

# American Farm Bureau® Foundation for Agriculture Recommended Reading List of 160 books

## Animals & Foods from Animals

**Amazing Grazing** by Cris Peterson

Best for ages 7-11

Price: \$16.95

ISBN: 1-56397-942-x

This author, well known to the agricultural community, has produced another outstanding book. The book's main focus is on rangeland grazing but the book does have information of value to readers anywhere in the country. Using the stories of three Montana ranchers, Cris describes the love ranchers have for their land, efforts to preserve and enhance the environment and raise a healthy food source for America's consumers. She depicts that their efforts care for their cattle and enhance the wildlife habitat on their ranches.

**Cheese Primer** by Steven Jenkins

Best for ages 14 – Adult  
& Teacher Reference

Price: \$16.95

ISBN: 0-89480-762-5

This detailed book provides a wealth of information about cheeses of all shapes, sizes, flavors, and origins. From a description of how cheese is made to classifications and consumption, all the basics are covered. Country by country, region by region, cheese by cheese, this complex topic is examined, dissected and savored. The book includes both domestic and European cheeses. Even farm sources are identified. If you want to understand cheese, this is the book for you.

**Chickens Have Chicks** by Lynn M. Stone

Best for ages 3 - 7

Price:

ISBN: 0-7565-000-1

How does a chick get out of the egg? This and many other chicken-related questions are answered by this book. Each chapter title asks a question, and the text attempts to answer that question. While the book does focus on free-range chickens, the text also discusses eggs being hatched in incubators and chicks needing heat lamps in lieu of their mother's feathers. The text is accompanied by wonderful photography and a section of fun facts. This book contributes to a great learning experience.

**Cow** by Jules Older

Best for ages 5-8

Price: \$7.95

ISBN: 0-88106-956-6

This is a book about cows with colorful artwork and cool cow facts. Ever wonder why ice-cream sundae isn't called ice-cream Thursday? Having trouble telling a Jersey from a Holstein? Are you confused about the difference between a cow and a bull? This book has the answers and much, much more. It is a lively and fun compilation of facts and images.

**Cows Have Calves** by Lynn M. Stone  
Price: \$19.93  
ISBN: 0-7565-0001-X

Best for ages 4-7

This book (part of the “Animals and Their Young” series) discusses the basics of how dairy calves arrive, what newborn calves do, what they look like and what happens as they grow older. The real-life photographs help to simplify complex concepts and make this book a great read for parents and children. Key terminology and concepts make this book acceptable in spite of a photo of free-range chickens running with calves.

**Dog Days** by Beth Gruber  
Price: \$22.60  
ISBN: 0-7565-0698

Best for ages 7-12

While it may seem strange to include a book about dogs in a list of agricultural books, dogs do have a role on farms and serving humans. Having a book which accurately portrays dogs and their history serving humans is also important to provide students with accurate information about animals. This book does just that. It provides information on dog roles, breeds, social structure, history, communications, terminology and equipment. It instructs the reader on the proper way to interact with dogs and what their body language tells the observer. It also gives good tips on animal care. The book closes with trivia and a glossary.

**Extra Cheese, Please** by Cris Peterson  
Price: \$15.95  
ISBN: 1-56397-177-1

Best for ages 6-9

Cris Peterson’s first book tells the story of her own farm and the journey of milk from cow to mozzarella cheese on a pizza. It begins with the birth of a calf and acknowledgement that a cow must have a calf before she can give milk. The book details cattle feed (silage and grain), shows the herd being milked in a pipeline system, milk pick up and sampling, the cheese making process, and concludes with a recipe for cheese pizza. The book includes a glossary and list of books for further reading.

**Face-to-Face With The Chicken** by Christian Harvard  
Price: \$9.95  
ISBN: 1-57091-455-9

Best for ages 7-9

While this book almost exclusively depicts chickens in a free-range setting, it does so realistically and that is why we are recommending it. It discusses pecking order although it avoids the most unpleasant aspects of that behavior. It includes the need to have a rooster to have fertile eggs which will hatch but does not mention that most eggs are not fertile and a rooster is not needed to produce eggs. It depicts an embryo developing inside the egg and a chick hatching. What is most appreciated about this book is that it does not shy away from discussing predators and depicts both a fox and weasel in photographs and text. It also discusses rats, cats and dogs as serious predators. Almost no other book on free-range chickens includes this information or if any information is included, the impact and problems are downplayed. If this book is used, the incorrect information about battery-raised chickens needs to be corrected. Neither the photo nor description is accurate. These chickens are not force fed. They are provided free access to food and water and eat and drink as they choose.

**Farm Animals** by Jennifer Blizin Gillis  
Price: \$19.93  
ISBN: 0-7565-0670-0

Best for Ages 4-7

This book is one of the better books in the series. It actually provides a better photographic portrayal of the animals it describes than other books in the series of specific animals. For example, the book in the series on pigs only depicts free-range hogs. The photo in this book depicts market hogs in a group confinement. The animals look healthy and contented. The other book would have benefited immeasurably by including this photo. That does not mean that this book is perfect. It misses the opportunity to address the fact that cows only give milk after having a calf by stating that dairy cows start giving milk when they are two. If one did not know better, one would believe that on the heifer's second birthday she instantly becomes a cow and begins giving milk. Another photo depicts a hen sitting on a nest of hay while the text describes hens in cages with conveyors collecting eggs. Those points are minor flaws in an otherwise acceptable book. The book ends with a short vocabulary list and few trivia questions.

**Feels Real On the Farm**  
Price: \$4.95  
ISBN: 0-7641-5856-2

Best for toddlers and pre-schoolers

With stunning photographs, simple words and five different textures for little hands to touch and feel, the farm animals in this delightful book come to life! This book is a must for tactile exploration and vocabulary building by non-readers.

**From Cow to Ice Cream** by Bertram T. Knight  
Price: \$6.95  
ISBN: 0-516-26066-9

Best for ages 5 -7

From cow to consumption, this well photographed book tells the story of ice cream. It depicts the total process from milking cows to finished ice cream products. It includes milking cows in a milking parlor, mountains of raw sugar in a warehouse and the refining process, natural flavor additives, processing milk into ice cream, making ice cream sandwiches, the freezing process, and retailing. It even has a page dedicated to quality control. The book ends with the happy faces of children consuming ice cream and six types of ice cream novelties.

**Horses Have Foals** by Lynn M. Stone  
Price: \$19.93  
ISBN: 0-7565-0002-8

Best for Ages 4-7

The excellent photos of young foals enhance this book and bring a smile to any animal-lover's face. The high-quality text includes accurate terminology and explanations. The book even explains that gray horses begin life dark and gradually turn gray. It enhances that explanation with several photos as examples. It also depicts foals in a wide array of ages instead of just newborns as most books do.

**The Horse: Faster than the Wind** by Valerie Tracqui  
Price: \$9.95  
ISBN: 1-57091-450-8

Best for Ages 7-10

While this book focuses on wild horses, it provides many facts about horse characteristics and behaviors that are valuable. Excellent photos of wild horses, including a mare giving birth and stallions fighting, enhance the book. The book ends with a section on wild horse issues. While this section of the book is very limited, it would provide the opportunity to begin a dialog about damage wild horses can do to fragile environments and competition with native species.

**Lets Find Out About Ice Cream** by Mary Ebeltoff Reid  
Price: \$4.95  
ISBN: 0-590-73800-3

Best for ages 5-8

Children want to know how ice cream is made. They may ask how you get the nuts in it, or how it gets to the store without melting among many other questions. This book takes you on a field trip to an ice cream factory with real photographs and simple language.

**The Milk Makers** by Gail Gibbons  
Price: \$6.99  
ISBN: 0-689-71116-6

Best for ages 6-9

As with all of Gail Gibbons' books, she depicts agriculture accurately in the text. This is one of her weaker books from an illustration standpoint. The book describes the five common breeds of dairy cattle, other animals that give milk which humans consume, feeds cattle eat, the digestion process, the milking process, how milking machines work, quality control, the basics of milk transportation and processing, pasteurization, homogenization, retailing and consumption. The book ends with an illustrated glossary of terms and dairy products.

**Out and About at the Dairy Farm** by Andy Murphy  
Price: \$22.60  
ISBN: 1-4048-0041-7

Best for ages 5-10

This lively trip to the dairy farm introduces calves, heifers and milkers. Full-color illustrations and fact-filled text take us through meadows, barns and a milking parlor. Each book features a topic-related activity, an index, a vocabulary list and fascinating fun facts. As with most books this one does include a few stereotypical images but the content is one of the best we've found. It also includes multi-cultural images of farmers and students and a woman farmer, always a plus.

**Pet's Point of View, Horse Sense** by Beth Gruber  
Price: \$22.60  
ISBN: 0-7565-0702-2

Best for ages 7-13

As with the other books in this series, this text provides an excellent overview of the horse, its evolution, relatives, anatomy, gaits, care, equipment and history. The book includes fun facts, record breakers, a timeline, and superstars. It ends with an excellent glossary and resources.

**Pig** by Jules Older  
Price: \$16.95  
ISBN: 0-88106-109-3

Best for ages 4-8

Using the humor that readers have come to expect, Jules Older's text explores the life of a pig. While it does depict hogs splashing about in mud, it accurately explains why they do so. Packed with facts, figures, geography and science, this resource would provide answers to most basic questions about swine.

**Pigs Have Piglets** by Lynn M. Stone  
Price: \$19.93  
ISBN: 0-7565-0003-6

Best for Ages 4-7

This book opens with a heart-tugging photo of two piglets asleep. The photo is so vivid one can almost feel how soft the piglets are. The book's major shortcoming is that pigs are only depicted in a pasture setting (free-range). It is the weakest book in the series. The text explains many things which the photos avoid and is mostly accurate. Considering the lack of accurate books about swine, this one meets the minimum standard for recommendation. If a better book were available, this book would not be included in the list. The book ends with a short glossary and a few trivia questions.

**Rabbits Have Bunnies** by Lynn M. Stone  
Price: \$19.93  
ISBN: 0-7565-0005-2

Best for Ages 4-7

This book provides excellent information about rabbits. While the text explains that this is a book about bunnies raised on farms or pet rabbits, the photos only depict rabbits and bunnies that are not confined. Rabbits are photographed in leaves, surrounded by plants, among vegetables, standing in a field of dandelions, and nestled in colorful apples. As with another book in this series, the photos are less accurate than the text and if another book were available this would probably not be recommended. However, the text does tell a fairly accurate story. The book ends with a short vocabulary and few trivia questions.

**Sheep Have Lambs** by Lynn M. Stone  
Price: \$19.93  
ISBN: 0-7565-0004-4

Best for Ages 4-7

This is one of the better books in the series. The photos match the text quite nicely and both are fairly accurate. This would be a good early book for students to learn about sheep. The book ends with a short vocabulary and few trivial questions.

**Thanks to Cows** by Allan Fowler  
Price: \$4.95  
ISBN: 0-516-04924-0

Best for ages 5-7

This early-reader book gives a nice overview of cows. It uses correct terminology and accurately depicts milk production. It is limited in the information it provides but considering the age - appropriate audience this is sufficient.

**What's for Lunch, Eggs** by Claire Llewellyn  
Price: \$18.80  
ISBN: 0-516-21547-7

Best for Ages 6-8

Unlike most other books that describe the chicken and egg relationship, this book does not avoid the image of poultry in cages. It also depicts free-range chickens and hens sitting on a nest. The book ends with an excellent glossary and foods made with or from eggs.

**What's for Lunch, Milk** by Claire Llewellyn  
Price: \$18.52  
ISBN: 0-516-2040-3

Best for Ages 6-8

Colorful, high-quality photographs complement the text and tell more than half of this story. The book accurately depicts modern dairy production and processing with a couple of exceptions. On the pages immediately following the accurate explanation of dairy production, the photo is of a beef cow as the text explains why a cow can give milk. In the next photo it also depicts cows feeding on silage in a confined area but the text states that cows spend most of the year grazing in fields. The other images of modern dairy production and processing are rarely if ever depicted in children's books and that makes this a recommended addition. An excellent glossary will help build vocabulary.

**Where Do Chicks Come From?** By Amy E. Sklansky  
Price: \$15.99  
ISBN: 0-06-028892-2

Best for ages 4 - 7

The excellent illustrations of the egg-laying anatomy of the hen, structure of the egg and embryo to chick development process and hatching process qualify this book for recommendation. The one short-coming of this book is that it only depicts chickens in a free-range setting and hatching eggs on a nest. Educators in the process of incubating eggs can discuss that issue when they read this book. This book receives high marks in discussing which eggs are fertile, why and which eggs are not. It actually contains a page explaining that the eggs which children eat for breakfast are not fertile.

## **Composting**

**The Magic School Bus Meets the Rot Squad** by Joanna Cole  
Price: \$3.50  
ISBN: 0-590-40023-1

Best for ages 6-8

Take a trip into a decomposing log and explore the organisms that help make compost. As with the other books in the Magic School Bus series, this book helps students examine a potentially unpleasant topic without the "ick" factor. This book also deals with the insects and mammals that aid in decomposition.

**The Worm Café** by Binet Payne  
Price: \$25.95  
ISBN: 0-942256-11-5

Best for ages 14- Adult,  
and Teacher Reference

This is a comprehensive instruction guide about worm composting. It explains setting up and properly operating a composting system from A to Z. This book's 13 chapters contain information which could be used by teachers as instructional activities and as a set-up and operation manual for vermiculture. The book closes with a high quality reference list, student worksheets, a pre- and post-test, and bibliography.

**Worms Eat My Garbage** by Mary Appelhof  
Price: \$12.95  
ISBN: 0-942256-10-7

Best for ages 14- Adult,  
and Teacher Reference

If you are interested in a comprehensive instruction guide about worm composting this is the book for you. It explains setting up and properly operating a composting system from A to Z. This book's 14 chapters ask and answer almost any question a beginning worm composter could pose. The appendices contain information which could be used by teachers as instructional activities. The book closes with a high quality reference list and glossary.

**Worms Eat Our Garbage** by Mary Appelhof  
Price: \$22.95  
ISBN: 0-942256-05-0

Best for ages 14- Adult,  
and Teacher Reference

This resource is the follow-up book to the previous book listed. Note the similar title. This teacher resource is a comprehensive set of classroom activities about worm composting. The activities are, for the most part, educationally sound although the authors could improve on the written objectives, connection to standards, and delineate evaluation components. This text should not be viewed as the final authority on the many topics included. Its description of Rachel Carson and her capability as a scholar and biologist would be challenged by true research scientists. There are also objectionable anthropomorphized animals in a few sections.

## **Cooking**

**All in Just One Cookie** by Susan E. Goodman  
Price: \$16.99  
ISBN: 0-06-009092-8

Best for ages 6-12

Focused around all of the ingredients that are used to make chocolate chip cookies, this book takes the reader and listener on a world-wide exploration. The trip is complete from butter produced by local dairy farms in the United States to Madagascar vanilla beans. The flour page explains how challenging it used to be to harvest wheat and the miracle performed in a couple of hours by a modern combine. It also includes the mining information for salt and baking soda. This is an unusual find. The book's sole shortcoming is the anthropomorphized animals which are used to tell the story. As the teacher utilizes this resource, that issue can be addressed.

**Cook-A-Doodle-Do** by Janet Stevens  
Price: \$17.00  
ISBN: 0-15-201924-3

Best for ages 4-8

In this work of fiction, a rooster and his eager assistants set out to make strawberry shortcake. Rooster is glad to have the help but none of the helpers know how to cook so Rooster forges ahead to teach the helpers the basics of cooking and baking with entertaining results. While a book containing anthropomorphized animals would normally not pass our scrutiny, this one cannot be resisted. It provides great opportunities to build correct vocabulary and teach basic cooking skills.

**Kids Cooking**  
Price: \$13.95  
ISBN: 0-932592-14-7

Best for ages 6-12, Teacher  
and/or Parent Reference

As with other Klutz Press books this colorful book provides great information in a fun and colorful manner. It includes great simple recipes for kids to do with their parents or another adult. It includes recipes for play dough, face paint, giant soap bubbles and Fido's People Biscuits (doggie treats).

**Mama Provi and the Pot of Rice** by Sylvia Rosa-Casanova  
Price: \$5.99  
ISBN: 0-689-84249-X

Best for ages 6-10

Using the pot of rice with chicken, Mama barter with her neighbors to create a bountiful meal. As she does so she also takes her granddaughter, Lucy, on a marvelous cultural tour of the neighborhood. Woven throughout the book are the Spanish names for a variety of foods.

**The Science Chef** by Joan D'Amico  
Price: \$12.95  
ISBN: 0-471-31045-x

Best for ages 7-16 or adult  
use with younger children

One hundred fun food experiments and recipes are explored in a variety of topics in this 180 page book. The book explores questions from "How does yeast make bread rise?" to "What makes popcorn pop?" and "Why does whipped cream froth?" in a series of 20 chapters. The book also includes cooking skills, safety rules, nutrition in a nutshell, food safety and a nice glossary.

## **The Earth and Nature**

**Crinkleroot's Nature Almanac** by Jim Arnosky  
Price: \$16.00  
ISBN: 0-689-80534-9

Best for ages 6-11

Crinkleroot hikes through the traditional seasons starting with spring and honeybees. As the book progresses it divulges Crinkleroot's observations of nature and the wildlife. It includes picture puzzles and descriptions of important concepts such as "habitat" and "pollinate" and some fun quizzes and nature activities that make learning about the outdoors active and fun. The mysteries of popcorn are explored in the trip through summer.

**I Can Read About Seasons** by Robyn Supraner

Best for ages 7-11

Price: \$4.95

ISBN: 0-8167-4719-9

As the population has moved to urban and suburban settings, the connection with the impact of the seasons on nature has become foreign. This colorful book explains why we have seasons and how they impact plants and animals. Each season provides both text and illustration to explain where we are in the earth's revolution around the sun and what dates each season brings. This is a great addition to help student understand what causes each season.

**Our Seasons** by Grace Lin

Best for ages 5-10

Price: \$15.95

ISBN: 13-978-1-57091-360-0

Evocative haiku poetry accompanies season-related questions and answers about weather, the natural world, and the human body. The colorful pictures enhance the text to explain weather phenomenon and natural phenomenon. Why do leaves change color? Why do I tan? Why do I see my breath? Why do bees like flowers? Read this book and find the answers.

**Seasons (A True Book)** by Paul P. Sipiera

Best for ages 8-10

Price: \$6.95

ISBN: 0-516-20677-X

This book examines why the seasons change. The history of telling time and predicating the seasons and its impact on culture (from ancient times to today) is explored in text and pictures.

**Sunshine Makes the Seasons** by Franklyn M. Branley

Best for ages 6-9

Price: \$16.89

ISBN: 0-06-059204-4 – hardcover

This book, focused completely on the sun-earth relationship, is an excellent resource for explaining the concept of seasons. The text even includes an excellent, student-centered technique that uses a pencil and orange to depict the seasons. This makes the information real.

## **Entomology and Foods From Insects**

**Bees** by Ann Heinrichs

Best for ages 7-11

Price: \$7.95

ISBN: 0-7565-0165-2

This book nicely summarizes details of bees. It describes the kinds of bees, bee structure, how honey bees function and live in both a natural environment and a man-made one, and how bees make honey and wax. It also explains beekeeping, why bees sting, provides insight into killer bees, and how bees benefit us. The book includes a glossary and reference list.

**The Bee Tree** by Patricia Polacco  
Price: \$6.99  
ISBN: 0-698-11696-8

Best for ages 5-7

This work of fiction would be a great way to introduce bees to students. It also extols the virtues of reading. The adventure of chasing the bee back to its hive (the bee tree) provides a romp for a variety of people and animals as they join in the chase. That chase ends, of course, by gathering and eating the honey.

**Beekeepers** by Linda Oatman High  
Price: \$14.95  
ISBN: 1-56397-486-X

Best for ages 6-9

This is a beautifully crafted story about a girl, her grandfather and the passing of a legacy to be a beekeeper. The soft oil paintings and simple illustrations leave the readers with a warm feeling of shared experience between grandfather and granddaughter. This book fosters positive feelings about bees and beekeeping but does not provide a great deal of information about bees.

**Bugs, Bugs, Bugs!** By Mary Reid  
Price: \$5.99  
ISBN: 0-590-39792-3

Best for Ages 4-6

The best part of this early-reader book is the wonderful, up-close photos of insect anatomy. Each page focuses on one term and concept. Unfortunately for the title, not all of the insects identified are actually bugs. The last two pages provide information which an adult may read and share with the child.

**Bugs for Lunch** by Margery Facklam  
Price: \$16.95  
ISBN: 0-188106-271-5

Best for ages 5-8

This chipper picture book is full of recipes which may not be everyone's favorite dish. Bugs make tasty treats for many creatures, even humans. In simple rhyming verses this book offers a list of critters that regularly dine on insects. It includes an illustrated glossary that expands on these basics, providing a plethora of fun facts. This book captures the world with realistic details and pictures which will appeal to the "yuck factor" in every child.

**Creepy Crawlies and the Scientific Method** by Sally Kneidel  
Price: \$18.95  
ISBN: 1-55591-118-8

Best for ages 10-18,  
and Teacher Reference

This book contains more than 100 hands-on experiments for children that involve insects, worms and other creepy crawly things such as fungus. It provides detailed descriptions, directions, and ideas. This is a book for those who would like to seriously develop experiments.

**Creepy, Crawly Caterpillars** by Margery Facklam

Best for ages 7-11

Price: \$5.95

ISBN: 0-316-27342-2

A combination of attractive and informative materials brings to life a metamorphosis of a butterfly, the anatomy and behavior of a caterpillar and dozens of other creepy, crawly insects. The colorful, magnified pictures help make this book great learning material for children.

**Face to Face With The Ladybug** by Valerie Tracqui

Best for ages 5-10

Price: \$9.95

ISBN: 1-57091-453-2

Useful to begin a discussion of beneficial insects, this book describes the life cycle, environment and characteristics of the ladybug. The book includes bright, colorful photographs that capture the ladybug beetle in its natural habitat.

**From Caterpillar to Butterfly** by Deborah Heiligman

Best for ages 6-10

Price: \$4.95

ISBN: 0-06-445129-1

With lovely, fun illustrations this book takes the child on a journey through the life and metamorphosis of the butterfly from caterpillar to butterfly as the title suggests. After exploring that process and transformation it describes major butterflies students are likely to encounter and where they may see each, and provides four locations across the United States where they could learn more about butterflies.

**The Magic School Bus Inside a Beehive** by Joanna Cole

Best for ages 4-8

Price: \$5.99

ISBN: 0-590-25721-8

Once again, Ms. Frizzle's students board the magic school bus for a class trip, this time to watch a beekeeper. Once the children turn into bees and the bus turns into a beehive, Ms. Frizzle leads them on an informative tour and explains the communication systems, inter-workings of the beehive and the social structure of one of the most commonly known beneficial insects.

**The Honey Makers** by Gail Gibbons

Best for ages 7-11

Price: \$6.99

ISBN: 0-688-17531-7

As with Gail's other books, she does a wonderful job explaining how bees make honey. The detail of both the text and illustrations provides a wealth of information. It explains bee social structure and roles, pollination, honey making, beekeeping, harvesting honey, includes a beekeeper's diary, and fast facts. This book is a great addition to any library that wants to include bees and honey in its topic list.

**Insects** by Steve Parker

Best for ages 8-14

Price: \$5.99

ISBN: 0-7894-2215-8

Insects from definitions, to habitats, metamorphosis, and anatomy are covered in this 61-page book. Insects of all sizes, shapes and functions are included. This is a nice book to provide an

overview of insects without a student being bogged down with too much detail. Yet, it provides factual information for this age group.

**Nature's Friends, Ladybugs** by Ann Heinrichs

Best for ages 6-11

Price: \$7.95

ISBN: 0-7565-0167-9

This is a very nice book about the beneficial insect, Ladybug beetle. The text describes the beetle's anatomy, their diets, overwintering, and predators. It closes with a very short glossary, trivia and additional resources to consult.

**Praying Mantises (A True Book)** by Larry Dane

Best for Ages 7-13

Price \$6.95

ISBN: 0-516-26769-8

This book about the fascinating praying mantis is significantly enhanced by detailed photographs which capture praying mantises in all stages of life. The photographer has capture images of praying mantises mating, laying eggs, hatching, emerging from the egg case, dangling to the ground, stalking and consuming its prey, and molting. The text and photos take an amazing look at the various forms of camouflage employed by this insect in a variety of environments. A challenging glossary is included.

## **Farms and Farming**

**Farming** by Gail Gibbons

Best for ages 4-8

Price: \$6.95

ISBN: 0-8234-0682-2

Each season in this book brings to life a new chore or activity on the farm. This book about farming intends to portray not just one particular farm but a universal one. This book shows how real-life activities and chores on a farm can produce crops and food, indoors or outdoors despite the forces of nature that may impact the farm. This book is traditional in concept but excellent in some depictions!

**Farmers Market** by Carmen Parks

Best for ages 4-7

Price: \$11.95

ISBN: 0-15-204881-2

Rise and shine it is market day! This book was developed with fresh vegetables and fruits in mind! The story recounts a family trip to the farmers market through the eyes of a small girl. The setting is southwestern as is the scenery.

**Living on Farms** by Allan Fowler  
Price: \$4.95  
ISBN: 0-516-21564-7

Best for ages 5-7

This short, early-reader book gives a brief overview of farms and farming. It is a bit simplistic but as an early-reader book one cannot expect too much. For the most part, it depicts images and texts of modern farms after the introduction.

**Unusual Farms** by Brenda Haugen  
Price: \$19.93  
ISBN: 0-7565-0668-9

Best for ages 6- 8

This delightful book examines farm production that many do not connect as a type of farming. It provides high quality photos and brief explanations for ostrich, bison, llama, fish, silk, trees, and bamboo farms. Unfortunately, it takes one step too far and includes wind farms. While wind turbines may be an increasingly visible component in the rural landscape they really are not “farmed.” The book closes with trivia and a short glossary.

## **Food and Culture**

**Midday Meals Around the World** by Michele Zurakowski  
Price: \$22.60  
ISBN: 1-4048-0281-9

Best for ages 7-10

Discover what children around the world eat for their midday meals. Menus include one or two meals from North and South America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and Australia. It also includes kid-friendly recipes.

## **Food Safety**

**Food Safety (A True Book)** by Joan Kalbacken  
Price: \$6.95  
ISBN: 0-516-20757-1

Best for ages 8-10

This book covers various health concerns related to the food we eat and explains and discusses ways to avoid them. Personal responsibility for food safety and the importance of hand washing are stressed.

**Food Safety (A True Book)** by Joan Kalbacken  
Price: \$6.95  
ISBN: 0-516-26377-3

Best for Ages 7-13

This book and its accompanying photos provide sound information about food safety for readers at an intermediate level. It contains excellent photos of several microbes as it describes that particular problem. All the essential messages of food safety are included and common myths are avoided. The book correctly describes food safety safeguards, governmental oversight and individual responsibility. It does a good job of explaining pesticides and how food safety is

maintained. Unlike many other books on this subject, this book contains information about food allergies and the information is accurate and provides good advice. The important focus on washing hands, fruits and vegetables because of bacterial contamination is excellent. The book ends with a glossary.

**Food Safety** by Sharon Gordon

Best for ages 6-8

Price: \$9.99

ISBN: 0-516-22294-5

This book and its accompanying photos provide basic information about food safety for early readers. It contains an excellent photo of bacteria and provides good advice. The important focus on washing hands, fruits and vegetables because of bacterial contamination is excellent. All the essential messages of food safety are included and common myths are avoided. The book ends with a unique photo 'glossary.'

**Germs Make Me Sick** by Melvin Berger

Best for ages 6-10

Price: \$16.89

ISBN: 0-06-024250-7

While this may seem to be a strange addition to a list of recommended books that address agriculture, before students can understand food safety they must understand microbes and illness. Hence, this recommendation. This is a basic book that explains that germs cause illness and we are surrounded by them. Basic sanitation is covered along with some simple explanations of microorganisms, transmission, the body's immune system and rules for good health. With food safety issues facing agriculture (E. coli contamination), possible pandemics (bird flu), and bioterrorism (anthrax), this is an issue that every citizen needs to understand.

**How to Prevent Food Poisoning** by Elizabeth Scott, Ph.D. and Paul Sockett, Ph.D.

Price: \$14.95

Best for ages 14-Adult,  
and Teacher Reference

ISBN: 0-471-19576-6

This book is a comprehensive examination of food safety. It examines causes of food-borne illness, impacts that are short- and long-term as well as fleeting or permanent, and prevention techniques. It explores food prepared and eaten at home, food prepared at home but eaten elsewhere, and food prepared and eaten outside the home. The authors also detail what conditions may make one most susceptible to food poisoning such as the regular consumption of antacids. The book closes with a self-assessment quiz, A-Z guide of food poisoning germs and an excellent glossary.

**Safe Food for You and Your Family** by Mildred M. Cody

Best for ages 12-18,

Price: \$5.95

and Teacher Reference

ISBN: 1-56561-094-6

This book provides a wealth of information about food safety in a pint-sized book. It provides detailed information about foodborne illnesses, safely storing and preserving food, irradiated food, biotechnology and a host of other topics. This would be a great resource for high school students writing papers on the topic.

## [Gardening - See Also Plants](#)

**[Beyond the Bean Seed](#)** by Nancy Allen Jurenka

Best as a teacher reference

Price: \$28.00

ISBN: 1-56308-346-9

The 11 chapters created by the author in this book provide information, resources, student-centered educational activities which connect the garden to required subjects, games, and recipes for treats. While a great book for teaching ideas and methodology to connect the garden to required learning, this book will not stand alone. It is intended as a teacher companion reference. If your school plans to weave a school garden into its curriculum and would like to have that garden impact education most effectively in a positive way, then this book is an excellent reference especially for the elementary grades.

**[Carrots Love Tomatoes](#)** by Louise Riotte

Best for ages 14- Adult,  
and Teacher Reference

Price: \$14.95

ISBN: 1-58017-027-7

As gardens and gardening move beyond the basics, this book would be a good resource for any gardener. It contains companion planting, pest control and fertilization techniques. The text provides advice on topics which include vegetables, herbs, fruit, grasses and field crops, ornamental trees, and shrubs. A detailed overview of poisonous plants would benefit any reader. The book includes a garden planning section which includes plans for a weekend garden, postage stamp garden, children's garden, kitchen herb garden, able disabled garden (raised), spirit garden, mini-garden and suggestions for window boxes.

**[A Child's Garden of Verses](#)** by Robert Louis Stevenson

Best for ages 4-8

Price: \$18.00

ISBN: 0-689-82382-7

This book celebrates children and nature through poetry. Throughout sixty-six poems, the author recalls the joys of his childhood, from sailing boats down river, to waiting for the lamplighter, to sailing off to foreign lands in his imagination. Its poetry can be used to introduce the topics and techniques to children as well as connect them to agriculture. From golden apples to meadows or climbing cherry trees and enjoying the activities of a cow, these poems celebrate the farm life of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**[From Seed to Plant](#)** by Gail Gibbons

Best for ages 6-9

Price: \$6.99

ISBN: 0-8234-1025-0

As with all of Gail Gibbons' books, she depicts information accurately in both text and image. This is one of her stronger books from an illustration standpoint. The book describes plant structure and function. It also includes how seeds move and the mechanisms that enable them to move. The book ends with an illustrated glossary of terms.

**The Garden of Happiness** by Erika Tamar  
Price: \$16.00  
ISBN: 0-15-230582-3

Best for ages 5-8

This is a story about an inner-city neighborhood's effort to clean up a vacant lot and transform it into a community garden. Colorful, multi-cultural images enhance and help tell the story. A little girl, Marisol, finds a small patch of her own where she plants a large flat seed. As the garden grows, her little seed exceeds the rest of the plants, surprises everyone and becomes the happiest plant in The Garden of Happiness. This book would be an excellent resource to initiate planning a school garden or working to plant one in the spring.

**Gardening Wizardry for Kids** by Patricia Kite  
Price: \$14.95  
ISBN: 0-8120-1317-4

Best for ages 6-adult,  
and Teacher Reference

This colorful book on gardening is an excellent book to introduce children to gardening. Packed with fun activities, facts, folklore, history, and gardening tips it is just the tool needed to get kids hooked on gardening. Divided into six sections, the book has history, fun activities, ideas and directions for science experiments, insect and earthworm-raising tips, a section on herbs and craft projects.

**Inch by Inch** by David Mallett  
Price: \$5.95  
ISBN: 0-06-443481-8

Best for ages 4-7

This book is an illustrated version of the song of the same title. If one wishes to interest students in gardening from an early age this is a great place to begin.

**Lily's Garden** by Deborah Kogan Ray  
Price: \$16.95  
ISBN: 0-76-131593-4

Best for ages 4-8

Lily's grandparents move all the way across the country, but stay in touch with Lily by sending her plants and produce from their new home and through her garden. Each spread deals with a new month and garden challenge for Lily. Her grandparent's advice helps her cope with the realistic challenges presented by managing a successful garden. This book is also a good exploration of seasonal changes.

**The Summer My Father Was Ten** by Pat Brisson  
Hardcover Price: \$15.95      Paperback Price: \$8.95  
ISBN: 1-56397-435-5      ISBN: 1-56397-829-6

Best for ages 5-13

One of the most touching stories available, this book takes a growing up journey. The cross-generational story uses the vandalism of a neighborhood garden to explore the lessons learned by the author's father. The thoughtlessness of youth is met with real consequences in the life of the elderly gardener. The unsentimental tale of mending one's ways and changing a life is illustrated by beautiful watercolors. If only a few books can be included in a library this is one that is a must for many reasons. Those who know the investment of time, hope and love made by anyone growing a crop will make good use of this story to express that investment.

**This Year's Garden** by Cynthia Rylant  
Price: \$6.99  
ISBN: 0-689-71122-0

Best for ages 4-7

This short book takes us on a year-long journey through a garden. Beginning in winter, the planning takes place for the next growing season. The story follows the activities of each season until we arrive back at winter and begin again.

## **Harvest and Harvest Celebration**

**Harvest Year** by Cris Peterson  
Price: \$15.95  
ISBN: 1-56397-571-8

Best for ages 5-9

Cris Peterson captures the concept that every single month food is being harvested somewhere in the United States with colorful and dramatic photos by Alvin Upitis. This book is a collaboration of clear and concise text and a map of harvest locations across the country. With an array of photographs that capture the colorful fields and orchards and a variety of workers and machines and children sampling foods from the year's harvest. While not every state is included, 27 states representing every region of the country are included, from Maine to Hawaii and Alaska to Florida.

**A Midwestern Corn Festival: Ears Everywhere** by Lisa Gabbert  
Price: \$19.95  
ISBN: 0-8239-5341-6

Best for ages 6-8

This book explains the importance of corn as a crop. It explores corn's origins, history, and examines the rides, pageants, and other activities at a corn festival.

## **Issues**

**Beatrice's Goat** by Page McBrier  
Price: \$16.00  
ISBN: 0-689-82460-2

Best for ages 7-13

This beautifully written and illustrated book tells the story of Beatrice, a poor Ugandan girl who longs to go to school. Her family's poverty makes that impossible because they cannot afford the school uniforms or to buy books. The gift of a goat provides the answer even though Beatrice can initially only see the extra work it means. This story begins to teach students that the solution to world hunger is to help people lift themselves out of poverty. Selling her goat's milk allowed her mother to improve her family's nutrition and to send Beatrice to school. The goat's offspring, given to her friend's family, also sent her friend to school. And so the circle widens and multiplies the gift. Written about a real little girl, Beatrice is now a college student in America. Purchase of this book will benefit Heifer Project International.

**Bio-Vision: World Life Sciences Forum Series**

Price for the Series of Three Books: \$125.00

ISBN: 3-527-31489-X

Best for ages 14- Adult,  
and Teacher Reference

While this book series has a hefty price tag, it also contains a wealth of information for any reader truly interested in the effort to reduce poverty and solve global hunger. It approached the issues from a scientific perspective unlike most other public sources. This is a cross-disciplinary, international account of essential information provided by experts, not pundits, using research-based information not rhetoric. It includes the expertise of 20 Nobel Laureates in volumes with these titles: Agriculture and Nutrition; Bioindustry and Environment; and Human Health. Recommendations support the use of high-tech agriculture whether or not that includes biotechnology. This is information not available from any other source.

**Food: The Struggle to Sustain the Human Community** by Jake Goldberg

Price: \$23.00

ISBN: 0-531-11411-2

Best for ages 12-18

This book's author looks at the struggle to feed the human population from the earliest days through the present. It provides a nice overview of the development of agriculture but comes up short as it explores agriculture's future. Surprisingly, a discussion of biotechnology is absent. This book is recommended in spite of that because it does a credible job in other areas.

**Invasive Species in a Changing World** by Harold A. Mooney

Price: \$37.50

ISBN: 1-55963-782-x

Best for ages 15-adult, and  
Teacher Reference

As the world becomes smaller, the issue of invasive species becomes evermore probable and impacts more damaging. Though noxious, invasive species have long been recognized and challenged by agriculture, others are now taking notice with the threat of a bird flu pandemic. Invasions of fire ants and Africanized honeybees have made average Americans realize that this is a very real threat to all. This book provides a well-referenced, comprehensive overview of the issues and looks not only at the ecological implications but also the economic costs.

## **Machinery and Equipment**

**I Drive a Tractor** by Sarah Bridges

Price: \$7.95

ISBN: 1-4048-1609-7

Best for Ages 4-8

Students can learn a great deal about tractors by having this book read to them or reading it themselves. Modern tractor technology, structure, and operation are accompanied by how a tractor functions. The authors have wisely included some tractor safety information such as the slow-moving vehicle sign and what it signifies. The driver explains how he courteously and safely uses the road, aware of cars which may want to pass. While the book depicts only one person on the tractor, it does not actually address this issue. The book includes a vocabulary list.

**The Tractor Goes Farming** by Roy Harrington  
Price: \$6.95  
ISBN: 0-929355-68-7

Best for ages 3-8

What can a tractor do? Read this book and find out. The many diversified jobs performed by tractors, on and off the farm, are described and accompanied by excellent photographs. Developed by the American Association of Agricultural Engineers, tractors of all makes and colors are represented. The book also includes a variety of other farm equipment made by a variety of manufacturers.

**Tractors** by Darlene R. Stille  
Price: \$21.26  
ISBN: 0-7565-0287-X

Best for ages 4-8

Through bright colors and informative text, young readers can explore the world of tractors in this book. This book encourages an interest in the machines and activities that they help us with on the farm and beyond.

## **Microorganisms and Fungi**

**The Fungus That Ate My School** by Arthur Dorros  
Price: \$15.95  
ISBN: 0-590-47704-8

Best for ages 5-8

This work of fiction is a fun way to introduce fungi to the classroom. During a damp spring break, a science-class mold experiment outgrows its jar. Three elementary school students return from vacation to find an amorphous green shape dominating the lab. This book is a silly, eccentric caricature of how fungus spreads which can be used to introduce how easily all microorganisms spread and how they impact humans.

**Good Mushrooms and Bad Toadstools** by Allan Fowler  
Price: \$4.95  
ISBN: 0-516-20808-X

Best for ages 6-7

This early-reader book explores this world sometimes hidden from view unless one seeks it out. A variety of colorful and interestingly shaped mushrooms and toadstools are depicted. It gives adequate warning that the novice should not pick or eat mushrooms as they can be very dangerous.

**Slime, Molds and Fungi** by Dwight Kuhn  
Price: \$14.22  
ISBN: 1-56711-182-3

Best for ages 8-14

Beautiful photographs enhance the descriptions of this unlikely subject. From mushrooms to yeast, the organisms in this group are very important to the food system. Some cause damage others are beneficial. All are essential to moving the composition cycle along. Producers work to control many fungi or to promote others. Some fungi can be fatal while others can provide life saving assistance such as the antibiotic penicillin. The book contains great science experiments and demonstrations, sources for supplies, further readings and an index.

## Natural Fibers

**From Plant to Blue Jeans** by John L'Hommedieu

Best for ages 4-8

Price: \$6.95

ISBN: 0-516-20366-5

This wonderful photo essay documents the process of making blue jeans. From the first step of planting cotton to sewing the finished denim into jeans, the process is captured in image and text.

## Nutrition

**The Quest to Digest** by Mary K. Corcoran

Best for ages 4-8

Price: \$16.95

ISBN: 1-57091-664-0

Children always wonder what happens after our food is swallowed and where does it go? Follow an apple's journey from the mouth to the small intestines on a quest to learn about the digestive system. Many questions regarding burps, passing gas and vomit will be answered. Accompanied by comic illustrations this book is fun, fascinating and concise for all readers. Although not technically an agricultural topic this resource will help teachers begin to discuss nutrition and healthy food choices as students learn how their body digests food.

**When Vegetables Go Bad** by Don Gillmor and Mary Louise Gay

Best for ages 6-9

Price: \$5.95

ISBN: 1-55209-261-5

This work of fiction is a great tool to introduce nutrition to younger audiences and encourage them to eat vegetables. The title might mislead you to think the vegetables in the book are spoiling but the story is really about vegetables behaving badly because Ivy refused to eat them. Instead of eating her vegetables, Ivy stuffed them into her pocket. At night when she is sleeping, the vegetables form a taunting chorus in Ivy's sleep and invade her dreams with nasty songs. No matter how Ivy tries to run from this nightmare, the vegetables chase her down and continue their harassment. Once she admits she likes vegetables, the nightmare stops.

## Plants, Foods From Plants and Goods From Plants

**Amazing Apples** by Consie Powell

Best for ages 5-8

Price: \$15.95

ISBN: 0-8075-0399-1

From blossom to pollination to picking, this beautifully illustrated book details how apples grow, their various uses, and the different varieties through an interesting methodology. Each single or double page contains an acrostic poem that describes part of the story. The acrostic words are apple, orchard, leaves, bees, sun, rain, core, worm, bushel, pick, varieties, cider, dried, sauce, pie, basement, and winter. This book also includes a detailed description of apples.

**Apples** by Gail Gibbons  
Price: \$6.95  
ISBN: 0-8234-1497-3

Best for ages 5-8

From blossom to pollination to picking, this beautifully illustrated book details how apples grow, their various parts, and the different varieties. This book also includes instructions on how to plant and care for an apple tree.

**Apples of Your Eye** by Allan Fowler  
Price: \$4.95  
ISBN: 0-516-06026-0

Best for ages 6-8

As with other books by this author, this is a good, basic explanation of how apples grow and the foods made from them. While a few of the images are not completely current the information provided is excellent for this age group. Most importantly, the author explains that while apples can grow from seed, apples are grafted (to guarantee the apple variety). The book does a good job of depicting and explaining one type of grafting.

**Apples Here!** by Will Hubbell  
Price: \$16.95  
ISBN: 0-8075-0397-5

Best for ages 5-8

From blossom to pollination to picking, this beautifully illustrated book details how apples grow, their various parts, and some of the different varieties. The rhyming text takes the reader on a year-long journey from winter with a young girl and her grandfather to spring with a boy and girl to summer where three children enjoy the orchard and watch apples develop through fall where two boys enjoy the harvest and fresh-from-the-tree apples. Another girl buys apples at a farm market and uses them to make a pie and others include apples in celebrations. The final page is of a deer also enjoying the apples. The book also includes a detailed description of the apple production process, varieties, history and uses.

**Bananas** by Elaine Landau  
Price: \$24.00  
ISBN: 0-516-21025-4

Best for Ages 8-13

This text provides an A to Z overview of bananas. Banana history, botany, production, types, trade, ripening, nutrition and trivia are wrapped in colorful photos and informative text. The book closes with a glossary, an index and additional resources – books and Web sites.

**Bananas** by Jacqueline Farmer  
Price: \$6.95  
ISBN: 0-88106-115-8

Best for Ages 7-12

Whatever a child would like to know about bananas can be explored in this colorful text. Banana production, types, trade, ripening, history, nutrition and trivia are wrapped in colorful artwork and informative text. The book closes with banana recipes and jokes.

**The Berry Book** by Gail Gibbons  
Price: \$16.95  
ISBN: 0-8234-1697-6

Best for ages 4-8

Gail Gibbons has developed another excellent book on an agricultural topic. This time she weaves her storytelling magic about all sorts of berries. Her discussion of how berries grow in the wild and how they are cultivated in fields and gardens domestically includes the impact of climate. The author describes the uses of edible berries and even gives directions on how to grow strawberries. The colorfully illustrated book includes recipes for berry jams, pies and ice creams.

**Bread** by Eric Treuille  
Price: \$20.00  
ISBN: 978-0756-1889-6

Best for ages 12-Adult

This book moves beyond the basic how bread is made from wheat to display and explains how cultures interpret bread and how bread impacts culture. It explains and displays a wide variety of bread from across the globe, explains the characteristic of each and explains the area it developed and sometimes what its name signifies. This is an updated, paperback edition of the book *Ultimate Bread*.

**Bread, Bread, Bread** by Ann Morris  
Price: \$15.99  
ISBN: 0-688-06334-9

Best for ages 6-8

This book shares the idea that people eat bread all around the world and explores the forms which bread takes in each of those cultures. As an early-reader book this book does not contain too much detail but the excellent photographs help tell the story very well. The index contains pictures and identifies where each type of bread originates.

**Bread Comes to Life** by George Levenson  
Price: \$15.99  
ISBN: 1-58246-114-7

Best for ages 6-8

This book shares the story of wheat in a rhyming poem and excellent photographs. Unfortunately, the effort to successfully complete the rhyme precludes using modern production techniques in the telling. Accurate up to the baker sowing the seed in his back yard, the story includes hand harvesting and threshing the wheat instead of the modern use of sowing seed in large fields using a seed drill and combine. While the poem and images are not technically incorrect they are not modern. The best use of this book would be as an accompaniment with another book that included modern images. The index contains pictures and detailed descriptions and student centered activities.

**Buried Treasure, Roots and Tubers** by Meredith Sayles Hughes  
Price: \$26.60  
ISBN: 0-8225-2830-4

Best for ages 10-16

This series provides a wealth of information on each topic. Discussing foods which grow in the ground can be tricky because some are roots, some modified stems, some leaves, etc. This book handles those issues nicely by just addressing roots and tubers. The book covers five topics in some detail the last of which is divided into three root crops.

**Corn (A True Book)** by Elaine Landau

Best for ages 7-13

Price: \$6.95

ISBN: 0-516-26759-0

This excellent book takes a thorough look at corn by providing high quality, sound information in both text and image. It provides a comprehensive overview of types of corn and their uses, how and where corn grows, the history of corn, and the uses of corn for food and more. The book provides text and photos which describe using corn in both food and non-food items and even the most surprising uses. It also includes a section on corn breeding and its use in creating renewable fuels and biodegradable plastics. The book ends with a good glossary.

**Eating the Alphabet: Fruits and Vegetables from A to Z** by Lois Ehlert

Best for ages 2-5

Price: 0-15-224435-2

ISBN: \$16.00

In brilliant watercolor collages, Lois Ehlert introduces young readers to a wide variety of fruits and vegetables from A to Z. Clearly labeled and easy to identify, the collection includes favorites such as apples, bananas, potatoes and tomatoes - as well as some less common edibles like jalapeño peppers and radicchio. This book includes a glossary which offers useful and interesting information about each fruit and vegetable.

**Everybody Bakes Bread** by Norah Dooley

Best for ages 5-8

Price: \$6.95

ISBN: 0-87614-895-X

On a rainy Saturday, what is better to do than to bake bread? Carrie and her brother bicker so much that their mother sends Carrie on a fool's errand to borrow a rolling pin. Each house she stops at a new kind of bread is offered to her and by the time she returns home the bread is ready at her house. This tummy warming story is both informational and fun for families to enjoy together as each new kind of bread represents a household of a different culture.

**A Field of Sunflowers** by Neil Johnson

Best for Ages 4-8

Price: \$3.25

ISBN: 0-590-96549-2

High-quality photographs depict the process of growing sunflowers from preparing the soil through seed production. The book explains phototropism, pollination, and pollinators accurately and would be an excellent resource for teachers explaining these concepts. The community delight in the field of sunflowers and resulting interaction helps readers or listeners appreciate agriculture. The book is a bit less realistic in explaining that the farmer decided not to harvest the field but to leave it to feed the wild birds. Few farmers could afford that luxury.

**The Flower Alphabet Book** by Jerry Pallotta

Best for ages 4-8

Price: \$16.95

ISBN: 0-88106-459-9

The author and illustrator of this book have collaborated to produce a stunning bouquet of words and pictures about the world of flowers. This book includes a variety of flowers from A-Z beginning with the Amaryllis and concluding with the Zinnia.

**The Fresh Tastes from the Garden State** by Carol Byrd-Bredbenner

Price: \$32.00

ISBN: 0-8135-3129-2

Best for ages 14 to  
Adult, and  
Teacher Reference

While this book focuses on one state, New Jersey, the content, recipes and photos cross those boundaries and are suitable anywhere. Each chapter examines a fruit, group of fruits or vegetable and describes its history, impact on culture, its nutrition and phyto-nutrition and how it is sold and used. Modern production practices are illustrated and beautifully photographed. Each item of produce is depicted on the plant as it grows.

**From Seed to Pumpkin** by Wendy Pfeffer

Price: \$15.99

ISBN: 0-06-028038-7

Best for ages 4-7

It is unfortunate that this wonderful book has to open with the farmer standing in bib-overalls with a hoe in his hand and a straw hat on his head. Three for three stereotypes on the first page of a book is an unusual negative accomplishment. It is unfortunate because the rest of the book is wonderful. It accurately depicts germination; pumpkin plants growing and flowering; pollination by bees; young pumpkins growing; larger pumpkins growing and still green; pumpkins changing colors; and uses for pumpkins. In fact, unlike almost all other books about pumpkins, this one is accurate. That is why we are recommending it in spite of the stereotypes. Please address that when using this book.

**From Wheat to Pasta** by Robert Egan

Price: \$6.95

ISBN: 0-516-26069-3

Best for ages 6-9

The excellent photographs beautifully illustrate this story from the wheat to the finished meal. The photos and story depict the growing wheat, combining wheat, grain elevators, milling flour, and making pasta. The book closes with photos and descriptions of six different types of pasta.

**Glorious Grasses, The Grains** by Meredith Sayles Hughes

Price: \$26.60

ISBN: 0-8225-283-2

Best for ages 10-18

This series provides a wealth of information on each topic. It covers seven major grains in a fairly complete fashion. The first two-thirds of the book are dedicated to the three major grains; wheat, rice and corn.

**The Great Sunflower Book** by Barbara Flores

Price: \$15.95

ISBN: 0-89815-837-0

Best for ages 12-Adult

Almost everyone enjoys seeing the bright and sunny face of sunflowers in a garden, field, or bouquet. But how many of us know the history of the sunflower or that sunflowers come in many varieties? Did you know that Jerusalem Artichokes are the roots of a sunflower? This book, with its beautiful photographs and well-researched information, will provide history, cultural impacts, cultivation, and varieties. Uses are detailed. The book includes a variety of recipes with sunflower seeds and/or oil. It ends with a list of heritage seed sources and reference list.

**Green Power, Leaf and Flower Vegetables** by Meredith Sayles Hughes      Best for ages 10-18  
Price: \$26.60  
ISBN: 0-8225-2839-8

This series provides a wealth of information on each topic. The book covers cabbage, broccoli, artichokes, spinach, Belgian endive, and lettuce. Each chapter covers the vegetable's history, sources, production methods and uses. In some cases, issues with the crop are presented or in others, nutritional benefits are addressed.

**Growing Colors** by Bruce McMillan      Best for ages 2-5  
Price: \$16.99  
ISBN: 0-688-07844-4

The wonderful photographs of this book are designed to help teach more about colors than plants but a skillful reader can use it to teach both.

**Growing Vegetable Soup** by Lois Ehlert      Best for ages 2-5  
Price: \$6.00  
ISBN: 0-15-232575-1

This colorful book is designed to capture the attention of young children and interest them in gardens. The bright (florescent) colors and shapes will capture the attention of most preschool children.

**How Do Apples Grow** by Betsy Maestro      Best for ages 5-10  
Price: \$4.95  
ISBN: 0-06-445117-8

This well-illustrated book detailing apple production can be used in a unit teaching about seasons, pollination, parts of the flower, honey production or just apples. It does an excellent job depicting the total process from dormancy through apple harvest. A credible illustration of apple harvest depicts dwarf apple trees which are the modern image of an orchard and seen in very few books of this type. This book is strongly recommended to teach about flower parts, pollination, fertilization and fruit growth.

**How Do You Raise a Raisin?** By Pam Munoz Ryan      Best for ages 5-10  
Price: \$16.95  
ISBN: 1-57091-397-8

This funny and informative book about this ancient food delivers a multi-dimensional look at one of America's favorite healthy treats. The book explains how grapes become raisins, who introduced the seedless grape, raisins throughout history, nutrition, and the many uses for raisins besides snacks.

**I Like Berries** by Jennifer Julius      Best for Ages 4-7  
Price: \$4.95  
ISBN: 0-516-23054-9

This early-reader book focuses on the foods which contain berries. It depicts strawberries, blueberries, raspberries and blackberries with text and products. It contains text about cranberries and red currants but photos only of cranberry sauce and currant jam. The one glaring error is that

the author confuses blackberries with black raspberries. The text describes blackberries but the photo is of both black and red raspberries. On a previous page the photo includes blackberries along with red raspberries. The book has a three-word glossary.

**I Like Corn** by Robin Pickering

Best for Ages 4-7

Price: \$4.95

ISBN: 0-516-23009-3

This early-reader book provides basic information about corn. It does not differentiate between sweet corn and field corn but discusses both as food, a problem on two levels. The text describes corn as a vegetable. We eat sweet corn as a vegetable but is (botanically) a fruit. On the other hand, field corn is considered a grain. This book nicely depicts corn growing and one method of irrigation, corn in the husk, on the cob, tamale making, and foods made with corn. The book ends with a nice glossary.

**I Like Oranges** by Robin Pickering

Best for Ages 4-7

Price: \$4.95

ISBN: 0-516-23011-5

While the chapter designations in this book are very artificial, this is one of the best books of the series. It depicts the fruit growing on trees and identifies it as a fruit. It also describes and depicts the structure of an orange and making juice. The book ends with a nice glossary.

**I Like Peanuts** by Jennifer Julius

Best for Ages 4-7

Price: \$4.95

ISBN: 0-516-23058-1

As with other books in this early reader series, this book focuses most on products made from peanuts. It has a nice photos of peanuts still attached to the plant and makes it clear that the peanuts develop underground. That process is not discussed. It also makes clear that peanuts are not a nut in a woody husk or shell, but a seed in a pod. The book ends with a nice glossary.

**I like Potatoes** by Jennifer Julius

Best for ages 5-7

Price: \$4.95

ISBN: 0-516-23134

This early-reader book gives the basics about potatoes. It focuses mainly on how potatoes are cooked and eaten rather than growing or history.

**It Could Still Be a Flower** by Allan Fowler

Best for ages 5-7

Price: \$4.95

ISBN: 0-516-27308-6

This early-reader book gives the basics about flowers. The book's title is misleading in that the book only focuses only on those flowers which would be readily identified. There are no unusual flowers here or tree flowers other than magnolias or cherry blossoms.

**Lan's Plant** by Sandy Riggs  
Price: \$3.99  
ISBN: 0-7641-3287-3

Best for ages 5-7

Readers Clubhouse presents a comprehensive program for young readers that reviews the short-a vowels and the short-e vowels while telling a story of a girl and her plant, how she cares for her plant and watches it grow.

**Loaves of Fun** by Elizabeth Harbison  
Price \$14.95  
ISBN: 1-55652-311-4

Best for ages 8-adult

The text of this book is much better than its black-line illustrations. The illustrations are rudimentary at best while the text is well researched and written. The book starts in 8000 B.C. in Asia with the first known use of a ground grain and water mixture. It ends with a look at a modern bakery today. Included are breads from many countries, cultures and celebrations. Beyond bread, it includes recipes for poster paints, squeeze paints and play dough that use wheat flour as an ingredient. The book ends with a well-developed glossary.

**Picking Apples and Pumpkins** by Amy and Richard Hutchings  
Price: \$3.95  
ISBN: 0-590-48456-7

Best for ages 5-7

This book would be a good one to read in the fall when pumpkins and apples are being harvested. Harvest is really the only connection between the two. The very traditional text and images depict a traditional family with grandmother taking a trip to the farm and harvesting their own apples and pumpkins. A warning is needed to address the hazards of climbing in trees and reaching to pick fruit.

**Plant Plumbing: A Book about Roots and Stems** by Susan Blackaby  
Price: \$21.26  
ISBN: 1-4048-0109-X

Best for ages 7-9

While the illustrations of this book detract from its overall appeal, the content is excellent. The book's focus on roots and stems is an unusual approach. The author explains the role of roots and stems, the two types of roots, stems found both above and below ground, function of their structures and how both help plants survive. It also includes a depiction of a seed germinating and some simple experiments. Included at the back of the book are a few Web sites and four additional books to read on the subjects.

**Plant Stems and Roots** by David M. Schwartz  
Price: \$2.99  
ISBN: 0-8368-2581-0

Best for ages 5-7

This early-reader book gives the basics about plant roots and stems without too much detail. The right-hand side of the page gives a clue (sometimes a strange one) as to what the reader will find when the page is turned.

**Popcorn** by Elaine Landau  
Price: \$16.95  
ISBN: 1-57091-422-7

Best for ages 5-9

Join the zany popcorn-loving raccoon on a journey through the history and science of popcorn. You'll learn where archaeologists found 5,600 year old ears of popcorn, how a hard little kernel turns into a fluffy snack and much more! While the book is a bit silly, it encompasses everything you ever wanted to know about popcorn! Take the opportunity to have children seek out the ridiculous images and correct them as you read the book. (Hint: The Pilgrims did not watch football on television at the first Thanksgiving.)

**The Pumpkin Book** by Gail Gibbons  
Price: \$6.95  
ISBN: 0-8234-1465-5

Best for ages 5-9

This is one of the few pumpkin books which explains that pumpkins are a member of the squash family and that there are different varieties and each has a different purpose. As with her other books, Gail does a great job of getting the information correct. This book provides a nice overview of how pumpkins grown, their history, uses, and includes a few fun activities.

**Pumpkin Jack** by Will Hubbell  
Price: \$6.95  
ISBN: 0-8075-6666-7

Best for ages 5-8

Join Jack in his voyage of discovery as he experiences death, decomposition and rebirth as his Jack-o-lantern fades, rots and new plants grow from a seed left inside the pumpkin shell. That seed sprouts and the growth leads to a new crop of pumpkins.

**Pumpkins** by Jacqueline Farmer  
Price: \$16.95  
ISBN: 1-57091-557-1

Best for ages 4-8

From Halloween jack-o-lanterns to Thanksgiving pie, pumpkins brighten up autumn days in so many ways. This book discusses where pumpkins come from, why we carve them on Halloween, and how to make pumpkin pie. This book brings you facts about pumpkins and can help to teach geography, history, nutrition, and life sciences.

**A Seed in Need** by Sam Godwin  
Price: \$22.60  
ISBN: 1-4048-0920-1

Best for ages 4-8

A first look at the plant cycle has never been so fun. In this book a colorful parade of inquisitive insects follow the progress of a sunflower seed in this first look at the life cycle of a sunflower. This book would be a great accompaniment for a lesson on planting seeds.

**Seed to Peanut** by Oliver S. Owen  
Price: \$22.78  
ISBN: 1-56239-489-4

Best for ages 7-12

This story tells about peanuts from A to Z. It provides the history of the peanut, its structure and growing habits, peanut farming, George Washington Carver, the use of peanuts, and how to grow peanuts in a short 25 pages of text. The book contains an excellent glossary. Excellent photographs and illustrations enhance the information presented.

**Seeds Grow!** by Angela Shelf Medearis  
Price: \$3.99  
ISBN: 0-590-37974-7

Best for ages 3-6

Basic plant germination and growth is described in rhyming poetry. This colorful book by Scholastic is designed for early readers. Without complex detail, germination, plant growth, flowering and pollination are identified. Activities in the back of the book are most suitable for first graders or children who have begun to read.

**Spill the Beans and Pass the Peanuts, Legumes** by Meredith Sayles  
Price: \$26.60  
ISBN: 0-8225-2834-7

Best for ages 10-18

This series provides a wealth of information on several types of legumes. The book covers peanuts, lentils, peas, and beans. Each chapter covers the vegetable's history, sources, production methods, and uses. In some cases, nutritional benefits are addressed.

**A Story about Raisins** by Karen A. Adler  
Price: \$14.95  
ISBN: 0-9679772-3-1

Best for ages 5-7

This book for young readers gives a brief overview of raisins. It describes a bit of their history, production and uses. The book contains four simple recipes that children can make themselves. The book also contains a CD with 3 songs.

**Taking Root** by Allan Fowler  
Price: \$4.95  
ISBN: 0-516-27058-3

Best for ages 5-7

This early-reader book begins to teach children about roots. Roots used for food are explored along with other root functions. The information is limited but appropriate for this age level.

**Tall and Tasty: Fruit Trees** by Meredith Sayles Hughes  
Price: \$26.60  
ISBN: 0-8225-2837-1

Best for ages 7-13

*Tall and Tasty: Fruit Trees* is packed with information about apples, peaches, mangoes, figs and citrus. Each chapter examines the discovery and migration of these plants as well as their roles in cooking, technology and world cultures. Through a close-up look at planting, pollination, harvesting, and processing, readers will also learn how fruit crops make their way from field to table.

**The Tiny Seed** by Eric Carle  
Price: \$18.95  
ISBN: 0-88708-015-4

Best for ages 4-7

Eric Carle's fanciful collages give this fictional story plenty for young children to view. Intended more as a book to interest children in nature, the book does contain some factual information for young children.

**Too Many Pumpkins** by Linda White  
Price: \$6.95  
ISBN: 0-8234-1320-9

Best for Ages 4-8

This colorful work of fiction will charm the students who hear it or read it. In the process they will learn that pumpkins grow from seeds. The pumpkin plant grows as a vine. Pumpkins are harvested in the fall and the many uses of pumpkins as food and decorations.

**Tomatoes (A True Book)** by Elaine Landau  
Price: \$6.95  
ISBN: 0-516-26773-6

Best for ages 7-13

As with the other books written by this author, this text provides an accurate and comprehensive look at tomatoes. From the early cultivation of tomatoes by the Aztecs to the introduction of the tomato to Europe by the Spanish Conquistadors and modern culture today, the text and photos tell tomato's story. The author has even depicted and described backyard, greenhouse and large scale tomato production. The story of processing the tomato into a variety of products is enhanced by including the rise of the Campbell Soup Company. The book ends with a good glossary.

**Tomatoes, Potatoes, Corn and Beans** by Sylvia A. Johnson  
Price: \$16.00  
ISBN: 0-689-80141-6

Best for ages 12-Adult

This excellent book describes how foods from North and South America changed eating around the world. It focuses on corn, beans, peppers, peanuts, potatoes, tomatoes, and chocolate but also includes other foods that originated in the Americas. Can you imagine Italian food without the tomato? Indian curries without the pepper? German or Irish food without the potato? Corn is now the most widely grown grain in the world. This book details the history of those transitions and is illustrated with historic artwork and modern photos. For anyone wishing to understand the real gold found in America, this book is an essential read.

**Tops and Bottoms** by Janet Stevens  
Price: \$16.95  
ISBN: 0-15-29285-10

Best for ages 4-8

Unfortunately, it is virtually impossible to avoid anthropomorphication of animals in children's fiction books. In spite of that fact, we are recommending this book because of the information it delivers. Bear and hare are involved in a gardening project. Hare, the book's main character, tricks his lazy colleagues into sharing crops which only benefit the hard work of the hare. During the process children learn which foods grow above the ground and which grow below the ground, hence the title - tops and bottoms. This is a great book to introduce gardening topics.

**The Tree Farmer** by Chuck Leavell and Nicholas Cravotta  
Price: \$16.95  
ISBN: 1-893622-16-9

Best for ages 6-14

This is the story of a tree farmer, his love of the land and appreciation of the beauty of trees. But he also appreciates the beauty of the products made from trees and how they grace our lives. Challenged by his grandson as to how he can grow beautiful trees only to cut them down, the tree farmer shares his knowledge and understanding of trees as a renewable resource. He also shares his love of the products trees provide and how they touch the souls of the people whose lives they grace. Written about family tree farm of the Rolling Stones' keyboardist, Chuck Leavell, the author shares his second life as a tree farmer. This is a book that shares a farmer's love of the land and wise use of its resources.

**The Ugly Vegetables** by Grace Lin  
Price: \$16.95  
ISBN: 0-88106-336-3

Best for ages 6-9

This fiction book is a good introduction to multiculturalism and the benefits of differences. A little girl is distressed by the ugly vegetables her mother is growing in their garden. The neighbors were all growing pretty flowers that filled the yards with color, aromas and pretty butterflies flitting about. But the plants grown by the girl's mother in her garden looked strange and the vegetables it yielded were ugly and bumpy. When it came time for harvest, the girl's mother filled the air with a wonderful aroma. The whole neighborhood stopped to partake of the delightful scent. Before long the neighborhood is gathering to trade their flowers for her soup. The book closes with a list of the "ugly" Chinese vegetables, their names, pronunciations, images, and descriptions along with the recipe for the "Ugly Vegetable Soup."

**Ultimate Bread** by Eric Treuille and Ursula Ferrigno  
Price: \$20.00  
ISBN: 0-7894-3513-6

Best for ages 12-Adult

Other books make the wheat-to-bread connection for younger students. This book moves beyond that to display and explain how cultures interpret bread and how bread impacts culture. It explains and displays a wide variety of bread from across the globe, explains the characteristic of each and explains the area it developed and sometimes what its name signifies.

**The Vegetable Alphabet Book** by Jerry Pallotta  
Price: \$6.95  
ISBN: 0-88106-469-6

Best for ages 4-7

A wonderful blend of facts and humor make learning about vegetable gardening fun and easy for children. The wonderful, accurate illustrations guide children through a variety of vegetables and terms from A to Z relating to vegetable gardening.

**What's for Lunch, Banana** by Pam Robson  
Price: \$18.52  
ISBN: 0-516-20823-3

Best for Ages 6-10

As with the other books in this series, the colorful, high-quality photographs complement the text and tell half the story. The book accurately depicts planting bananas, banana growth, plant

structure, harvesting, processing and ripening bananas. The book concludes with shipping bananas and familiar foods made from bananas and an excellent glossary.

**What's for Lunch, Corn** by Pam Robson

Best for Ages 6-10

Price: \$18.52

ISBN: 0-516-20823-3

As with the other books in this series, the colorful, high-quality photographs complement the text and tell half the story. The book accurately depicts planting corn, corn growth, plant structure, pollination, mechanically harvesting sweet corn, and processing sweet corn. The book accurately portrays insect damage in one of the best photographs of the whole series, need for chemical intervention to halt that damage and aerial spraying. The book's one short coming is that the author does not understand or explain the difference between sweet corn and field corn. It treats them as one and the same and the reader should address this with students. The book concludes with familiar foods made from corn and an excellent glossary.

**What's for Lunch, Peas** by Claire Llewellyn

Best for Ages 6-10

Price: \$18.52

ISBN: 0-516-21549-3

This is one of the best books in the series. The colorful, high-quality photographs are excellent. The book accurately depicts planting seed through harvesting, storage, packing and processing peas. Included with the production photos are a series of three time-lapse photos of seed germination and seedling growth. The book accurately portrays aerial spraying to control pests. Perhaps the best inclusions in the book are the two photos of mechanical pea harvest. As with the other books in the series, an excellent glossary will help build vocabulary.

**What's for Lunch, Potatoes** by Claire Llewellyn

Best for Ages 6-10

Price: \$6.95

ISBN: 0-516-26223-8

The colorful, high-quality photographs complement the text and tell half the story. The book accurately depicts planting seed potatoes, potato growth, fields of growing and harvested potatoes, harvesting, storage, packing and processing potatoes. Interspersed with these production photos are a series of "below the soil" photos which expose tuber formation and growth. The book concludes with familiar and not-so-familiar foods made from and with potatoes. An excellent glossary will help build vocabulary.

**What's for Lunch, Rice** by Pam Robson

Best for Ages 6-10

Price: \$6.95

ISBN: 0-516-26224-6

Representative of rice production worldwide, the book depicts planting seed rice through harvest and consumption. Although a bit confusing, photos of the high-tech method of rice production of the United States are interspersed with those of the hand-labor production methods in developing countries. This is the weakest book in the series but recommended because of a lack of any other book depicting modern rice production. The book mentions insect damage and the need for chemical intervention but the photo accompanying the text is of fertilizer application by hand. It concludes with familiar foods made from rice and an excellent glossary.

**The Yummy Alphabet Book: Herbs, Spices and Other Natural Flavors** by Jerry Pallotta  
Price: \$16.95 Best for ages 4-8  
ISBN: 10-0-88106-898-5

In this subject-oriented alphabet book the light-hearted style of Pallotta is expressed through mysterious and informative watercolors and creative alphabetic spice suggestions for cooks of all ages. This book is imaginative in introducing spices and herbs from ginger and garlic to bearberry which can only be eaten by bears.

**We Love Fruit** by Fay Robinson Best for ages 4-7  
Price: \$4.95  
ISBN: 0-516-46006-4

This early-reader book begins to teach students about fruit. A few basic concepts are addressed superficially, which is appropriate at this age level. The nice photos enhance the text.

**What Is a Plant?** by Bobbie Kalman Best for ages 7-12  
Price: \$5.95  
ISBN: 0-86505-959-4

This book provides a nice overview of plants. It identifies plant characteristics, their structures, the function of those structures, adaptations which plants have made to stay alive, how plants make food, novel ways plants meet their nutritional needs, germination, pollination and fertilization, seed dispersal and uses of seeds. It includes information on carnivorous and parasitic plants, vegetative reproduction, and forests. The book's one serious shortcoming occurs at the end of the text. In the "Threats to Plants" section, the information under wetlands and forests is a reiteration of commonly held environmental beliefs, several of which have no scientific basis. The statement that tropical rainforests are being cut down to make room for cattle ranches is the most egregious. If this book is used, that is an area for discussion and to point out to students that just because a statement is in print does not make it true. (Tropical forests are cut down for a type of slash-and-burn agriculture which cannot be sustained in fragile tropical soils. Grazing cattle is the last use of areas cleared when no other crops can be produced.) It is unfortunate that the author did not stop before including this section of the book.

**Wheat (A True Book)** by Elaine Landau Best for ages 7-13  
Price: \$6.95  
ISBN: 0-516-26792-2

As with the other books written by this author this text provides an accurate and comprehensive look at wheat. From the early cultivation of wheat over 17,000 years ago through modern culture today, the text and photos tell wheat's story. The author has even depicted and described the milling process. The author does a good job describing the six classes of wheat and difference between winter and spring wheat. The one small flaw appears in the caption of a photo which identifies large round bales of wheat straw as bales of hard red winter wheat. The book ends with a good glossary.

## Soils and Soil Conservation

**The Science of Soil** by Jonathan Bocknek

Best for ages 7–14

Price: \$24.67

ISBN: 0-8368-2468-7

One of the topics largely ignored in children’s books and instruction is soil. Yet it is of utmost importance in the food production system. This is one text that is both available and accurate. This book provides an excellent overview of a number of soil topics. It addresses soil formation, structure, components, nutrients, and issues. It also covers soil conservation, organic farming and non-agricultural topics such as building with soil.

**Dust Bowl Diary** by Ann Marie Low

Best for ages 12-Adult

Price: \$16.95

ISBN: 0-8032-7913-2

Taken from the diary of a young girl, this true-life account of the dust bowl is heart wrenching. The detailed, often humorous account is painful in its description of the ravaged land. One unusual insight that makes the book very relevant today is the description of government ineptitude and callous disregard for the damage done to human life. The timeliness of that connection makes this era come to life in a way that would be challenging were it not for recent events. This book would be an excellent accompaniment for classes reading the “Grapes of Wrath” or studying the dust bowl years in American history.

## Technology

**Rainmakers: A Photographic Story of Center Pivots** Forward by Congressman Tom Osborne

Price: \$34.95

Best for ages 7-Adult

ISBN: 0-9765058-0-0

This book takes us on a journey that explains how center pivot irrigation is an important tool for growing the food on which we depend. This important story is presented through instructive and beautiful photographs making the books a visual delight for even the casual reader. The goal of the book is to help all of us appreciate the history and complexity of center pivot irrigation and how the technology helps producers nourish our world.

**High-Tech Harvest, A Look at Genetically Engineered Foods** by Elizabeth Marshall

Price: \$12.00

Best for ages 14-Adult

ISBN: 0-531-11434-1

and Teacher Reference

While genetic engineering could be a very complex issue, this book makes the topic, techniques, and issues very understandable. The author has produced a text that examines the issue of genetically engineered foods in a very objective manner. She does not shirk from exploring those opposed to this new technology nor does she criticize their opposition. As such, this is a great addition to a library or classroom as a resource for this topic. The book provides references for each chapter, resources for further exploration and a glossary.