



BARNYARD BONANZA

Lesson Objective

To introduce various types of livestock, poultry, and equine found on farms in Mississippi.

Learner Objective

Students will become familiar with beef cattle, dairy cattle, poultry, swine, and horses and how they are used in their daily lives.

Educational Outcome

Students will be able to identify common products and uses of beef cattle, dairy cattle, poultry, swine, and horses.

Core Concept Areas

Reading, writing, art, science

Materials Needed

Interest Approach: Picture of a beef cow

FARMtivity 1: FARMcabulary

FARMtivity 2: Sources for research of different types of farms

FARMtivity 3: Shoebox and craft supplies

FARMcabulary

Calf – Baby cow or bull.

Hen – Female chicken over a year old.

Broiler – Chicken raised for meat.

Fertilize – Applying something to the soil to make it better.

Nutrient – Elements essential to growth.

By-product – An incidental or secondary product made in the manufacturing process of something else.

FARMfacts

The most common animals found on farms in Mississippi are chickens, beef cows, dairy cows, swine, sheep, goats, and horses. Even farms that grow crops, trees, or vegetables may have a few animals. Livestock and poultry farmers work 365 days a year to care for their animals no matter the size of their farm.



Most farms in Mississippi are diverse and produce several commodities. On many farms, animals like cows and horses depend on the crops for part of their food. On the other hand, crops may depend on animal waste from barns and poultry houses to fertilize the land.

You might think that a cow is a cow. But there are differences in how they are raised. Beef cows are raised to produce high-quality calves that will produce high-quality meat. The dairy cow's purpose is to provide us with high-quality, nutritious milk.

Most poultry farmers in Mississippi produce broilers. A broiler is a young chicken that is usually less than 12 weeks old and has been bred specifically for meat production. Some farms raise layer birds. Female chickens are called "pullets" until they are old enough to lay eggs. Then, they become hens. Hens lay about 300 eggs per year, on average.

Besides supplying us with top-quality food products, many of these animals also provide us with many by-products.

Beef Cattle Facts

- There are more than 15,500 beef cattle farms in Mississippi.
- These farms raised more than 900,000 head of cattle in 2022.

Dairy Cattle Facts

- There are only 55 Grade A dairy farms in Mississippi.
- There were 7,000 milk cows in the state in 2022.

Poultry Facts

- Poultry is the largest commodity produced in Mississippi.
- There are more than 1,400 poultry farms in Mississippi.
- Poultry is used for eggs and meat.

Swine Facts

- Mississippi farmers produced 170,000 pigs in 2022.
- There were 437 farms raising swine in the state in 2022.

Equine Facts

- There are more than 10,000 horse farms in Mississippi.
- More than 39,000 jobs were held by people in the equine industry in 2022.

Interest Approach

Show a picture or slide of a beef cow. Ask the question: "What does this cow have to do with sports?" Allow students to respond.

Explain that a cow is covered with a thick skin, unlike people, who have thin skin. The cow's skin is called a "hide." This hide is used for many items that we use every day—shoes, belts, purses, and more. Because it is strong and durable, hide is also used to make equipment for many sports.

Make a list of sports and other recreational activities on the board—baseball, basketball, soccer, football, golf, skating, horseback riding, biking, etc. Have students think of sporting equipment items that are made from leather.

Football – 20 footballs can be made from one cow's hide. Cleats and gloves can also be made from leather.

Basketball – 12 basketballs can be made from one hide. The shoes worn by the players can also be made from leather.

Baseball – 144 baseballs can be made from one hide. Gloves, catcher's mitts, and shoes can also be made from leather.

Soccer – 18 soccer balls can be made from one hide. Cleats and shin guards can also be made from leather.

Volleyball – 18 volleyballs can be made from one hide

Golf – gloves, shoes

Skating – shoes

Horseback riding – saddles, bridles, boots, chaps

Biking – bicycle seat

Bowling – shoes

TRIVIA QUESTIONS

How many cows does it take to make the 72 footballs used in a Super Bowl game?

Answer: 3.8

What else do we get from a cow at a sporting event? (Hint: it is not sports equipment; it's something we get from the concession stand at the ball game.)

Answer: Hot dogs and hamburgers





FARMtivity 1: FARMcabulary

Using the FARMcabulary words, have the students look up the words and write definitions for each word.

FARMtivity 2: Farm Research Project

Have students research one type of livestock farm (beef cattle, dairy cattle, sheep, goat, pig, or horse).

Have them write a short research paper about their farm choice, providing an introduction, two body paragraphs, and a conclusion.

FARMtivity 3: Shoebox Barnyard Diorama

Have students use a shoebox and various craft supplies to make a barnyard diorama that depicts the type of farm they selected in FARMtivity 2. This project could be an in-class, group, or take-home activity.

Have students present their diorama and discuss the farm they chose.

References

Mississippi State University Division of Agriculture, Forestry, and Veterinary Medicine. (2022). [2022 Mississippi Ag Fact Book](#).



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