

# Agriculture Pays

## Grade Level

K - 2

## Purpose

Students discover that agricultural careers are interconnected and that agriculture influences many parts of their daily lives. **Grades K-2**

## Estimated Time

45 minutes or two 30-minute sessions

## Materials Needed

### Engage:

- [Producer to Consumer Cards](#)

### Activity 1: Career Vests

- [Five Career Signs](#)
- 5 grocery bag career vests (See [Career Vest Instructions](#))
- Crayons or markers

### Activity 2: Jobs of a Farmer

- Career vests (from *Activity 1*)
- *Farming* by Gail Gibbons
- [T chart](#)

## Vocabulary

**career:** an occupation undertaken for a significant period of a person's life and with opportunities for progress; generally a profession requiring special training

**consumer:** a person who buys and uses goods and services

**farmer:** person who owns or manages a farm, cultivates land or crops, or raises animals

**producer:** a person or company that makes, grows, or supplies goods or services

## Did You Know?

- All in one day's work a farmer or rancher can use science, math, technology, and engineering to produce food we eat.<sup>3</sup>
- The USDA reported in 2013 that there were almost 17 million farm and agriculture-related jobs found in the United States. This includes both part-time and full-time employment.<sup>1</sup>
- Jobs found in forestry, fishing, food and beverage manufacturing, textile mill operations, leather products, and restaurant services are just a few industries related to agriculture.<sup>3</sup>

## Background Agricultural Connections

Before we had grocery stores people lived on farms and grew or hunted all of their food. Imagine that! Farming is important because it creates food and everyday products that humans and animals need in order to live. Farm fresh eggs and fresh grown vegetables are delicious and nutritious! Soft cotton sheets, bath soap, and the clothes we wear also come from agricultural products. Farming in the United States provides many of these items that we sometimes take for granted. These items grew from seeds and plants or came from animals before they were placed on a shelf for **consumers** to purchase. Many hands help in the process of getting items from farms to consumers. Workers such as truck drivers, veterinarians, chefs, and biologists play an important role in bringing these commodities to the marketplace for consumers to purchase.<sup>2</sup>

**Careers** involving agriculture extend far beyond that of the **farmer**. A rancher raises livestock until they are ready to be sold. A truck driver 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 truck driver for his services. The meat packer may purchase the livestock from the rancher directly or from a feed-yard. The meat is distributed to grocery stores. The butcher 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 truck drivers to transport their produce to a factory. The factory purchases the potatoes from the farmer and uses them to make an item, such as french fries. The fries are packaged and distributed to a chain of restaurants. The cook at the restaurant prepares the french fries, and a waitress serves them to the consumer, who pays the restaurant for the goods and the service. There are many people involved in getting food products from the farmer or rancher to the consumer.

See More...

## Engage

1. Ask the students the following questions;
  - "Do you like to eat?"

- "What are some of your favorite foods?"
  - "Where can you purchase these items?"
  - "How do these items get to the grocery store?"
  - "Other than a grocery store, where might you buy and/or eat these foods?"
  - "Who grows these foods?"
  - "What jobs are involved in getting food to your table?"
2. Divide your students into four groups and hand out the [Producer to Consumer](#) cards. Ask each group to place each set of jobs in a correct sequence by numbering each job listed in the box. Once completed have each group share out their answers and tell them they will be learning about the many types of jobs interconnected to agriculture. <sup>2</sup>

### Answer Key

- Fried Chicken: 4 - 2 - 8 - 1 - 5 - 7 - 6 - 3
- Cotton Shirt: 8 - 6 - 5 - 1 - 3 - 2 - 4 - 7
- Fruit Salad: 3 - 5 - 2 - 6 - 4 - 1
- Milk: 1 - 4 - 3 - 5 - 2

## Explore and Explain

### Activity 1: Career Vest

1. Show students the [five signs](#): Farmer or Rancher, Truck Driver, Packager, Grocer or Chef, and Consumer. Explain that a consumer is a person who buys and uses goods or services.
2. Ask the students to discuss which of these words might be related to agriculture. Remind them that agriculture includes the five *F*s: farms, food, fabric, forestry, and flowers. Encourage students to share their reasoning.
3. Divide the class into five groups. Assign each group to represent one of the terms on the signs. Have the groups discuss briefly what their job might include and how it may be related to agriculture.
4. Supply each group with a blank [Career Vest](#), crayons, and markers. Ask the group to work together to decorate the vest to match the term on their sign. Attach the sign to the completed vest.
5. Have each group share with the class how and why they decorated their *Career Vest* to show the jobs related to their assigned occupation.

### Activity 2: Jobs of a Farmer

1. Regroup the class so that each group includes one member from each career.
2. Assign each farmer or rancher a commodity, such as potatoes, beef cows, dairy cows, pigs, corn, peaches, wheat, cherries, etc.
3. Have the new groups come up with a scenario of how that commodity will involve each student's role and end up with the consumer.
4. Allow groups to wear their career vests and share their scenarios with the class.

5. Gather the students and read the book *Farming* by Gail Gibbons. Point out the many jobs and responsibilities of a farmer illustrated in the book.
6. Stop on the pages where the farmer interacts with the veterinarian, the consumer at the farmer's market, the tractor mechanic, and the delivery truck driver and help students understand the relationships.
7. Discuss the many agriculture commodities raised and produced by a farmer. Could we live without agriculture?
8. Use the [T chart](#) found in the Essential Files. On the left side, list the commodities mentioned in the book that the farmer produces. On the right side of the chart, have the students brainstorm the careers and/or jobs that may relate or have a connection to each commodity listed. For example, when discussing eggs, ask the students, "How are the eggs delivered to the grocery store?" or "What other jobs are important to getting the eggs from the farm to your house?"

## Elaborate

- Contact members of your community who are involved in each of the roles mentioned in the lesson—farmer or rancher, truck driver, packager, grocer or chef, and consumer. Allow students to write a letter to a community member with the same role to which they were assigned. Students may write individually or as groups. Guide the students to ask the community members questions about their role in getting food and other everyday items from farms to consumers.
- Invite members of the community involved in ag-related occupations to speak to your class. Consider taking your class on a field trip to their places of business.

## Evaluate

After conducting these activities, review and summarize the following key concepts:

- Agriculture provides our most basic necessities including food, fiber, and shelter.
- There are many types of farmers. Some farmers raise animals and others grow crops.
- In addition to farmers, there are many other careers in agriculture that include transportation, shipping, processing, sales, and much more.

## Sources

1. <http://www.ers.usda.gov/faqs.aspx#jobs>
2. [www.ncagintheclassroom.com](http://www.ncagintheclassroom.com)
3. <http://www.agclassroom.org/>
4. <http://www.worksheetworks.com/miscellanea/graphic-organizers/tchart.html>

## Recommended Companion Resources

- [Adventures in Agriculture Coloring Book](#)
- [Before We Eat: From Farm to Table](#)
- [Farm Crops](#)
- [Farming](#)
- [Farms Feed the World](#)
- [Food and Farm Facts Booklet](#)
- [Food and Farm Facts eLearning Module](#)
- [From Farm to You Coloring Sheet](#)
- [From Start to Finish Series](#)
- [How Many Hats Does a Farmer Wear?](#)
- [Illustrated Alphabet of Farms](#)
- [My Farm Web](#)
- [My Little Ag Me](#)
- [Ox-Cart Man](#)
- [Pathful Connect](#)
- [The Things You'll Grow: Agriculture Careers for Little Big Dreamers](#)
- [The Tortilla Factory](#)
- [What Is Agriculture?](#)
- [Where Does Food Come From?](#)

## Author

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## Organization

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Agricultural Literacy

Education Content Standards

### Agricultural Literacy Outcomes

Agriculture and the Environment

- Describe how farmers use land to grow crops and support livestock (T1.K-2.a)

Culture, Society, Economy & Geography

- Discuss what a farmer does (T5.K-2.a)
- Explain why farming is important to communities (T5.K-2.b)

- Identify the people and careers involved from production to consumption of agricultural products (T5.K-2.e)

Food, Health, and Lifestyle

- Recognize that agriculture provides our most basic necessities: food, fiber, energy and shelter (T3.K-2.b)

Plants and Animals for Food, Fiber & Energy

- Identify examples of feed/food products eaten by animals and people (T2.K-2.c)
- Identify animals involved in agricultural production and their uses (i.e., work, meat, dairy, eggs) (T2.K-2.b)