



Ontario Agriculture Week Resource Kit

ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

This resource was created for **Ontario Agriculture Week 2026** to help teachers bring agriculture into the classroom and help students discover the people, processes, and products that make Ontario agriculture one of the most diverse food systems in the world. As farmers enter the busy fall harvest season, students can explore the journey of food and the many people who help bring it to our tables.

Designed for flexibility across grade levels, these activities support inquiry, discussion, and hands-on learning while connecting to Social Studies, Science, Mathematics, and Language curriculum. Use this resource as a complete Ontario Agriculture Week experience or select individual activities to fit your classroom needs.

Look for [AgScape Virtual Field Trips!](#)

Pair these lessons with an AgScape Virtual Field Trip to connect students directly with Ontario farmers and agricultural businesses!

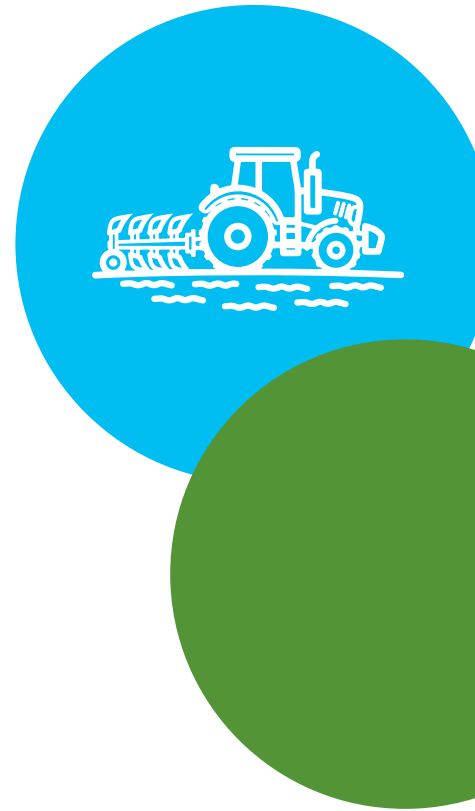
PACKAGE CONTENTS

Lesson #1 - Cart Full of Ontario

Lesson #2 - Commodity Case Files

Lesson #3 - The Web Behind Your Meal

Lesson #4 - Thank an Ontario Farmer Letter Writing



CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Cart Full of Ontario (Grades 3-8)

Language: Strand A. Literacy Connections And Applications

- A2.3; Research and Information Literacy

Mathematics: Strand F. Financial Literacy, Strand B. Number

- F1; demonstrate the knowledge and skills needed to make informed financial decisions
- B1; demonstrate an understanding of numbers and make connections to the way numbers are used in everyday life
- B2; use knowledge of numbers and operations to solve mathematical problems encountered in everyday life

Commodity Case Files (Grades 3-8)

Social Studies: Strand B. People and Environments

- Grade 3 B1; demonstrate an understanding of some key aspects of the interrelationship between the natural environment, land use, employment opportunities, and the development of municipal regions...
- Grade 4 B1; assess some key ways in which industrial development and the natural environment affect each other...
- Grade 5 B2; use the social studies inquiry process to investigate Canadian social and/or environmental issues from various perspectives

Science & Technology: Strand B. Life Systems

- Grade 3 B1; assess ways in which plants are beneficial to society and the environment, and ways in which human activity has an impact on plants and plant habitats
- Grade 4 B1; assess impacts of human activities on habitats and communities...
- Grade 6 B1; assess the importance of biodiversity, and describe ways of protecting biodiversity

Geography: Strand A. Physical Patterns in a Changing World & Global Settlement

- Grade 7 A1. analyse opportunities presented by the physical environment...
- Grade 8 A1. analyse some significant interrelationships between Earth's physical features and processes...

The Web Behind Your Meal (Grades 3-6)

Language: Strand B. Foundations of Language, Strand C. Comprehension

- B1; apply listening, speaking, and non-verbal communication skills and strategies to understand and communicate meaning in formal and informal contexts and for various purposes and audiences
- C2; apply comprehension strategies before, during, and after reading, listening to, and viewing a variety of texts

Social Studies: Strand B. People and Environments

- Grade 3 B1; demonstrate an understanding of some key aspects of the interrelationship between the natural environment, land use, employment opportunities, and the development of municipal regions...

Thank an Ontario Farmer Letter Writing (Grades 2-8)

Language: Strand D. Composition: Expressing Ideas and Creating Texts

- D2 Creating Texts; apply knowledge and understanding of various text forms and genres to create, revise, edit, and proofread their own texts, using a variety of media, tools, and strategies....
- D3 Publishing, Presenting & Reflecting: select suitable and effective media, techniques, and tools to publish and present final texts, and critically analyze how well the texts address various topics



CART FULL OF ONTARIO

Learning Goal: Investigate Ontario’s agricultural commodities while applying financial literacy skills to build a grocery cart, calculate cost, and stay within budget.

Materials:

- Various Grocery flyers
- Scissors & glue sticks
- Grocery Cart Template ([Page 4](#))

Minds On

Show students a grocery flyer and ask: “If you went grocery shopping today, how much of your cart do you think would come from Ontario?” Discuss:

- What foods are grown or raised in Ontario?
- Why do some foods come from other places?



Action

Introduce the challenge: “Today, you are grocery shoppers with a mission: create a cart filled with as many Ontario products as possible!” Using grocery flyers, students search for products they believe are:

- grown in Ontario,
- raised in Ontario,
- made using Ontario ingredients.

Students work in groups to cut out products (**with the price**) and place them on their grocery cart template. Before students glue their items, prompt each group to review their selections:

- How do you know this product is from Ontario?
- What evidence supports your thinking?
- Should any items be reconsidered?

Math Extension: After students have found products, give the class a set shopping budget. Students must keep as many Ontario products as possible while staying within budget by calculating costs, substituting lower-cost items, or removing products as needed. (Suggested budgets: Grade 4: \$50, Grades 5-6: \$75, Grades 7-8: \$100).

Once their final grocery cart fits the budget, students glue the items onto their template.

Consolidation

Display grocery carts around the room and complete a gallery walk. Afterward, discuss:

- Which Ontario products appeared in the most carts?
- Were you surprised by how many foods can come from Ontario? Why or why not?



Name: _____

CART FULL OF ONTARIO

Your mission: Fill your grocery cart with as many Ontario products as possible!



COMMODITY CASE FILES

LESSON PLAN

Learning Goal: Investigate Ontario's agricultural commodities by using evidence and clues to explain how climate, land, and other factors influence what can be grown or raised in different parts of the province.

Minds On

Write the word "Commodity" on the board. and ask students:

- What do you think the word commodity means?
- Invite a few ideas and then explain: An agricultural commodity is a product that is grown, raised, or harvested and can be bought or sold. Commodities include crops, livestock, and other foods produced on farms.

Action

Place 6 Commodity Case Files (Page 6 & 7) around the room.

"Today, you are Agriculture Detectives! Each case file contains clues about an Ontario agricultural commodity. Your job is to examine the evidence, identify the commodity, and explain why Ontario is a good place for it to grow."

Working in small groups, students rotate through each station, reading the clues and completing their Agriculture Detective Report by answering:

- What commodity am I?
- What conditions do I need to grow or thrive?
- Why is Ontario a good place for me?

After completing a case file, groups rotate to the next station until all investigations are complete.

Consolidation

Go through each case file and take-up/discuss the answers as a class. (Answer Key on Page 9)

Discuss and reflect with prompting questions:

- Why doesn't every Ontario farm grow the same things?
- How do Ontario's climate and land influence what farmers produce?
 - Conclude by emphasizing that Ontario produces more than 200 agricultural commodities, but not every commodity can be grown everywhere. Farmers make decisions based on environmental conditions, available resources, and the needs of the commodity.



COMMODITY CASE FILES

CASE FILE #1 - WHAT AM I?

- I grow on trees and bloom in the Spring with beautiful white and pink blossoms
- Ontario grows more than 15 varieties of me!
- I am most commonly grown along the shores of Lake Ontario, Lake Erie, Lake Huron, and Georgian Bay, because these bodies of water create the perfect climate for me.
- I am Ontario's #1 fruit crop!
- I need well-drained soil and need enough sunshine and water throughout the growing season.

CASE FILE #2 - WHAT AM I?

- Farmers plant me in the Spring and harvest me in Fall after my plants have completely matured.
- I need warm temperatures, lots of sunshine, and fertile soil.
- The majority of my crops are grown in Southwestern Ontario because it provides rich soils, flat farmland, and one of Canada's longest growing seasons.
- I am used for many things, like livestock feed, and over 2,500 items in the grocery store including cornmeal, cereal, shampoo and toothpaste!

CASE FILE #3 - WHAT AM I?

- I need warm summer weather, full sunshine, healthy soil, and pollinators like bees.
- Ontario's warm summers and long frost-free growing season give me enough time to grow big before the first fall frost.
- You can find me growing on farms across Ontario, especially in the southern part of the province where the growing season is longest.
- My vines spread across the ground as I grow, and no two of us are exactly alike.
- In the Fall, people carve me, bake me, or even roast my seeds!

COMMODITY CASE FILES

CASE FILE #4 - WHAT AM I?

- Most of my growing happens where you cannot see it.
- I need loose, sandy, well-drained soil and consistent moisture so I can develop underground.
- Areas such as Simcoe County and Eastern Ontario have the sandy soils that help me grow to the right size and shape.
- Farmers use special harvesting equipment to gently lift me from beneath the soil.
- I can become many familiar foods found on dinner tables.

CASE FILE #5 - WHAT AM I?

- I stay on my plant until the pods naturally dry before harvest.
- I need warm temperatures, fertile soil, sunshine, and moderate rainfall throughout the growing season.
- Southwestern Ontario has the warm climate and fertile soils that have helped make it Canada's leading region for producing me.
- After harvest, I can be stored for many months without spoiling.
- I am an excellent source of protein and fibre.

CASE FILE #6 - WHAT AM I?

- I do not always grow in an open field like many other crops.
- I grow inside large glass buildings where farmers use science and technology to carefully control my temperature, water, nutrients, humidity, and sunlight.
- Many farms producing me are located in Essex County. This region has one of the warmest climates in Ontario, ideal sunlight levels, and is close to transportation routes that help move me to grocery stores across the province.
- I can be red, yellow, or even orange when I'm ripe, and I'm often used in salads, sandwiches, sauces, and many other meals.

COMMODITY CASE FILES DETECTIVE REPORT

Case #	What commodity am I?	What do I need to grow? Why is Ontario a good place for me?



COMMODITY CASE FILES

DETECTIVE REPORT ANSWER KEY

Case #	What commodity am I?	What do I need to grow? Why is Ontario a good place for me?
1	Apple	Needs well-drained soil, plenty of sunshine, water, and cold winters followed by warm springs. The Great Lakes moderate temperatures, making areas along Lake Ontario, Lake Erie, Lake Huron, and Georgian Bay ideal for growing apples.
2	Grain Corn	Needs warm temperatures, lots of sunshine, fertile soil, and a long growing season. Southwestern Ontario has rich soils, warm summers, and one of Canada's longest growing seasons, making it one of the most popular places to grow grain corn.
3	Pumpkin	Needs warm summer weather, full sunshine, healthy soil, water, and pollinators to help produce fruit. Ontario's warm summers and long frost-free growing season give pumpkins enough time to grow and mature before the first fall frost, especially in Southern Ontario.
4	Potato	Needs loose, sandy, well-drained soil, consistent moisture, and plenty of sunshine to develop underground. Regions such as Simcoe County and Eastern Ontario are popular for growing potatoes because they have the sandy soils and suitable growing conditions that help them grow to the right size and shape.
5	Soybean	Needs warm temperatures, fertile soil, sunshine, and moderate rainfall throughout the growing season. Southwestern Ontario's warm climate, fertile soils, and long growing season make it Canada's leading soybean-producing region.
6	Greenhouse Tomato	Needs warm temperatures, water, nutrients, sunlight and carefully controlled growing conditions. Essex County has one of Ontario's warmest climates and many sunny days, making it ideal for greenhouse production. Its proximity to major transportation routes also helps fresh tomatoes reach grocery stores quickly.



THE WEB BEHIND YOUR MEAL

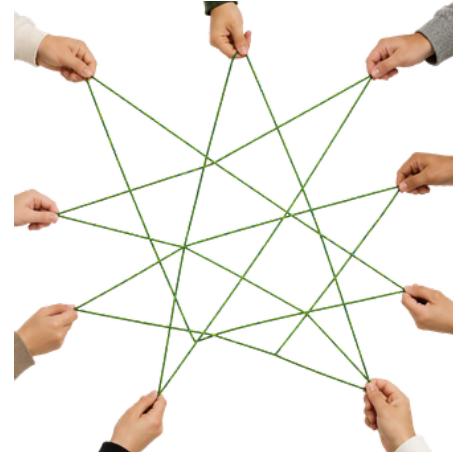
Materials

- Ball of Yarn/String
- Role Cards ([Page 12](#)) or assign roles verbally

Activity

Arrange students in a circle and give each student a role.

“As I read the story, listen for your role. When you hear your role, you will receive the yarn and pass it to the next person named. Keep holding your yarn after passing it so the yarn stays connected. At the end, we will explore what our web represents.”



Read the Script ([Page 11](#)) and pause between sentences to coordinate the yarn tossing.

What Happens if Someone is Missing?

When the story is complete, ask students to imagine that one role is no longer available.

Have that student (ex: Truck Driver) carefully let go of their section of yarn and observe how the web changes. After each role is removed, discuss:

- What happens when one part of the system changes?
- Who is affected?
- Could food still reach our tables? Why or why not?

Repeat with different roles to show how each part of the food system is connected.

Reflect

Complete verbally. For older students, extend the activity with a written reflection ([Page 13](#))

- What do you think the yarn represents?
 - Possible responses: the interconnectedness of the food system, the many steps involved in producing food, and how each role depends on others.
- Why do you think we created a web instead of a straight line from farm to table?
 - Possible responses: agriculture is a complex system with many connected people, processes, and resources.
- What does this web teach us about Ontario agriculture?
 - Possible responses: food production is a complex process involving many stages and people.



THE WEB BEHIND YOUR MEAL

TEACHER SCRIPT

Note: The bolded names show who the yarn should be passed to during the story.

“The harvest begins long before anything is planted. The **Plant Scientist** develops stronger seeds that can grow well in Ontario’s climate.

The **Seed Producer** carefully grows and prepares quality seeds for farmers to plant, while the **Equipment Technician** makes sure the tractors, planters, and harvesters are repaired and ready for the growing season.

The **Farmer** then plants the seeds, cares for the crops, manages the land, and makes important decisions throughout the growing season. Farmers do not work alone. Healthy farms depend on the environment around them.

Pollinators, such as bees and butterflies, help many plants produce fruits and vegetables by moving pollen from flower to flower.

Once crops are ready, the **Farmer** harvests the food and prepares it for the next step in its journey.

The **Truck Driver** transports harvested food from the farm to places where it can be stored, cleaned, sorted, processed, or packaged.

The **Food Processor** prepares food for grocery stores by washing, sorting, cutting, or packaging products so they are ready for consumers.

The **Food Safety Inspector** helps ensure that food meets safety standards and is safe to eat.

The **Grocery Store Worker** helps stock shelves and makes food available for customers.

Finally, the **Consumer** purchases, prepares, and enjoys the food that has travelled through this entire journey.”

THE WEB BEHIND YOUR MEAL ROLES

Assign roles verbally, or cut out the Role Cards and hand them out randomly.
For groups larger than 10 students, assign the same role to multiple students.

**PLANT
SCIENTIST**

**SEED
PRODUCER**

**EQUIPMENT
TECHNICIAN**

FARMER

**TRUCK
DRIVER**

**FOOD
PROCESSOR**

**FOOD SAFETY
INSPECTOR**

**GROCERY STORE
WORKER**

CONSUMER

POLLINATOR



THE WEB BEHIND YOUR MEAL REFLECTION

What would happen if one role in the Ontario food system disappeared? Use examples from the activity to explain how it would affect the rest of the system.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

THANK AN ONTARIO FARMER LESSON PLAN

Learning Goal: Express gratitude for Ontario agriculture and recognize the important role agricultural professionals play in producing food and supporting communities.

Minds On

Ask students “What foods are you thankful for? Which farmers help produce those foods?” Create a class brainstorm on the board.

Action

Depending on grade level, modify the activity by instead using the shorter postcard template, providing sentence stems, or completing the letter as a shared-writing activity. This activity can also be used as a diagnostic assessment for letter-writing. Assign the letter audience to be:

- A farmer or professional featured in a Virtual Field Trip
- A commodity group (e.g., egg farmers, apple growers, greenhouse growers)
- A local agricultural business or a farmer the student/class knows personally

Explain that a friendly letter has several important parts that help organize our ideas and communicate clearly with the reader.

Review the six parts of a friendly letter:

1. Date
2. Greeting – Who are you writing to?
 - Dear Egg Farmer, or Dear Mrs. Smith,
3. Opening – Why are you writing?
 - Introduce yourself and explain the purpose of your letter.
4. Body – What do you want your reader to know?
 - Share what you learned.
 - Explain why you are thankful.
 - Include specific examples from Ontario Agriculture Week or a Virtual Field Trip.
5. Closing – End your letter politely.
6. Signature – Write your name.

Give students time to complete their writing (**Templates on Page 15-17**)

Consolidation

Invite students to share their letters or postcards by asking, “What do you think is the most important thing Ontario farmers do for us?”

Display the completed letters/postcards on a classroom bulletin board.



Name: _____

THANK AN ONTARIO FARMER GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

Date

Greeting

Body

Closing

Signature

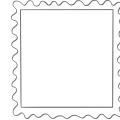




THANK AN ONTARIO FARMER POSTCARD

Instructions: Cut out the postcard, fold along the centre line, and glue the two sides together to create your postcard.

Dear _____ ,







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