

Sustainable Agriculture

Part of the *Green Careers* series

Study Guide

Appropriate for grades 9-12 and post-secondary,
as well as 7-8 with teacher guidance.



This program provides an inside look at an organic farm and an organic retail store and discusses the day-to-day challenges and rewards of working in this field. Organic farming includes a wide range of jobs in production, marketing and distribution.

Organic farming is a very competitive business, but for people with an interest in growing food, it can be a rewarding career. Many people in this industry grew up on farms, but there are also opportunities to start at an entry level and learn the business. It is by definition local, so there are opportunities anywhere, in both rural and urban settings.

Jobs profiled in this program include:

Farm Manager, Retail Sales Manager, Organic Produce Buyer.

22 minutes



**The Phoenix
Learning Group, Inc.**

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Learning Objectives

Following are some sample cross-curricular learning objectives for comprehension questions and activities. Students will be able to:

Science

- Determine the impact industrial farming has had on the environment.
- Describe the steps that are being taken to improve the way land is farmed.
- Identify the technology used in farming and food safety.

Careers/guidance

- Define on-the-job training and how it may be necessary in some sustainable farming careers.
- Investigate the wide variety of careers available in sustainable farming.
- Evaluate personal interests to determine if green careers are an area in which to pursue further education.
- Compare and contrast the skills and education required for a variety of green careers.
- Identify post-secondary programs that offer green careers and locate courses of study within the programs.
- Determine the appropriate high school courses to enroll in to prepare for a chosen green career.
- Predict the demand for green careers in the future, and develop a plan to experience and prepare for one of these careers prior to attending trade school or college.

Technology

- Conduct research utilizing a computer and the Internet.

Language Arts Literacy

- Write and conduct interviews to acquire knowledge regarding green careers.
- Use context clues to derive meaning from statements made in the film.

Social Studies

- Research current events causing people to want to identify where their food originated.

Math

- Collect data and use the data to construct a graph.

Questions

Introduction

1. Identify the negative effects large-scale farming, using previous technologies, has had on the environment.
2. What excesses are produced by industrialized farming?

Farm Manager

1. What current events have contributed to the importance of knowing where your food comes from, and the chemicals used in the growing of those foods?
2. Cite the areas of knowledge a farm manager must possess.
3. How does this farmer utilize technology in the distribution of his products?
4. Evaluate the statement, "Marketing is necessary for a farm to be able to support the owners and workers."
5. What plan is outlined as a way to gain an education in farming?
6. What career options are available if you want to be involved in the farming industry, but do not wish to work in the fields?

Retail Sales Manager

1. In what way is the retail store an innovative way to acquire new customers?
2. Why is the connection to the customers so important, and how does the retail farm store accomplish this connection?
3. Explain the statement, "Organic farming developed as a niche market."
4. List four jobs described that are associated with the retail component of the farming business.

Organic Produce Buyer

1. List the responsibilities and skills required to be an organic produce buyer.
2. Why is the relationship between the buyer and the farmer so important?
3. Describe the process of becoming a buyer and why you may need patience to complete this process.
4. State the reasons why the position of organic produce buyer is considered to be a challenging one.

Sample Activities

- Go to your local grocery store and locate the organic foods sold there. Compare the prices to those of industrialized-farm products. Survey your community to investigate if people think the benefits are worth the difference in price. Construct a graph to display the opinions of the people you surveyed and use this information to determine the possibilities of this green collar career in your area.
- Visit an organic farm, observe people at work, and inquire about job sampling in one or two areas of interest.
- Survey members of your community to inquire how many people feel it is important to know exactly where their produce comes from, how many people do not feel it is important to know, and how many people actually know where the produce originated. Construct a Venn diagram to evaluate the results.
- Construct a diagram of the steps the food goes through from the farm to your table, both for industrialized farm products and local farm products. Identify all of the jobs that need to be filled to complete the process.

Related Links

<http://www.bls.gov/audience/students.htm>

Part of the Bureau of Labor Statistics website designed for teachers and students. It includes resources such as the latest statistics on employment, prices, and wages.

<http://afsic.nal.usda.gov/>

The Alternative Farming Systems Information Center of the USDA.



The complete *Green Careers* series includes:

Building Green Clean Energy

Recycling Environmental Justice

Water Management Green Design

Sustainable Agriculture Hazardous Waste Management

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