

Farmers Market

This lesson and background information was adapted from: Growing Minds – Apple Exploration. For the full lesson visit – www.growing-minds.org.

Lesson Summary: This lesson will introduce students to the system farmers use to sell the vegetables and fruits they grow and sell locally. A farmers market will be set up in your classroom where the students will sort sell and buy apples.

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Learn about the farmer’s market system.
- Learn how to buy food at a farmers market.
- Learn what questions to ask at a farmers market.

Time Required:

30 – 40 minutes

Background Information:

Farmers markets got their start early in our nation’s history when farmers began taking vegetables, eggs, cream, cheese, honey and other produce to the nearest town to trade for things they could not produce on the farm - a steel plow, cotton material for clothing, coffee, sugar, and tea. If the farmer had produce left after trading was complete, he or she would take it to an area where an open market was set up and sell it directly to the city folk. As cities grew, new stores were built, and farmers markets began to lose customers. Many farmers stopped hauling their goods to town because they could not earn enough money to make it worthwhile.

In 2002 farmers markets got federal support through a program added to the Farm Bill, The Farmers’ Market Promotion Program. The purpose of this program was to increase and strengthen direct producer to consumer marketing channels. Farmers markets have continued to grow in popularity because customers enjoy the quality of food grown in season by local producers.

Materials:

- Apples – two different local variety’s
- Price signs
- Baskets or bags
- Market signs
- Money – either fruit bucks or play money

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- Instructions for the farmers and customers
- Apple cards
- *Apple Farmer Annie* by Monica Wellington
- Markers and crayons
- Cash boxes
- Table cloths

Procedure:

1. Read the book *Apple Farmer Annie* by Monica Wellington to the students. The book will introduce students to farmers markets and people buying and selling products at a market.
2. After reading the book ask the students:
 - a. What do farmers do at the market?
 - b. How is a farmers market different than a grocery store?
 - c. Have any of you gone to a farmers market? Let them share their experience.
 - d. Have any of you been to an actual farm to buy food?
3. Explain the market activity. Tell students that their class is going to work together to set up a farmers market to sell apples in their classroom. Tell the students that some of them will be farmers who will set up the table and sell apples while some of them will be the customers buying the apples.
4. Show the students the fruit bucks they will be using to purchase the apples. Explain that one fruit buck is the same as one dollar and a five fruit buck is the same as a five dollar bill.
 - a. With older children you could use the fake money from money counting lessons and use this as a lesson on counting money and change.
5. Select the farmers and set up the stands. Select approximately nine students to be the class farmers. Divide them into three even groups and assign a table or desk area to be their farm market table. Give each group all the supplies they will need. Market sign, table covering, baskets, apples, price labels, and cash box for change – give farmers the one fruit buck bills. The customers will each be given one five fruit buck. That way the students will practice paying, counting change and receiving change for a purchase. Farmers then need to complete the following tasks:
 - a. Decide on a name and write it on the farmers market sign and display sign.
 - b. Cover table with table cloth.
 - c. Sort apples by size, color, or by variety and place them in display baskets.
 - d. Decide which apples are going to cost one fruit buck and which apples are going to cost two fruit bucks.
 - e. Apple samples could be cut for farmers to allow taste testing at the stands.

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6. The remaining students will be the market customers.
 - a. Give each student a \$5.00 fruit buck. Tell them they will be buying apples for a class snack.
 - b. Explain that some apples will be priced at 1 fruit buck and others will be priced at 2 fruit bucks. Discuss how much change they should get in return for their 5 fruit buck bill.
 - c. Then while the farmers are setting up, brainstorm with the customers how they will decide which apples to buy.
 - d. What questions will they ask the farmers?
 - e. What will they look for when they select the apples? Explain that they can only sample each kind once. (good manners)
 - f. Encourage the students to look at all the apples before they decide which one to buy.
7. Start the market when the farmers are ready.
8. Markets close for the day. Gather children. Have the farmers count the fruit bucks they earned at the market – don't forget to subtract the change you gave them.
 - a. Ask students:
 - i. What did they enjoy about selling the apples?
 - ii. How would a farmer feel?
 - iii. Was it difficult or challenging?
9. Now ask the shoppers what they enjoyed about buying apples at the farmers market.
 - a. How did they select their apples?
 - b. What questions did they ask the farmers?
10. Have the apples for snack or allow the students to each take one home.

References/Resources:

www.nyapplecountry.com

<http://www.agclassroom.org/ny/>