Specialty Crops are a big part of My Plate™. Hopefully they fill a large part of your plate too! Specialty Crops include a wide variety of fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture and nursery crops. All those spices and herbs used for cooking your favorite meals make the list too!

Why are they so special? Unlike crops such as corn, soybeans, cotton, and wheat that are grown for many different uses, Specialty Crops are grown and used by people for food, medicine, and decoration.

Get Truly Fresh Produce

The best way to get fresh food is to get local food! Just look for the orange and black Arizona Grown Label. Since the early 1990’s Arizona Grown has been used to raise awareness about the benefits of buying locally-grown produce and plants. Arizona Grown is a voluntary program. This means even if it does not have a label it still could have come right here from Arizona. Like local? Be sure to buy your leafy greens. Ninety-percent of the nation’s winter leafy greens come from Arizona farms!

WHAT MAKES SPECIALTY CROPS SPECIAL?

Did you know that the pollen of many fruits and vegetables is too heavy or sticky to be carried by the wind? Because of this, bees play a very important role! They visit flowering plants to gather sweet nectar while pollen from each plant sticks to their fine body hairs. A worker bee may visit as many as 2,000 flowers a day. This makes bees excellent pollinators! Bees pollinate 30% of food crops and 70% of all wild plants.

CAREER CORNER

Cheryl Goar - Executive Director
Arizona Nursery Association

I manage a non-profit trade association representing the wholesale and retail nursery industry in Arizona. That includes growers of trees, ornamental shrubs, and cacti! I am responsible for marketing, education, lobbying and representing Arizona’s nursery farmers on issues that affect their ability to do business. I love what I do because it allows me to be involved in agriculture, promotion, and government relations at the same time! One day I might be at the capitol and on another I could be planning an educational conference or visiting a plant nursery to say new technology in action. I received my Bachelor's Degree in Communications, a Certificate in Non-Profit Management, a Master's Degree in Agribusiness, and a Certified Association Executive designation.

Ashley Mortimer - Marketing Director
Mortimer Family Farms

Every day I get to share what I love with others! I work as the Marketing Director for my family’s farm. My job is to tell everyone what we do on the farm and share news about the events and festivals we put on! That means I get to work with social media, newspapers, TV stations, radio stations, and even write articles about life on the farm and upcoming festivals. My position was developed when my family saw a need to let people know what we do on the farm. It’s exciting to me to see the joy that comes from people coming with their families to our farm and learning what a farmer does every day! I also love being able to think creatively about sharing our message. To serve in my role, I earned a Bachelor's Degree in Agricultural Communications and Leadership at the University of Arizona.

Scotty Nickerson - Farm Family Partner
Nickerson Family Farms, Yuma, AZ

What I love most about farming is that I get to work outside directly with the plants. I feel a great sense of pride in working hard to produce food that ends up on the dinner plates of millions of people around the world. Looking forward, I am excited about the potential of agricultural technology to allow us to continue to produce enough food for the growing populations and it gives me tremendous satisfaction to know that I am building upon the hard work and tradition of many generations of American farmers who worked this ground before me. To help me bring new ideas to the farm, I attended the University of Arizona and received my Bachelor’s Degree in Business Entrepreneurship with honors distinction from Barrett Honors College.

To learn more about Agriculture in the Classroom and the other FREE classroom resources visit us at www.aizfbo.org/aic, or contact Katie Akins at 480-435-3608.

High School CTE Standards: Agribusiness Systems Standard 12.0 Analyze Agricultural Literacy Topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kindergarten</th>
<th>1st Grade</th>
<th>2nd Grade</th>
<th>3rd Grade</th>
<th>4th Grade</th>
<th>5th Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K.R1.1</td>
<td>1.R1.1</td>
<td>2.R1.1</td>
<td>3.R1.1</td>
<td>4.R1.1</td>
<td>5.R1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K.R2.2</td>
<td>1.R2.2</td>
<td>2.R2.4</td>
<td>3.R2.4</td>
<td>4.R2.3</td>
<td>5.R2.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FRUITS
apples
peaches
plums
pears

grains
barley
corn
wheat

VEGETABLES
broccoli
cauliflower
cucumber
artichoke

PROTEIN
soda
peanut butter
milk
cheese

Get Truly Fresh Produce

The best way to get fresh food is to get local food! Just look for the orange and black Arizona Grown Label. Since the early 1990’s Arizona Grown has been used to raise awareness about the benefits of buying locally-grown produce and plants. Arizona Grown is a voluntary program. This means even if it does not have a label it still could have come right here from Arizona. Like local? Be sure to buy your leafy greens. Ninety-percent of the nation’s winter leafy greens come from Arizona farms!
Tree nuts are a good source of protein, fiber, and fats. They contain many vitamins and minerals essential for healthy living. There are a variety of nuts grown throughout the world. Arizona is most known for growing pecans and pistachios. The trees that produce these nuts are alternate bearing trees. This means that they will have a good crop one year and then a smaller crop the next.

Arizona is most known for growing pecans and pistachios. The trees that produce these nuts are alternate bearing trees. This means that they will have a good crop one year and then a smaller crop the next.

Did you know tomatoes are grown both inside and outside? There are nearly 250 acres of greenhouse tomatoes in Arizona. Growing tomatoes indoors allows farmers to grow them year-round instead of in only one season.

Insta Grassification
Laying sod is the fastest way to a beautiful green lawn. Arizona farmers grow turf grass for use in landscaping, ball fields, and golf courses.

Sink or Float?

Does an apple sink or float? Sink____ Float____

Does an orange sink or float? Sink____ Float____

Does a peeled orange sink or float? Sink____ Float____

Try this with your teacher or another adult.

Were your guesses correct?

Grading

Many of the apple and citrus trees producing fruit today have been grafted. Grafting occurs when farmers insert a stem with leaf buds into the stock of another tree. Why do farmers do this? Grafting allows for different varieties of fruits to be attached to rootstock that might be better suited for the soil or resisting insects or disease. Fruit from grafted trees is more uniform in size, quality, and variety. Grafting can also be used to produce seedless fruits like navel oranges.

There are roses by many different names growing in Arizona. In fact, there are 50 varieties of red roses alone! Arizona farmers grow 75% of the nation's rosebushes. An amazing feat since there are only 4 farms that grow them!

The Juliet rose took 15 years and cost $5 million to breed.

Mom always says to eat your veggies and there is a good reason for it! Most vegetables are low in fat and calories and have no cholesterol. They provide us with lots of nutrients like potassium, fiber, and vitamins. Arizona farmers want to make sure you are eating your vegetables so they produce a lot. In fact, Arizona ranks #2 nationally in the production of cauliflower and broccoli. And the state that ranks #1, well they get most of their seeds from Arizona farmers.