



A Day in the Life of a Saskatchewan Farmer

The student will gain an understanding of exactly how a Saskatchewan farmer spends his/her day by interviewing the farmer and shadowing the farmer around the farm for a portion of a day. The interview will be documented in a journal. This lesson could be taught independently or as part of an “Exploring Agriculture in Your Community” module.



varies by
experience

Outcomes:

DR4.1 Correlate the impact of the land on the lifestyles and settlement patterns of the people of Saskatchewan.

RW4.1 Analyze the strategies Saskatchewan people have developed to meet the challenges presented by the natural environment.

RW4.2 Investigate the importance of agriculture to the economy and culture of Saskatchewan.

Indicators:

DR4.1 f. Analyze the influence of geography on the lifestyle of people living in Saskatchewan (e.g., flora and fauna, pastimes, transportation, cost of food, type of food, occupations, availability of services such as education and health care).

RW4.1 a. List the challenges and opportunities climate presents for residents of Saskatchewan.

RW4.1 f. Research past and present technologies used to withstand the Saskatchewan climate.

RW4.1 g. Investigate the technological evolution of farming practices in Saskatchewan, including crop variety development, pesticide and herbicide use, and soil and water conservation.

RW4.2 a. Identify and locate various types of farms in Saskatchewan.

RW4.2 b. Research production practices of various types of crop and livestock farms.

RW4.2 c. Identify various farm stewardship practices (e.g., how farmers care for the land, animals, water supply, natural vegetation, and air quality).

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- * student journaling materials
- * comfortable, farm-appropriate clothing

Questions to Guide Inquiry:

1. Where does our food come from?
2. What are some of the benefits of farming in this province?
3. What are some of the challenges of farming in this province?
4. What changes are taking place in farming?
5. How does Saskatchewan agriculture impact upon my life?



Teacher Background

Farming is very important to Saskatchewan's culture and economy. Farmers have a very important job as they feed, clothe, and fuel the world. There are many different types of farms in Saskatchewan and farmers are usually happy to share their stories with students.

Ensure there has been adequate contact with the farm family prior to the visit. They should be aware of the age of the students and the questions likely to be asked. Remind students to dress appropriately with safety in mind. The logistics will differ depending on the particular availability of willing farm families, but consider assigning no more than a small number of students to each location. In addition, make certain all field trip requirements as set out by your school division, have been followed.

If students are unable to visit a farm, a farmer could be invited into your classroom to speak to students about exactly how the farm operates and the activities that take place on it. Another option is to watch a selection of farm videos (Agriculture in the Classroom has several available). Students can write letters to farmers asking their questions. There is also the option of touring a virtual farm with your students on www.ofac.org/.

*A Farm Visit Guide
is available from
www.aitc.sk.ca*

Before Activity

Activity One

Ask your students about some of the foods they ate for breakfast. Talk about the journeys some of this food has taken in order to arrive on our breakfast plate this morning. Bring in an assortment of foodstuffs like bread, eggs, oatmeal, grapefruit, bacon, and a carton of orange juice. Discuss how most items of our standard meals in Saskatchewan have traveled thousands of kilometers to our plates. Indicate how this is very different from the time of the settlers who ate what they could in season or what they could preserve. Have students suggest the advantages and disadvantages of finding more local sources for our food. Have students meet in small groups and challenge each group to develop a Saskatchewan breakfast where all foods are locally grown. Discuss their results using the board to list Saskatchewan based foods.

Activity Two

Inform students they will be visiting a farm and interviewing the farmer to discover how a farm operates and what activities occur on it. Students brainstorm a list of things they want to know and then generate a list of potential questions in order to find out this information.

Activity Three

Impress upon students the importance of safety. Possibly have students draw up a list of behaviours they expect they would need to follow to ensure everyone's well-being. A discussion of appropriate clothing should also be explored (including closed-toed shoes).



During Activity

Students will visit a farming operation, shadowing a farm family around the farm during a portion of the school day. Each student will keep a journal to record impressions, make sketches, and take any notes.

After Activity

Students are to write a 'paper' reflecting on their experiences by writing about each of the following in four separate sections:

1. Describe the farm you visited. (Where was it? What did it look like? Sound like?)
2. Describe what happens on the farm. (What is an average day like?)
3. Explain what things you thought were interesting. Why did you think these things were interesting?
4. How does Saskatchewan agriculture have an effect upon your life?

In a largely agricultural province, 80-90% of the food Saskatchewan produces is exported and 80-90% of what we consume is imported

Assessment

Teacher Checklist

- ✓ Did student participate effectively in the discussion about local foods?
- ✓ Did student generate meaningful questions to ask during his/her visit?
- ✓ Did student writing reflect knowledge and understanding?
- ✓ Did student writing include all information requested?

Cross-curricular Connections

ELA

Student is asked to write about the visit.

Further Investigation

Students can research how their farm experience might differ from the farm experience of their classmates or students in other provinces and countries.

Lesson Resources

The Saskatchewan Organic Directorate's Food Miles campaign has some interesting links related to this lesson. <http://foodmiles.saskorganic.com>