

Inspiration for activities & demonstrations*

Demonstrations

Grind corn into flour using a hand grinder. Set up a square meter 'mini field' to show how much seed, agrochemical and fertiliser is used and the yield. Download 'minifield' instructions with facts and figures: letnaturefeedyoursenses.org/downloads/marvellous_mini_fields_Infys.pdf

Displays

'Field to fork' display for different crops grown (incorporating the farming year/annual cycle). Display of non-food uses for crops e.g. biodiesel, straw briquettes. Displays of amounts of seed, fertiliser, fungicides and insecticides used on one field of a crop together with the yield for that field. Dig out plants that have been protected and where sprays have missed to show plant health.

Activity 1: 'Farm Machinery' (8+)

Materials

Line up a series of the implements used on the farm, include sprayer and fertiliser spreader. You could devise a simple quiz sheet.

Instructions

Guess what this machine does in the line up of machines used to produce one crop. Include tools and equipment used. You could include a guess at cost, where made, width, height, age. These could be set out on your quiz sheet. Multiple choice could be given to assist, if your visitors need help.

Activity 2: 'Seed Pictures' (5+)

Materials

Small pieces of card for each background. Leave them blank for free expression or draw on templates. Templates can also be bought from craft shops or are available to download from the Grain Chain website. www.grainchain.com/Families/Tractor%20Colouring%20Card.pdf Small containers with a variety of different coloured grains, seeds and lentils. Pots of glue and glue brushes/sticks.

Instructions

Children apply glue to the backing card and add different coloured grains to create an image. Allow to dry. Extend this activity by having explanatory information or displays available about the origin and uses of the grains.

Talk about

Soils, machinery, fertilisers and crop protection; yields of different crops and in different years; winter and spring cereals; pests and diseases; harvest time; drying and storage. Have all the products you use in the production of a crop available to aid your talk.

Questions to ask visitors

- What food can be made from?
- What yield can we get from an acre/ha?
- How big is an acre/ha?
- How many seeds do I need to plant per square metre?
- How do I make this happen?
- Which weeds can be a problem? Why?

Activity 3: 'Salt Dough Shapes' (4+)

Children love to make salt dough models. It is relatively easy and cheap to make a mix and visitors can take them home on a flat piece of card to bake in a low oven.

Materials

Flour, salt, water (ratio 2:1:1) cups as a measure, a table to work on. Stiff card (from cereal packet would make sense as related to grain).

Instructions

- Combine the flour, salt and water in a bowl until it forms a simple dough. Add food colouring to the water for a colourful dough.
- Knead on a lightly floured surface.
- Roll dough between two sheets of floured parchment paper or cling-film. For younger children keep it quite thick.
- Make your models/items - either freeform or with farming-related cutters.
- Place items on to a baking tray lined with parchment paper BEFORE you decorate them with grains-wheat seeds, oats, barley, oilseeds, sunflowers, linseed.
- Make a hanging hole using a drinking straw or pencil end. You could supply some ribbon for hanging the shape later.
- Hand out a slip with the instructions below for people to take home if you don't intend to bake them on farm.

Adult help required: Bake on a lined baking tray for approximately 3-hours at 75°C. They can be turned half way through baking. Leave to cool in the oven.'

The Back British Farming campaign website www.nfuonline.com/backbritishfarming lists the many reasons why British farming should be backed and how you can show your support.

For more information about LEAF and LEAF Marque and how to support our work, please visit www.leafuk.org

* Text kindly supplied by FACE (Farming and Countryside Education)



Key messages

- Wheat, barley and oats are all known as 'cereal crops' and are well suited to the UK's temperate climate.
- Wheat is the most widely grown arable crop in the UK producing about 15-17 million tonnes each year. You'll find it in thousands of food products e.g. bread, cakes, biscuits and breakfast cereals.
- Barley farming output in the UK is around 6 million tonnes. About two million tonnes are used in the production of malt, a key ingredient in beer and whisky. The rest is mainly used in food products and animal feed.
- The food value of a wheat plant lies in the rows of starch-filled grains or seeds, called the 'ear', at the top of the plant. Each ear of wheat has about 40 grains. A single grain contains about 20,000 particles of flour.
- Each hectare of wheat - about the size of a football pitch - will produce an average of 7.5 tonnes of grain. That's enough to make 11,500 loaves of bread!

Speak Out top tips

- Be aware of background noise - pick a spot where everyone can hear you
- Create a circle - put an umbrella in the ground and ask people to stand round it; stand so that no one has your back to them
- Keep it personal - about you and your farm; it will be more memorable
- Be positive - if you are asked a negative question, turn it round and talk about the good things you are doing
- Keep out the jargon - a drill and headland mean something different; explain the terms you use e.g. an agronomist is a crop doctor, an acre is just over a football pitch
- Make your story relevant - start by talking about food and how your visitors benefit from your produce, rather than starting off talking about farming
- Use props - to illustrate what you are saying
- Talk with everyone - look at everyone, not just the people at the front
- Ask your visitors questions - interact with them, it will help keep their interest
- Engage the senses - encourage listeners to look, listen, smell and touch things to keep people engaged.

Health & Safety

- Don't leave keys in vehicles
- Static machinery should be supervised or locked, chocks under wheels, fuel tank locked and almost empty
- Bale spikes laid flat on the ground or removed
- Store away ladders and items which could fall over
- Cordon off tripping hazards such as hoses across walkways, areas that are slippery and broken/uneven concrete
- Lock up spray sheds and workshops, and cordon off slurry pits
- Ensure visitors with young children know where ponds and open water are - cordon off or supervise these areas
- Make sure the event is insured and that a risk assessment has been carried out (if you are a helper, please read it)

For more health and safety information see the Open Farm Sunday website: www.farmsunday.org

