serves as a visual reminder to fill half of your plate with fruits and vegetables. By doing so you will provide your body with vitamins such as vitamins A and C, as well as fiber, which helps maintain digestive health. Virginia farmers produce a wide variety of fruits and vegetables. Some are sold fresh, directly to market. Other fruits and vegetables may be processed and then frozen, canned, or used to make other products. Vitamin A, found in Virginia products such as tomatoes, squash, and green beans helps the body fight infections and maintain healthy skin and eyes. Vitamin C, found in spinach, peppers, apples, and strawberries, strengthens your body's cells and helps fight off diseases.

Foods in the protein group include meat, poultry, fish, eggs, nuts, and seeds. Protein is an essential building block for growth; helping us to have strong bones, muscles, skin, and blood. In addition to protein, the foods in this group provide us with B vitamins, vitamin E, iron, zinc, and magnesium. Virginia farmers produce many healthy foods within the protein group, such as beef, poultry, eggs, hogs, soybeans, and peanuts. In fact, each of these commodities ranks in the Top 20 of Virginia's agricultural commodities, with broilers (chickens raised for their meat) and beef cattle ranking numbers 1 and 2, respectively.

Grains come from plants such as wheat, rice, corn, barley, rye, and oats. With the exception of rice, which thrives in a different climate, Virginia farmers produce each of these grains. They are a source of many nutrients such as fiber, B vitamins, and minerals. Fiber from whole grains may also help lower cholesterol levels and decrease the risk of heart disease. These complex carbohydrates also provide energy for our bodies. Virginia grain farmers provide food for both people and livestock.

Milk products make up the dairy group. In addition to liquid milk, other dairy foods include butter, cheese, and yogurt. Milk products provide us with calcium, protein, riboflavin, and vitamin D. The calcium found in dairy foods helps build strong bones and teeth. Dairy ranks as Virginia's 3rd largest agricultural commodity. Dairy cows produce about 90 glasses a day and are milked twice a day using special machines that help keep the milk clean and safe.

## Color a Healthy Snack!



**Did you know?** Virginia apple growers produce an average of 8-10 million bushels of apples per year. Apple varieties grown in Virginia include Red Delicious, Fuji, and Granny Smith. The majority of apples in Virginia are grown in the Shenandoah Valley area.

In addition to apples, Virginia fruit farmers also grow peaches, grapes, and watermelons among others.

## Protein Word Search

I	R	W	V	V	G	S	Y	F	W	R	A	R	B	N
H	X	D	Q	X	T	J	I	R	G	X	K	E	B	O
V	S	E	L	U	W	S	H	R	T	S	G	G	E	R
S	C	T	N	E	H	P	K	C	K	L	H	H	U	I
M	X	A	M	L	F	B	D	M	S	J	U	B	W	C
C	E	V	X	W	N	D	A	I	T	E	T	O	N	H
P	A	R	E	O	N	G	I	X	S	F	E	I	P	N
Z	B	E	K	Z	N	R	O	V	J	W	Z	D	J	E
L	P	C	D	E	S	N	A	E	B	Y	O	S	S	K
G	Z	Q	S	F	P	Q	U	R	G	P	O	R	K	C
Q	D	I	C	D	E	U	O	B	M	S	D	O	H	I
I	U	P	R	O	T	E	I	N	E	E	R	H	R	H
M	Q	G	A	K	Y	H	B	N	A	I	E	Q	I	C
P	N	J	J	H	K	H	A	A	T	J	D	L	C	B
J	F	V	H	U	Y	V	P	B	S	A	Y	S	B	L

### Word Bank:

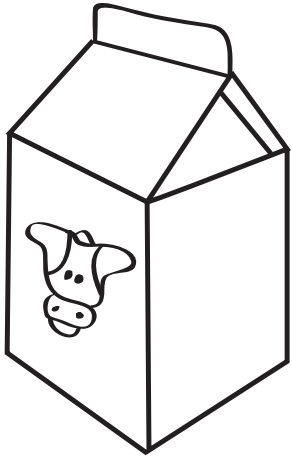
beef	chicken	iron
eggs	fish	magnesium
meat	peanuts	pork
poultry	protein	seeds
soybeans	zinc	

**Did you know?** Layers are chickens that are raised to produce eggs, while broilers are chickens raised to provide meat. Broilers are Virginia's top agricultural commodity.

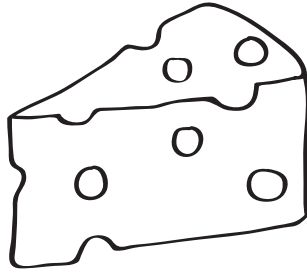
The color of the hen determines the color of the egg. White hens lay white eggs and brown/red hens lay brown eggs.

## Find The Dairy Product

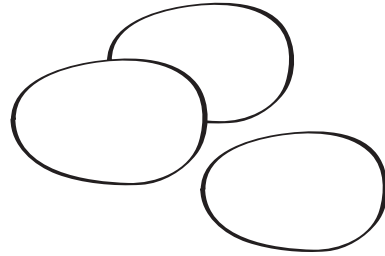
Circle each dairy product. Color every picture that is not a dairy product the correct color.



milk



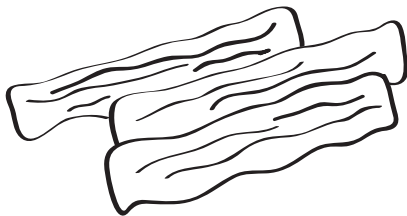
cheese



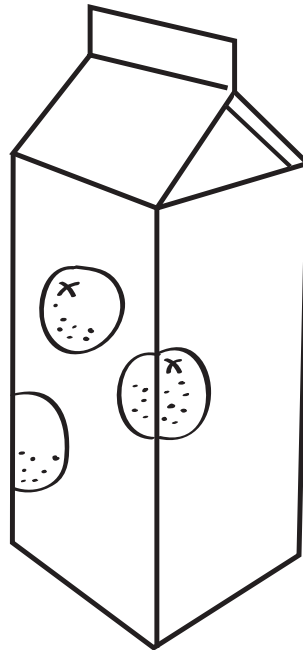
eggs



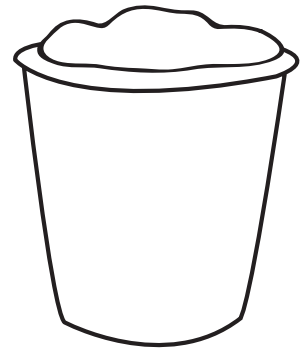
ice cream



bacon



orange juice



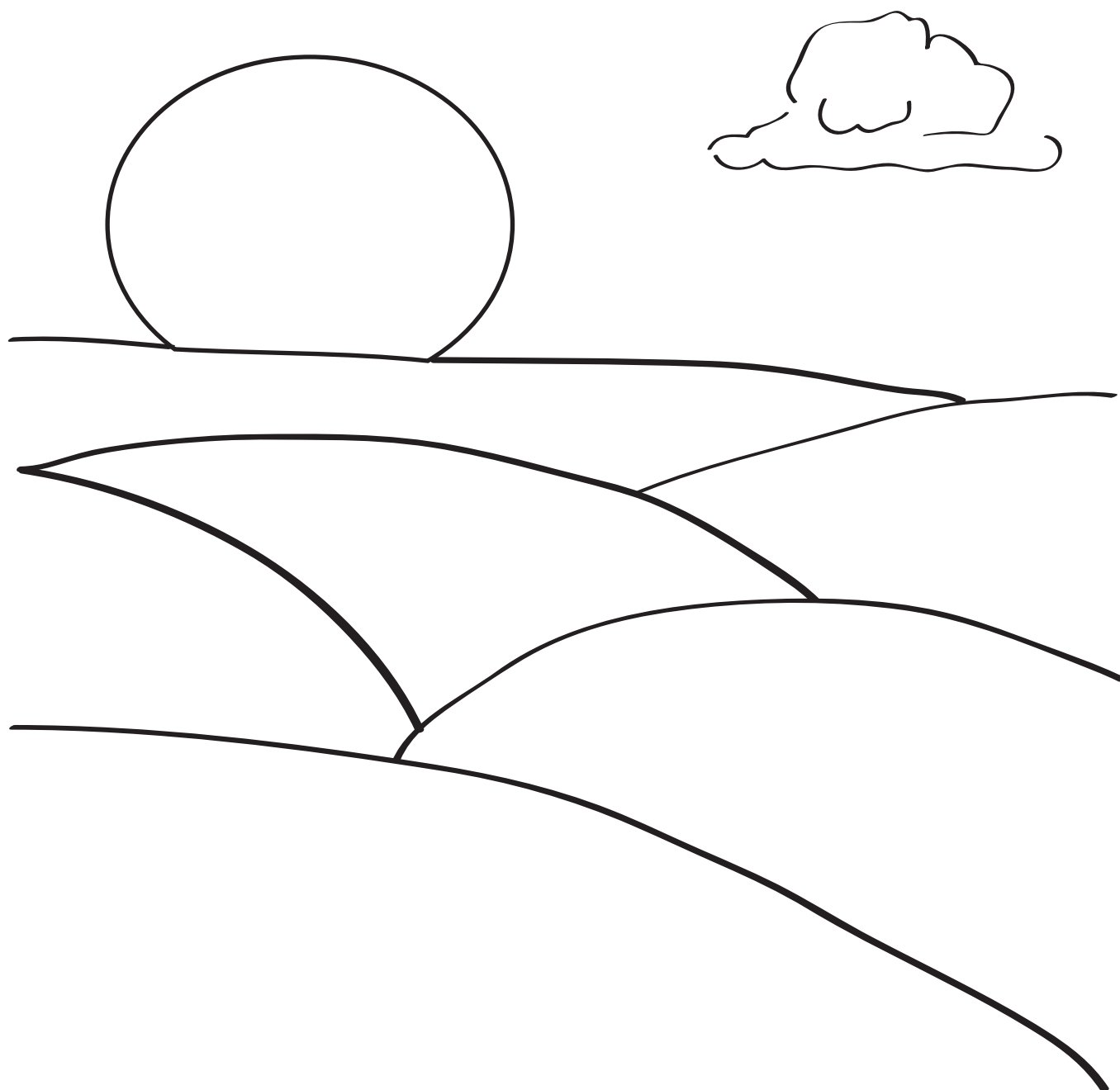
yogurt

**Did you know?** Dairy cows are raised to provide milk while beef cows are raised to provide meat. There are several breeds of dairy cows, but the most widely recognized dairy cow is the Holstein, which has black and white spots. No two Holstein will have the same pattern of spots.

## Create Your Own Vegetable Farm

Virginia farmers grow a wide variety of vegetables, such as cucumbers, cabbage, squash, peppers, sweet corn, green beans, potatoes, sweet potatoes, and tomatoes. Create your own vegetable farm by drawing your favorite vegetables in the fields below.

Does your favorite vegetable grow above or below ground?



## Grain Products Word Scramble

Unscramble the words below to reveal the grain products.

1. satpa
2. eradb
3. temolaa
4. ckrecra
5. aecler

## Bring the Wheat to the Table

Put the pictures in the correct order by writing numbers 1-5 under each.

