



Marvelous Milk!



Students will explore the process involved in the production of milk by dairy cows and extend their knowledge of milk and milk products by making butter.

Subject Levels/ Suggested Grade

Physical and Health Education K-7

Applied Design, Skills and Technologies K-9

Science K, 1, 3, 4, 5, 6

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Overview & Curriculum Connections

In this lesson, students will learn about the process of digestion in the cow that converts the nutrients from grass and hay that they eat into milk. Students will also gain a deeper understanding of the nutritional value of milk and investigate various milk products. This lesson plan will provide students with the opportunity to learn about the old-fashioned way of churning butter and they will get to make their own butter.

Physical & Health Education

Grade	Big Ideas	Curricular Competencies
K-3	<p>Knowing about our bodies and making healthy choices help us look after ourselves.</p> <p>Adopting healthy personal practices and safety strategies protects ourselves and others.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify and explore a variety of foods and describe how they contribute to health.• Identify opportunities to make choices that contribute to health and well-being.
4-5	<p>Understanding ourselves and the various aspects of health helps us develop a balanced lifestyle.</p> <p>Personal choices and social and environmental factors influence our health and well-being.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain the relationship of healthy eating to overall health and well-being. Identify and describe factors that influence healthy choices.• Identify and apply strategies for pursuing healthy-living goals.
6-8	<p>Healthy choices influence our physical, emotional and mental well-being.</p> <p>Learning about similarities and differences in individuals and groups influences community health.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Investigate and analyze influences on eating habits.• Identify factors that influence healthy choices and explain their potential health effects.• Identify and apply strategies to pursue personal healthy-living goals.

Science

Grade	Big Ideas	Curricular Competencies
K-3	<p>Plants and animals have observable features.</p> <p>Living things have features and behaviours that help them survive in their environment.</p> <p>Living things are diverse, can be grouped and interact in their ecosystems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrate curiosity and a sense of wonder about the world
4-6	<p>All living things sense and respond to their environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrate curiosity about the natural world.

Applied Design Skills & Technologies

Grade	Big Ideas	Curricular Competencies
K-3	<p>Designs grow out of natural curiosity</p> <p>Technologies are tools that extend human capabilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Generate ideas from their experiences and interests• Explore the use of simple, available tools and technologies to extend their capabilities
4-5	<p>Design can be responsive to identified needs.</p> <p>Complex tasks require the acquisition of additional skills.</p> <p>Complex tasks may require multiple tools and technologies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrate a willingness to learn new technologies• Reflect on their design thinking and processes, and their ability to work effectively both as individuals and collaboratively in a group
6-8	<p>Designs can be improved with prototyping and testing.</p> <p>The choice of technology and tools depends on the task.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify the personal, social, and environmental impacts, including unintended negative consequences, of the choices they make about technology use• Identify how the land, natural resources, and culture influence the development and use of tools and technologies

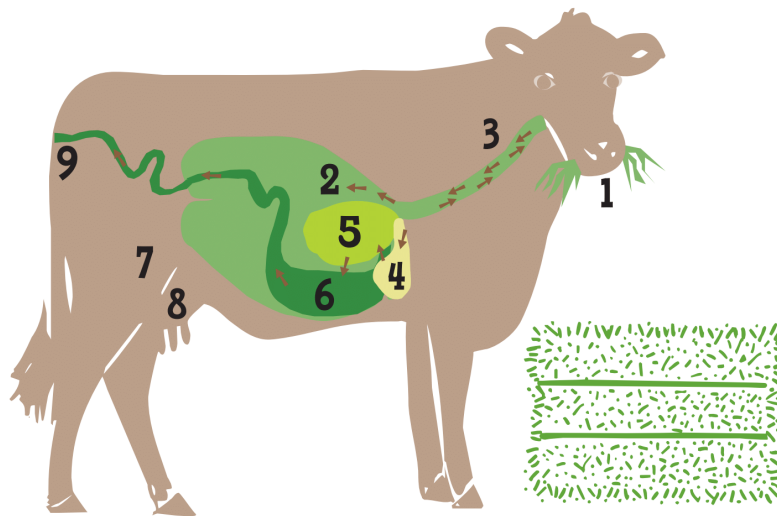
Teacher Background

Where Does Milk Come From?

The milk we drink comes from dairy cows who produce milk to feed their young. Cows spend a majority of their day lying down, chewing cud & resting. **CUD** is partially digested food that the cow has already chewed once that is returned from the stomach to the mouth to be chewed again. Female cows turn the grass and hay that they have eaten into milk by chewing cud and allowing the food to move through their four different stomach chambers. Cows are called **RUMINANTS** because they have specialized stomachs to help digest tough grasses and hay. Each stomach chamber has its own job to do to help soften the cud. In between each chamber, the cow “burps out the cud” to be chewed again.

Steps through the Cow’s Digestive System

1. Cows eat grass and hay which moves down their throats and into their stomach.
2. The tough food is mixed with water in first stomach chamber to soften it.
3. The cow “burps” out its food then re-swallows it.
4. In the second chamber, the food is squished to soften the cud.
5. The cud is “burped out, chewed again, then enters the third chamber.
6. The third chamber squeezes the water out then the re-swallowed cud and pushes it to the fourth chamber.
7. Nutrients from the fourth chamber of the stomach move into the cow’s bloodstream.
8. The nutrients turn into milk which is released from the cow’s udder. It can take up to two days for a cow’s food to become milk.
9. The cow’s waste is eliminated.



Dairy cows make a lot of milk: one dairy cow can make enough milk to fill more than 100 average glasses every day.

What is a Ruminant Animal?

Many different species of ruminant animals are found around the world. Ruminants include cattle, sheep, goats, buffalo, deer, elk, giraffes and camels. These animals all have a digestive system that is uniquely different from our own. Instead of one compartment to the stomach they have four. Of the four compartments the rumen is the largest section and the main digestive centre. The rumen is filled with billions of tiny microorganisms that are able to break down grass and other coarse vegetation that animals with one stomach (including humans, chickens and pigs) cannot digest.

Ruminant animals do not completely chew the grass or vegetation they eat. The partially chewed grass goes into the large rumen where it is stored and broken down into balls of “cud”. When the animal has eaten its fill it will rest and “chew its cud”. The cud is then swallowed once again where it will pass into the next three compartments—the reticulum, the omasum and the true stomach, the abomasum.

Dairy calves have a four-part stomach when they are born. However, they function primarily as a monogastric (simple-stomached) animal during the first part of their lives. At birth the first three compartments of a calf’s stomach—rumen, reticulum, and omasum—are inactive and undeveloped. As the calf grows and begins to eat a variety of feeds, its stomach compartments also begin to grow and change.

Many of the plants that grow on earth cannot be used directly by humans as food. Over 50 percent of the energy in cereal crops that are grown for food is inedible to humans. Ruminants have the ability to convert these plants and residues into high quality protein in the form of meat and milk. In addition, they feed on the rejects and cutting from fruit and vegetable farming and the by-products from food processing plants.

What Foods Contain Milk?

Milk is a good source of many essential nutrients, including calcium, potassium and vitamin D. According to Canada’s food guide (2019) milk, yogurt and cheese are recommended as healthy protein foods that are rich in calcium and other essential nutrients. Butter is another dairy food product. It is made by churning cream to separate the fat globules from the buttermilk. Butter is a great source of fat-soluble vitamins like Vitamin A, D, E and K. These fats are essential for the assimilation of nutrients, especially water-soluble vitamins. Without fat, your body is unable to obtain many of the nutrients needed by the body. Butter is also a good source of healthy cholesterol and contains traces of vital minerals such as manganese, zinc, copper, selenium, Lauric acid and chromium.

Materials

- Student Handout: “Moving Milk From Cow to You”
- Small glass or plastic containers with lids (125 ml mason jars work well)
- whipping cream or heavy cream (33% or higher MF)
- salt

Procedure

Part 1

1. Provide students with the handout, “Moving Milk From Cow to You” and ask them to locate the image of the cow’s digestive system.

2. Discuss with students how the digestive system of a cow differs from the digestive system of a human. Depending on the age level of students, introduce key vocabulary including the words RUMINANT and CUD.
3. Ask students to complete “Moving Milk From Cow to You” worksheet.

Part 2

1. Ask students to discuss with a partner what their favorite foods are containing milk.
2. Let students know that they will be creating their own milk products. Provide each student with a small plastic or glass container with a lid that has been half filled with whipping cream or heavy cream.
3. Instruct students to ensure the lids are tightened and then have them shake the containers well for several minutes.
4. After 5-7 minutes, students should notice the sloshing in their containers stop or at least slow down.
5. Have students open the jar to see if they have a semi-solid component. Tell students that this is called whipped cream and it is often eaten on desserts. Have them re-tighten the lid and shake their containers again.
6. After a few minutes, students should notice the butter and buttermilk separating. There will be a solid part (butter), and the liquid (buttermilk).
7. Have the students strain off the buttermilk (it can be saved for cooking), and rinse the butter in COLD water. It can be kneaded gently to remove all the buttermilk.
8. Add a pinch of salt, and then stir.
9. Remind students to store their butter in the fridge.

Extensions

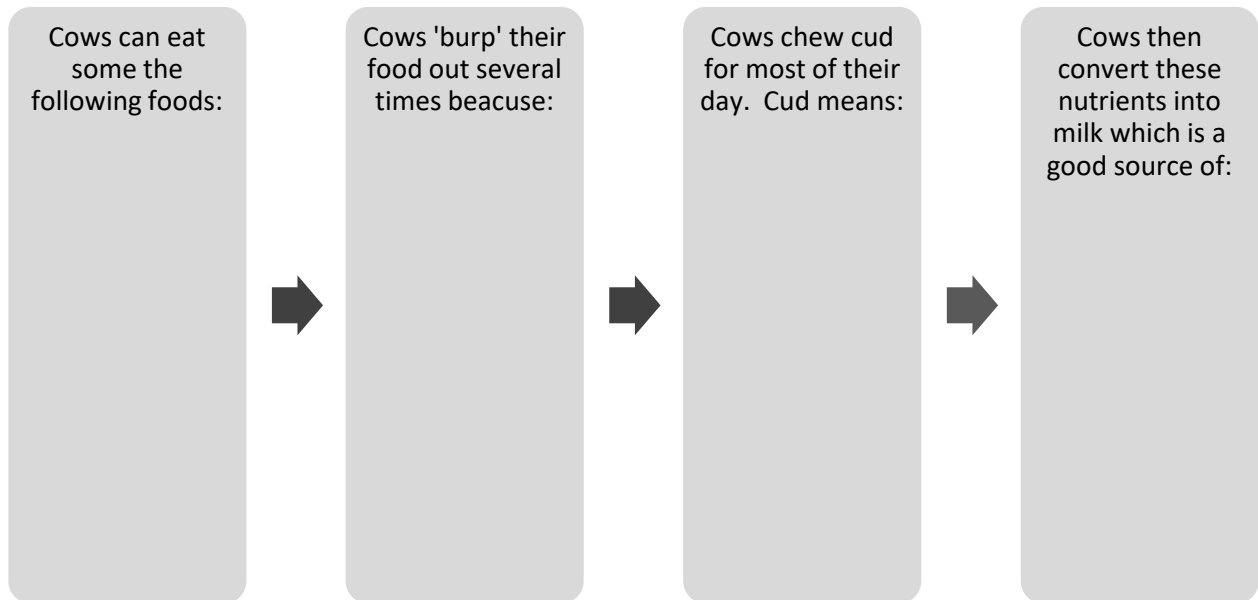
- Visit a local dairy farm with your class. To find a list of farms that offer tours, check out: <https://www.bcaitc.ca/index.php/farm-tours-field-trips>
- Have students compare the differences in diets between two animal species. Ask students to explain why the two species might have similar or different diets.
- Try activities from Fresh Stories-Milk [Intermediate](#) or [Primary](#)
- Have Intermediate students read the Huffington Post article, [Farm Animals Actually Eat People's Leftovers - And It's Good For the Planet](#) and discuss their findings.
- Have students try a milk recipe of their own choosing and share their creations with the class.
- Encourage students to try other milk recipes from <https://bcdairy.ca/milk/recipes>

Resources

- www.bcdairy.ca
- <https://proearthanimalhealth.com/how-does-the-digestive-system-work-in-a-cow-understanding-the-ruminant-digestive-system/>
- <https://www.progressivecattle.com/topics/feed-nutrition/a-cows-digestive-system-and-processes>
- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Butter>
- <https://nutritiondata.self.com/facts/dairy-and-egg-products/133/2>
- <https://www.webmd.com/diet/health-benefits-butter>
- <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/foods>
- <https://thekidsmenunutritionandfitness.weebly.com/blog/the-fat-fact-butter-vs-margarine>

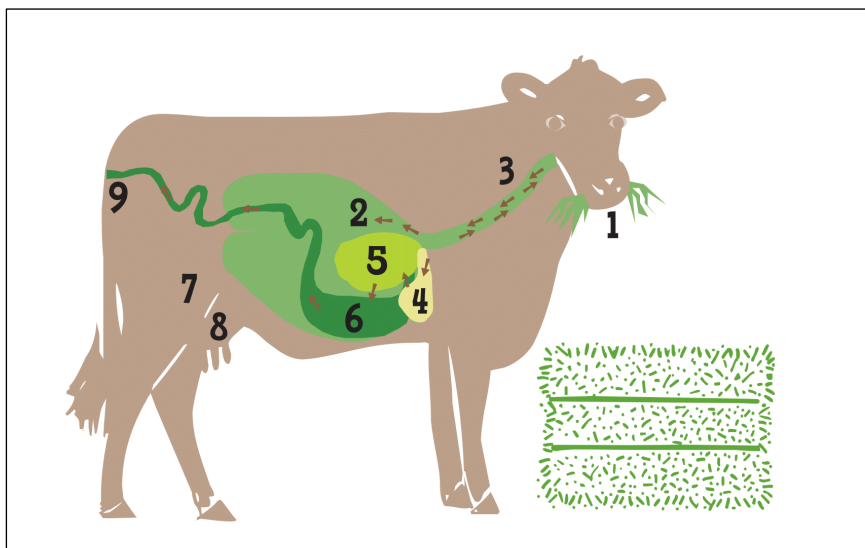
Moving Milk From Cow to You (Elementary)

#1 - The milk we drink comes from dairy cows who produce milk to feed their young. Fill in the boxes below to complete the steps that happen in order for cows to produce milk.



#2 - Write the corresponding number(s) beside the following term:

- Mouth: _____
- Udder: _____
- 4-chamber stomach: _____

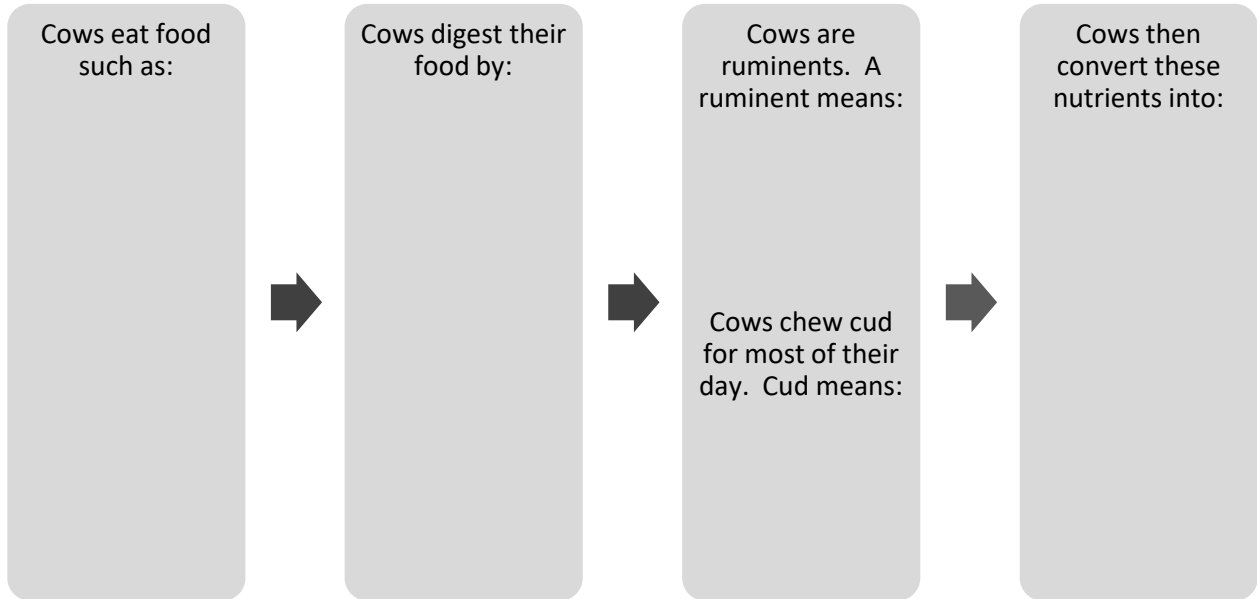


#3- **Draw** a picture of your favourite food item made from milk and label it. Then make a list or draw some of other dairy products that you know or use.

<p>My favorite food containing milk is:</p>	<p>Other dairy products:</p>
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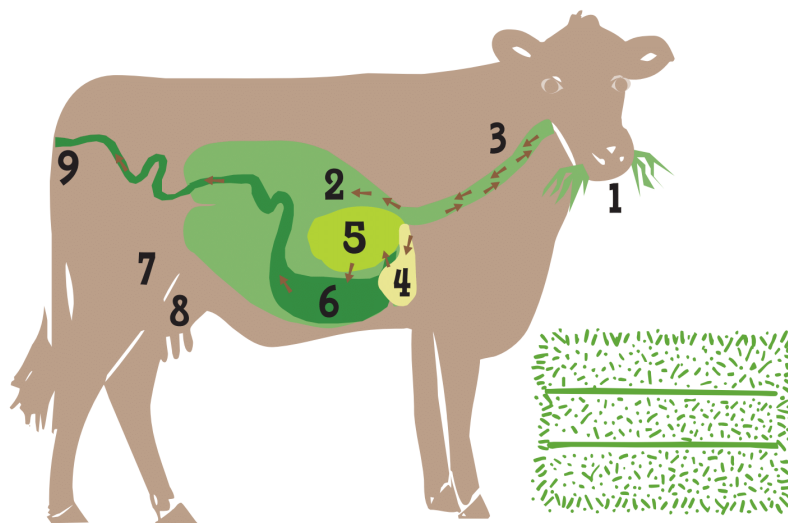
Moving Milk From Cow to You (Intermediate)

#1 - The milk we drink comes from dairy cows who produce milk to feed their young. Fill in the boxes below to complete the steps that happen in order for cows to produce milk.



#2 - Write the corresponding number(s) to match the following terms:

- Mouth: _____
- Esophagus: _____
- Udder: _____
- 4-chamber Stomach: _____
- _____



Q#3 - **Draw and label** a picture of your favourite food item made from milk. Then make a list of other dairy products that you know or use.

<p>My favorite food containing milk is:</p>	<p>Other dairy products:</p>
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Q#4 - Number the following steps from 1-9 in the order that they occur in the cow's digestive system:

- ____. In the second chamber, the food is squished to soften the cud.
- ____. The cud is "burped out, chewed again, and then enters the third chamber.
- ____. Nutrients are used up by the cow's body and the waste is eliminated.
- ____. The tough food is mixed with water in first stomach chamber to soften it.
- ____. The third chamber squeezes the water out of the re-swallowed cud and pushes it to the fourth chamber.
- ____. Cows eat grass and hay which moves down their throats and into their stomach.
- ____. Nutrients from the fourth chamber of the stomach move into the cow's bloodstream.
- ____. The cow "burps" out its food from the first chamber then re-swallows it.
- ____. The nutrients turn into milk which is released from the cow's udder.

