

PICK OF THE PEAR CROP

There are thousands of types of pears grown around the world. In BC, these three are the most commonly grown:



BARTLETT:
Juicy and sweet, Bartletts are perfect for eating fresh and are BC's most popular pear.



ANJOU:
Mild and sweet, Anjou pears are a winter pear that ripen in cold storage.



BOSC:
Rough-skinned on the outside, Bosc pears are juicy and bursting with flavour on the inside.



IS IT AN APPLE OR A PEAR?

Don't be fooled. This fruit might have the same shape and crunch as an apple, but it's a pear. Although only a few BC farmers grow Asian pears, they're one of the oldest varieties.

DIFFERENT WAYS OF FARMING

In BC, we are lucky to have a choice of pears that are grown using **conventional** farming methods and those that are grown using **organic** methods. Either way, the pears are equally delicious and nutritious. The farmers have just taken different approaches to growing them.

Organic farmers grow food without using any man-made chemicals. They feed their soil by adding compost and natural fertilizers made from bones, feathers, or fish. And, to manage weeds, pests, and diseases, they use naturally occurring chemicals or alternatives, like hand-pulling weeds or using helpful bugs to deal with pests. Organic farmers must go through a detailed certification process to prove they are growing their food according to strict rules.

Whether they choose to farm **organically** or **conventionally**, BC farmers do their best to...



keep their soil healthy and reduce erosion
apply chemicals responsibly
use less energy
create less pollution
conserve water



SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE = FARMING FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

Environment:



Conserving natural resources – air, land, water, and biodiversity.

Community



Maintaining a quality of life for farmers and in the community.

Economy



Ensuring long-term profitability.

All farmers can work towards conserving their land and resources for future generations. And everyone involved in the food system – growers, food processors, distributors, retailers, and consumers ... even you – can play a role in ensuring a sustainable agricultural system.

FINE ARTS ACTIVITY: PAPIER MÂCHÉ PEAR

Curriculum Connection: Fine Arts - grades 4 to 7: Works of art influence, and are influenced by, the world around us. First Peoples Principles of Learning: Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.

Have your class look at “Pick of the Pear Crop” on the student side of the sheet and note how each type of pear has its own unique appearance. Ask students to create a papier mâché pear of their choice.

Materials

1 small balloon per student
papier mâché paste
newspaper strips or squares
aluminum foil

Instructions

1. Blow up the balloon into a pear (i.e., teardrop) shape then tie it off. Students can twist some aluminum foil into a base for the balloon to rest in while they work on it.
2. Tear newspaper into strips or squares (roughly 5 x 5 cm) and cover the balloon with three layers of the paper and paste – allow time to dry in between layers. During the second papier mâché layer, have students twist aluminum foil into a stem.
3. Allow the pear to dry completely, then paint it.
4. Create a fruit tree on the bulletin board and have students attach their pears to the tree.

LANGUAGE ARTS AND SOCIAL STUDIES ACTIVITY: ORGANIC FARMING CERTIFICATION

Curriculum Connection: Language Arts - grades 4 to 6: Create and communicate by exchanging ideas and perspectives to build shared understanding. Social Studies - grades 4 to 6: Sequence objects, images, or events, and determine continuities and changes between different time periods or places (continuity and change). First Peoples Principles of Learning: Learning is embedding in memory, history, and story.

Refer to the brief overview of the organic farming certification process on the Certified Organic Associations of BC website: www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca/cb/certification.php#steps

Then, photocopy and hand out the steps shown below to students (removing the answers before distributing). Have them cut out and then order the steps to create the sequence of events a farmer has to complete in order to receive organic certification in BC. Younger students can share their knowledge and experience of organic farming in a whole-class discussion. Older students can write their perspectives on organic farming or their views on First Peoples' farming and gathering methods, making connections, comparing and contrasting, and/or sharing their opinion in their writing.

Directions: Cut out and order the steps below to help a farm receive organic certification.	Answers
Submit an application to a certified body.	Step 4
Review plan and address any issues.	Step 6
Choose a certification agency.	Step 2
Certification body presents status certificate.	Step 7
Undergo organic inspection by certified body.	Step 5
Develop a certifiable plan.	Step 3
Transition to organic production. Change over farming practices, such as pesticide use.	Step 1

SCIENCE ACTIVITY: CONSERVING WATER

Curriculum Connection: Science - grades 4 to 7: Applying and innovating by transferring and applying learning to new situations and generating and introducing new or refined ideas when problem solving. First Peoples Principles of Learning: Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.

Have students create a two-circle Venn diagram with “Students” on one side and “Farmers” on the other. Ask students to brainstorm how they can conserve water in their daily lives. For example: use low-flush toilets, turn off water when brushing teeth, take shorter showers, water gardens at dusk or dawn, etc. Have them write their ideas on the student side of the diagram. Now ask them how farmers could conserve water on their farms and have them write their ideas on the farmer side of the diagram. When they're done, share the BC Ministry of Agriculture's “Irrigation Tips to Conserve Water on the Farm” with the class (www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/agriculture-and-seafood/agricultural-land-and-environment/water/irrigation/500310-1_irrigation_tips_to_conserve_water.pdf). Are there any similarities between student-generated ideas and current agriculture water conservation practices? Did students generate any new water sustainability ideas for farmers? Write these ideas in the middle area/intersection of the Venn diagram.