Farming – The Big Picture:

Do You Know Your Farming Community?

Farming is a way of life as well as a business; it is a unique career. How would one describe a 21st century farmer and farm operation today? Is it different from the “Old MacDonald Had a Farm” image? Remember that many additional careers are linked to farming agriculture – we talked about the career diversity in agriculture previously in this unit. Today we will investigate farming communities in Canada and develop a profile of the 21st century Canadian farmer and farm.

**Vocabulary Check**

* ***Agriculture*** is the occupation, business or science of cultivating the land, producing crops and raising livestock.
* ***Farming*** is using land for agriculture, rearing something commercially (animals, fish, birds).
* Our ***“farming community”*** can have different geographical ranges – it may be used to refer to our local area (around the Shoal Lake region), provincial and/or national level depending on our situation.

**Getting Started**

1. Watch the YouTube video of the song “Old MacDonald Had a Farm”
2. You will also listen to a video recording of the children’s storybook “Big Red Barn”
3. Through class or small group discussion answer the following question:

What images of farmers and farms are created in the media and elsewhere? Support your answer using specific examples.

1. Through class or small group discussion answer now respond to this question:

What does a 21st century farmer/farm look like?

1. Brainstorm the types of farms that exist within our province. Put a \* beside the ones that are found immediately within our Shoal Lake region (approx. 30 mile radius).

**“Digging Up” Information**

You will use the following resources to answer questions presented on the following pages.

* **All About Food: Agri-Food Facts** (2008) – page 10 (this is a photocopy)
* **The Real Dirt on Farming II** – refer to “Farming-The Big Picture, pages 2-4 (please return this booklets at the end of class; we will be using them in later classes
* Statistics Canada online data - [www.statcan.gc.ca](http://www.statcan.gc.ca) (we will be using the computers in the lab for this section – do NOT ask to use the lab until you have finished the first six questions)

Use the information presented in “Farming – The Big Picture” on page 3 in **The Real Dirt on Farming** to respond to the following questions:

1. Have big corporations and “factory farms” taken over farm ownership in Canada? Provide evidence to back up your claim.
2. Can we re-wind the clock and go return to smaller, more traditional farms? Why or why not?

Looking at the “Regional Round Up” on page 4 in **The Real Dirt on Farming** to respond to the following questions:

1. Name the major agriculture sectors and agricultural products produced within Manitoba.
2. Compare Manitoba’s agricultural sector to our neighbours to the west (Saskatchewan) and east (Ontario). What general statements can you make?
3. What province has the greatest number of farms? The least?

Use **All About Food: Agri-Food Facts** (p.10) to answer the following questions:

1. Define the different types of family farms in Canada.

**“Growing” A Graphic Organizer**

You will use **The Real Dirt on Farming** (refer to “Farming – The Big Picture, pages 2-4), **All About Food: Agri-Food Facts**, page 17 and Statistics Canada to locate information about the following:

* Farm size
* Farm population
* Age of farmers
* Economics of farming (ex. Economic contributions to your province, farmer’s share, cost of doing business)
* How many people a farmer feeds
* Land usage
* Etc.

You will create a graphic organizer (either computer generated or hand drawn) that is used to record your information. Your graphic organizer should be neatly organized and will be assessed (out of a possible 20 marks) using the rubric provided. Remember that when you are citing statistics it is important to indicate the year the data was obtained in.

Just in case you’ve forgotten a graphic organizer is communication tool that uses visual symbols to express knowledge, concepts, thoughts, or ideas, and the relationships between them. Below are a couple of graphic organizer examples:

