

Suffolk Agricultural Association

School Farm and Country Fair

Support for schools

Bring learning to life and the School Farm and Country Fair experience into your classroom by following some of these suggestions.

From field to fork the whole concept of food production, farming and countryside management presents many learning opportunities for your pupils and encourages further knowledge and understanding of a crucial part of everyday life. We have produced some ideas which might enable you to extend your work on this subject, from a small project to a whole unit of work.



Before the visit:

- Talk to children about what they want to gain from their experience at the School Farm and Country Fair. Do they have any questions they want answers to?
- Explore the links between the School Farm and Country Fair and your current topic.
- Personalise their learning experience by getting each pupil to make their own information gathering sheet to use at the show.

At the Show:

- Encourage children to ask questions, engage fully and use the expertise of their steward to get the most out of their day.
- Get pupils to read the map and direct their group in the correct direction.

After the visit:

History - Compare farming today with farming practices from the era you are studying.

Geography – Compare farming in the UK with farming practices in different countries.

IT – Write a blog about your visit to the School Farm and Country Fair. Get your pupils to add to the school/Class blog about their experience.

Literacy

Reading – Read the information gathered at the fair from the various exhibits. Discuss these texts as part of a guided reading session to identify how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning of the text. Retrieve and record information from the information gathered at the show.

Writing – Non Fiction:

- Write a recount text type about your visit to the fair.
- Use an experience from the show to write a set of instructions for how to complete a farming/food production process step by step.
- Write an explanation text about the life cycle of one of the animals you have seen at the fair or the production cycle for a particular crop.
- Write a discussion text – Should there be a countryside code? Should fishing be banned? Should our milk cost more? Should we import fruit?
- Persuasion texts – Write a leaflet about the School Farm and Country Fair to persuade other schools to attend.

Writing – Fiction:

- Write a story with a character based on one of the animals/foods they have encountered at the School Farm and Country Fair.
- Write a poem.

Maths:

- Multiplication facts. Use a fact learnt on the day to create some multiplication problems.
Eg if 1 cow takes 6 minutes to milk how many cows can the farmer milk in 30 minutes?

- Measurement/Time – Get pupils to draw up a time table of their day at the School Farm Fair and write the times they visited each exhibition/show in both analogue and digital times. Compare durations of events at the fair.
- Statistics – produce a table/bar chart/ pictogram based on data collected from the Fair.

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- Discuss the foods experienced at the School Farm and Country Fair, their seasonality and where and how they are grown, reared, caught and processed.
- Prepare a variety of dishes using ingredients seen at the fair.

Also why not try these mini projects which can be used as ‘stand alone’ lessons in conjunction with your visit

Information and activities on the Countryside Code

Before looking at existing Countryside Code, set up a debate within class about why a code might be needed, what they might put in a code. Ask children to speak both for and against a Code (Literacy links -Speaking and Listening / persuasion / fact and opinion etc)

Research opportunities for finding out about the existing code, information could be presented as a leaflet or poster.

Create your own logo for the Countryside Code.

Try: www.naturalengland.org.uk has the Code and a quiz

Farming games

Create your own game as a class / in groups. Decide if it's to be numeracy or literacy or knowledge based, which age group it's intended for (e.g. make for younger children in school – a simple Bingo style farm animal game with words and pictures

Growing plants

As part of the Year 3 Science curriculum on growing plants, pupils could compare the effect of different factors on plant growth by carrying out experiments. Pupils could use what they had learnt at the fair to predict what might happen in their experiment.

YouTube has wonderful examples of plant growth. Why not try making your own time lapse video from your plant growth experiments.

Take part in the Suffolk Agricultural Association "Grow your own potatoes" day each year – see SAA website.

The gardening year

Create a garden in school – small tubs are quite sufficient for growing a range of vegetables, fruit and flowers. Consider working with the school's Parents' association / governors or school kitchen to use or sell produce and to possibly receive support with the actual gardening.

Keep a simple seasonal diary of a few plants in your school grounds – e.g. a shrub, a tree, herbs if grown, flowers. Record – photos, writing, drawings to show changes throughout the year. Add a weather report for each diary entry and you have a "Gardening Year"! Class, group or individual diaries.

Try: <http://www.countrysideclassroom.org.uk/>

<https://www.foodforlife.org.uk/>

www.greensuffolk.org

www.rhs.org.uk

Recipes linked with some of the produce

See information from exhibitors – many provide recipes

Ask parents / carers / friends for recipes which can be made into a simple ring-bound book to be sold at school for profits towards the PTA. Use a farming theme, or group recipes by main farming ingredients e.g. potatoes, milk, eggs, vegetables etc

Get your class to be creative and design a recipe from a chosen main ingredient seen at the show. Make bread sticks instead of a loaf, make gnocchi with potatoes

Consider cooking different meals for the class to share, showcasing some “Fair” ingredients e.g. breakfast using eggs, snack using breads/biscuits, lunch using potatoes, afternoon tea with homemade cakes using flour. Invite the parents/carers to help and share it with you!

Try: www.foodforlife.org.uk - has teaching resources including recipe cards

More support for lessons / follow up

There is much material on line to support lesson planning in areas linked to farming / countryside. Many of the free resources handed out at the show itself have good links and ideas.

Try: www.agriculture-4-u.co.uk – useful video resources + lesson planning

www.naturalengland.org.uk

www.roundgames.com

www.oxfam.org.uk - education section has resources if you wish to extend

classroom work into a global context

Follow up activities, especially linked to farming in the local community

Invite a local farmer to your school – contact can be made through the SAA.

Undertake research in class or as a home learning activity to find out about local farms – distance from school, type of farm, do they allow visits? Ask what methods children might have for finding out this information – maps, telephone directories, internet.

Hatch eggs – Easton Farm Park loans incubators.

Do a project on where all the food you eat in a day has originated from. Ask your school kitchen to try and cook using only local ingredients or better still cook a meal as a class using locally sourced food.

If your school is old, you may have Log Books dating back to the time when farming played a very important part in the school calendar. These may be wonderful resources showing the way children were involved in farming as unpaid labour!



'More of a Mouthful' – ideas for a whole unit of work using farming and

food production across the curriculum

Create a virtual farm – design a farm on paper, in groups, as a class or in pairs. Think about landscape, hills, fields, rivers meadow, ponds, irrigation, buildings and a farmhouse. Decide on a type of farm (arable, dairy, mixed), acreage, numbers of animals, machinery etc and for a term or longer “run” the farm to be economic, environmentally aware, sustainable etc. Children could take on different roles – growing crops, looking after livestock, accountants, managing the land, responsibility for the environment. Decide what product your farm is going to produce. For example rear pigs to make sausages or pork pies, cows to produce milk or ice cream, beef cattle to make beef burgers. Brand and market your products, design and create a farm logo. Farmers linked with the Suffolk Agricultural Association are very willing to come and talk to children and work with your school. As well as running the virtual farm you could grow some real crops in different conditions – actually grow tomatoes and produce a tomato sauce, rear chickens and sell the eggs, buy in some local milk to make an ice cream to sell, buy in some beef to make burgers.

If you are not familiar with the Mantle of the Expert philosophy check it out on line as this curriculum approach uses a very realistic way of engaging children in their learning. The children become “experts” and take ownership of their learning in a very practical way. Bealings School is very successful at working this way and their website will provide inspiration.

Think around the areas of study you need to cover and see what links can be made with farming and agriculture. E.g. **Science** - habitats – farms are full of a range of different habitats, life cycles etc ; **Geography** – farming takes place on a variety of landscapes in Britain and the rest of the world; **Maths** – milk yields and cost of milk present some realistic problem solving, capacity and money work; **History** – the Saxons were fantastic farmers, Suffolk is rich in Anglo Saxon villages, remains and legacy. Discuss with your class what might have been the reason for the Saxons choosing farming when they invaded and settled. **English** – write an information leaflet on your farm for the public, produce posters and leaflets advertising your ‘product’, produce labels and logos for your farm and its ‘products’. Farming globally offers opportunities to explore geography, science, RE.

Useful Websites

www.agriculture-4-u.co.uk

www.bealings.org.uk/exciting-projects/mantle-of-the-expert/

www.growingschools.org.uk

www.foodforlife.org.uk/Resources/Teachingresources/Resourcelist

www.naturalengland.org.uk

www.roundgames.com

www.rhs.org.uk

www.greensuffolk.org

www.orfordprimary.co.uk

www.mantleoftheexpert.com

www.farmafrica.org.uk

www.sendacow.org.uk

www.face-online.org.uk