

Udderly Confused

A Virtual Tour

Why Farms Are Different Because of Their Locations

A study of geography begins with knowing where things are located on a map/globe- but more importantly, it requires a knowledge of WHY things are located in particular places and HOW those places influence our lives. As students gain an understanding of milk processing, from “farm to YOU,” they will be able to observe first hand these “HOW” and “WHY” concepts.

Purpose:

- To recognize that location, climate, and natural resources determine the products that a rural community produces.
- To gain an understanding of at least three different types of farms.
- To understand the “moo-vement of milk” from producer to consumer.

Grade Level: Grades 3-5

National Geography Standards:

#4 PLACES AND REGIONS—

- The Physical and Human Characteristics of Places

#11 HUMAN SYSTEMS—

- The Patterns and Networks of Economic Interdependence on Earth’s Surface
- The Processes, Patterns, and Functions of Human Settlement
- The Changes That Occur in the Meaning, Use, Distribution, and Importance of Resources

Geographic Themes:

- Location
- Movement (“Milk on the Moo-ve” Virtual Tour)
- Human/Environmental

- Region

Definitions of Themes Covered:

Location: Finding the exact or relative location of a place.

Movement: How people, goods, and ideas are moved around the world.

Human/Environmental Interaction: How the surroundings in which we live influence and are influenced by people.

Region: Areas with common features that set them apart from other areas—
Examples include—political, physical, climatic, economic, and cultural.

Materials:

- Power Point slide presentation “Milk on the MOO-VE.”
- Internet
- Encyclopedias
- Statistical Abstract of U.S.
- World Almanac
- Large Chart Paper
- Outline maps of U.S. (one for each group)
- Crayons/Markers

Time Period: 2-3 class periods

I. Motivation/Anticipatory Set:

Ask Students:

- What natural resources are important to all farmers? (climate, water, soil)
- What resource of the Great Plains makes this area a good place for growing wheat? (rich soil and the right climate)
- How is the climate of the Great Plains different from the climate of California and Florida? (California and Florida have warm climates year round, but Great Plains is usually hot in the summer and cold in the winter)
- What natural resources help make Florida and California great places to grow citrus trees? (year-round warm climate)
- Would citrus fruits grow on the Great Plains? (No, they need a warm climate year-round, not just summer.)
- Can you name some animals that farmers raise for food like meat or eggs? (cows, chickens, turkey, sheep)
- What is a dairy farm? (a farm where cows are raised for their milk)
- What natural resources are important to dairy farmers? (grass)

- Could you have a successful dairy farm in Alaska? (No, there is not a lot of grassy areas and the climate is too cold, and not enough sunshine)
- Where in the U.S. would you guess the most dairy farms are located? (most are in the northern U.S. near the Great Lakes)

II. SHOW THE POWER POINT “MILK ON THE MOO-VE”

This will consist of a teacher and/or student-created slide presentation that will demonstrate the movement of milk from the dairy farm to the processing plant, and then to the refrigerator.

Teacher/Students Guided Research-

Conduct research using the internet with your students to find out where the most dairy farms are located in the U.S.

Teacher Background Knowledge:

- California and Wisconsin lead the states in milk production.
- Hay, corn, oats, and potatoes are other important crops in Wisconsin. These crops are fed to cattle.

III. Student Practice Activity:

Place students into 4 different working groups and assign each group a different type of farm to research.

Each group should create a chart that tells about the kind of farm they researched and what important resources are needed. Then have them record their information on a large classroom chart.

Example:

Kinds of Farms	Important Resources
Dairy	
Wheat	
Pig	
Citrus	

Give each group an outline map of the United States to color in the top producing states within their particular farming areas. Display maps along the sides of the large classroom chart (above). Discuss any noticeable patterns after observing the different maps.

Resources:

- Information can be obtained from the Statistical Abstract of the U.S.
- Most encyclopedias contain a farm-product map for each state.
- World almanacs also contain information on farm products.
- Internet (See our list of favorite sites)

IV. Closure/Assessment:

Each group will take turns presenting their maps to the rest of the class and explain any noticeable patterns in terms of where the top producing areas for their particular kind of farm were located. They should also be able to explain why the farms were located in those particular areas of the U.S.—discussing climate, natural resources, etc.

Additional Activities:

- Research the movement of “wheat” instead of milk.
- Research how butter (a milk product) is made and make home-made butter in the classroom.
- Students create “flow charts” of the movement of different products from “Farm to YOU.”
- Study the food pyramid and discuss the importance of including the products studied in our daily diet.

- Compare and Contrast the movement of milk in the 1600s vs. the movement of milk today.
- Write a narrative essay from a dairy cow's point of view.
- For older students: Write a persuasive essay focusing on the following question: "Should the government continue to use our tax dollars to help fund farmers who are "in the hole" OR should we raise the price of wheat (putting more money in the farmers pockets) and charge consumers double at the grocery store?"
- Groups of students might be assigned to report to the class on the types of farm machinery, chores, natural resources, etc. needed to run a poultry, sheep, citrus, cattle, or dairy farm.
- Do research about Louis Pasteur and the pasteurization process.

From Farm to You:

Why Farms Are Different Because of Their Locations

Focus: Dairy Farming - "Milk on the Moo-ve"



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Favorite Dairy-Related Websites

www.moomilk.com

Virtual Tour: The Story of Milk

www.wislink.org/

Wisconsin Link

www.wislink.org/ykfun.asp

Wisconsin Link: Youth/Kid/Fun Resources

www.census.gov/prod/www/statistical-abstract-us.html

Statistical Abstract of U.S.