

Greetings From
ARIZONA

Always in Season!

SCENIC ARIZONA

Arizona is known for its scenic vacation destinations including the Grand Canyon, the Sonoran Desert, the Mogollon Rim, Sedona, historic Indian Ruins, the Colorado River, and many others. Arizona is also known as one of the most productive and efficient agricultural regions in the world, with beauty that also provides the food and fiber to sustain life in the desert. We hope you enjoy your visit to scenic Arizona.

Arizona is one of the most diverse agricultural production states in the nation, producing more than 160 varieties of vegetables, livestock, field crops and nursery stock. Arizona's climate, natural resources, agribusiness infrastructure and farm heritage help make agriculture a multi-billion dollar industry employing over 88,000 Arizona residents. Arizona is a great place to live and enjoy the farm fresh products grown here.

Low relative humidity and 250 plus clear and sunny days make Arizona one of the best regions of the world to produce food and fiber and harvest our natural resources. Fertile soil, arid land technologies, and one of the most efficient and elaborate irrigation networks make our ability to ensure crop success unsurpassed.

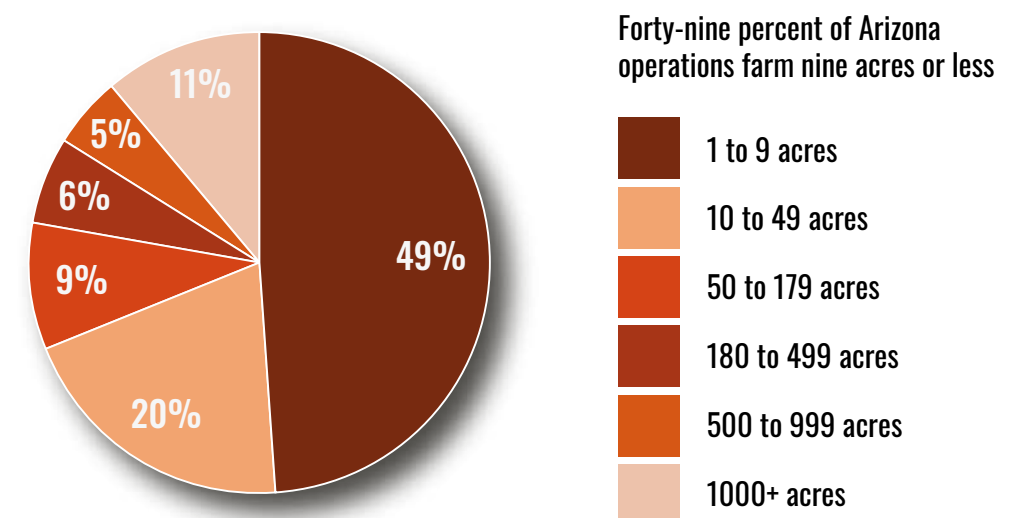
THE AGRICULTURAL “3 CS”

Cotton, Citrus, and Cattle provide the money that built much of the infrastructure Arizonans depend on today. Farmers and ranchers were among the earliest business, government and social leaders in Arizona, and they still take great pride in helping the state prosper. Today's technological innovations in Arizona and around the county are making the U.S. food supply the safest, most affordable and abundant in the world.

There are 19,000 farms and ranches in Arizona according to the USDA's National Agricultural Statistic Service. Individuals or families operate 96% of them. Farmers and ranchers are the primary managers of the Arizona's lands, with cropland and grazing land representing roughly three-quarters of the state's land area, according to the United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service. There are 26,200,000 acres of farm and ranch land in Arizona.

This guide was designed to highlight the numerous specialty crops grown in Arizona. All crops featured in this guide are specialty crops except wheat, feed grains, oilseeds and cotton.

Figure 1. Percentage of Arizona Farms by Farm Size (Acreage), 2022



Source: USDA, 2017, 2015 Census of Agriculture-Arizona State and County Data

VEGETABLES

AMERICANS NOW EAT EIGHT TIMES
THE AMOUNT OF BROCCOLI THEY ATE
ABOUT 20 YEARS AGO.

ARIZONA

ARTICHOKES

Borrow some spinach from Popeye and make a delicious spinach and artichoke salad for your next dinner party.

There is mention of the artichoke in Greek and Roman literature as far back as 77AD.

BELL PEPPERS

Don't forget bell peppers when you make grilled vegetables, or stuff them with Arizona raised ground beef.

BROCCOLI

Broccoli comes from the Italian "brocco," meaning arm or branch. The branch and the florets can be eaten cooked or raw and are a great source of Vitamin C.

In Arizona, broccoli grows October through April, perfect for the Holiday meals and Super Bowl party trays.

Broccoli is a human innovation, a man-made food, and a result of a mutation selected and cultivated by man throughout history.

CABBAGE

Great on St. Patrick's Day with your favorite corn beef, cabbage is grown mostly in Yuma and Maricopa counties and grows year round in Arizona.

CARROTS

High in the antioxidants Vitamin A and C, carrots are gaining in popularity. Carrots are usually orange in color although purple, red, white and yellow varieties also exist.

Technology allows farmers to produce bite-sized carrots that are peeled and ready to serve, making for a great snack. They go great on a vegetable platter or in a school lunch box.

CAULIFLOWER

From appetizer platters to vegetable salads, cauliflower is high in the antioxidant Vitamin C and a good source of folate. And now it comes in purple-that's right purple.

Purple fruits and vegetables contain health-promoting phytochemicals such as anthocyanins and phenolics, currently being studied for their antioxidant and anti-aging benefits.



MORE VEGETABLES

CELERY

Great in soups, mixed in your tuna salad or in your holiday stuffing, some people are surprised that celery is grown here. It's a great old standby snack with peanut butter!

Celery is mostly water and therefore very low in calories, making it a first-rate snack food for people trying to control their weight.

CHILE PEPPERS

A staple in most Mexican dishes, Chile peppers add an array of spice to your favorite authentic meal.

CILANTRO

Salsa connoisseurs recognize this bold garnish that you'll find in many salsas and in some Mexican dishes. It has a pungent smell and looks similar to parsley.

Also referred to as coriander, the leaves look a bit like flat parsley and, in fact, they are related.

CORN/SWEET CORN

Most of the corn grown in Arizona is cut for silage, meaning it's for cows to eat. But there are some farmers that grow fresh sweet corn for your family to enjoy.

Arizona's diverse regions allow for sweet corn season to run May - Sept.

LETTUCE

Chances are any salad you eat in the months of November through March literally had its roots in Arizona. Yuma is the winter lettuce capitol of the nation, producing several popular lettuce varieties including romaine, green and red leaf, butter, iceberg and numerous salad greens.

Lettuce is low in calories, fat free, cholesterol-free and very low in sodium.

ONIONS

A staple for cooking, onions are found in every kitchen cupboard. In Arizona, look for Grand Canyon sweet onions that you can deep-fry and make your own bloomin' onion.

Farmers donate surplus crops like onions to gleaning programs of Arizona Food Banks and contribute to food security.

PARSLEY

Probably the loneliest vegetable because it is used mostly for garnish, parsley is important to the restaurant industry.

In ancient times parsley wreaths were used to ward off drunkenness.

POTATOES

Mashed, fried, baked, kettle fried chips and in potato salad are just a few ways to enjoy Arizona fresh potatoes.

Queen Creek, Arizona, was once a leader in potato production.

PUMPKINS

Pumpkins are one of Arizona's interactive crops. At many Arizona farms, kids can search the fields for their own jack-o-lantern for Halloween. The seeds inside aren't wasted and make a great treat when dried and salted.

SPINACH

Popeye would enjoy living in Yuma in the winter because spinach fields abound. Enjoy it boiled the traditional way, or use it instead of lettuce to make a tasty sandwich.

SQUASH

Mother Nature really outdid herself when it came to the squash. There are more than a dozen varieties, each with a unique shape, color, texture and flavor.

In Arizona, farmers grow summer and winter squash.

TOMATOES

Arizona tomatoes provide us with salsa, tomato sauce for spaghetti and pizzas, and soups, plus taste great sliced on your summertime Arizona beef hamburger. Good quality tomatoes should have bright, shiny skins and firm flesh.

Tomatoes are a fruit. A "fruit" is any fleshy material covering a seed or seeds.

In 1893, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled the tomato was a "vegetable" and was subject to import taxes. At that time, fruits were not subject to import taxes and foreign countries could flood the market with lower priced produce.



Fruits



APPLES

Fuji, Granny Smith, Gala and Golden Delicious are the apple varieties grown here. Enjoy an apple a day or use a few more to make an American apple pie or turnover.

Although there are 7,500 varieties of apples, only 100 varieties are being grown commercially in the United States.

DATES

If you can't get a date, come to Arizona. Dates are grown on palm trees, fittingly called date palms. Only the female trees produce fruit and yes, a male tree is needed. Dates can be eaten whole, added to cookies and are even offered in milkshakes in Dateland, Arizona.

About three-fourths of the world's date crop is grown in the Middle East, but much of the U.S. date supply comes from California and Arizona, where date orchards were introduced in the early 1900s.

GRAPEFRUIT

Great for breakfast, grapefruit is part of a healthy start to the day.



GRAPES

Table grapes can be added to a child's lunchbox or frozen for a cold snack.

The science of growing and cultivating grapes is called viticulture.

LEMONS/LIMES

As a garnish to iced tea or the main squeeze in lemonade, lemons are one of the crops that Arizona is near the top of production in the nation. Arizona limes are great accents for mixed drinks.

Lemons are high in Vitamin C and contain folate, which helps prevent birth defects and cuts the risk of heart disease.

MELONS

Cantaloupes and honeydews are another way to cool off in the Arizona heat. They are sweet and juicy in a fruit salad or with a hearty Arizona grown breakfast.

ORANGES

Start every day with orange juice to get your Vitamin C. Peel and throw into a blender for smoothies or just peel and enjoy.

Oranges and orange rinds are used for potpourri and in shampoos and soaps. Oranges are the third most popular fruit in the U.S., right behind bananas and apples. Navel, Blood, Sweet, Temple and Valencia thrive here.

PEACHES

Though a limited crop in Arizona, "pick your own peach" farms give you sweet and ripe peaches for canning, pies and snacking.

TANGERINES/TANGELOS

Easy to peel, wonderfully sweet and highly nutritious, a small tangerine will have more usable Vitamin C than a large orange. People who have a difficult time digesting oranges find many tangerines more agreeable.

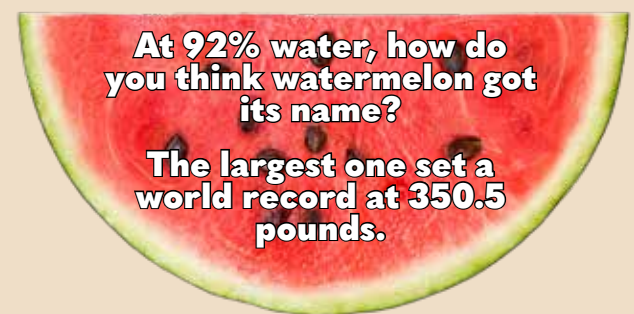
WATERMELON

What would summer be without watermelon? Arizona farmers now provide us with seedless and mini varieties of these sweet and juicy treats.

WINE

Grapes have been grown here for wine since the 1500s. Though once a secret, Arizona is fast becoming known for its wine grapes and demand is higher than ever.

Arizona wines have been served at the White House! One bottle of wine contains approximately 2.8 pounds of grapes.





Fiber

ALFALFA HAY

Alfalfa hay is fed to horses, sheep, goats, and cattle. It can also be made into pellets for horse feed. The smell of fresh cut alfalfa on an evening drive is unmistakable.

In most climates, alfalfa is cut 3-4 times a year. Thanks to Arizona's climate and irrigation systems, hay farmers here can harvest up to 12 times a year!

COTTON

Arizona's climate and controlled water supply makes for great cotton growing conditions. Raw cotton is picked from the plant and ginned into clean cotton that is used to make thousands of useful products including fine shirts, absorbent towels, pillowcases, diapers, Q-tips, and tissue paper. The seed, which is crushed and used for cottonseed oil is a common component in many food items such as cooking oil, shortening and salad dressing, crackers, cookies and chips.



U.S. PAPER CURRENCY
SHOULD ACTUALLY BE
CALLED COTTON MONEY.
IT IS MADE UP OF 75%
COTTON AND 25% LINEN.

Grains & Nuts

GARBANZOS

Popular on salad bars, garbanzo beans or chickpeas are the most widely consumed legume in the world.

Originating in the Middle East, chickpeas have a firm texture with a flavor somewhere between chestnuts and walnuts.

WHEAT

Durham wheat grown in Arizona is some of the finest grown for pasta in the world. Desert Durham is known for large uniform kernels and low moisture content, producing pasta of desirable color and firmness to satisfy domestic and international connoisseurs.

Right here in Arizona, wheat is used to make pretzels, tortillas, chips, spaghetti and other types of pasta.

NUTS

No, we are not nuts, but we certainly grow them here. Pistachios and pecans grow well in Arizona, mostly in southeastern Arizona.



Ornamentals

FORESTS

Arizona is home to the largest contiguous ponderosa pine stand in the world. Forestry is part of agriculture, and in fact, The U.S. Forest Service is managed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Years of drought and forest mismanagement is devastating the forest. Monumental fires and the pine bark beetle are causing irreversible damage. Limited timber milling may be planned if incentives are put in place for companies to harvest overgrown and fire damaged forests.

NURSERY

The "green industry" is a thriving and growing component of Arizona's economy and a viable partner in Arizona's diverse agriculture. From 100-acre tree farms to flowers for annual color, the green industry provides over \$1 billion each year to the Arizona economy. The industry provides the region with arid plant material and fosters a need for native and drought tolerant species.

Animals



BEEES

Used for pollination of crops, honey actually becomes a byproduct. It is jarred and sold for a variety of purposes. Bee farmers rent out their hives. Honeybees can visit up to 5,000 flowers in a single day. Bees must visit 2 million flowers to make one pound of honey.

Honey is the only food that never goes bad. It has been called nature's perfect food. If unprocessed and it crystalizes, just heat it up for one minute in the microwave.

CATTLE

Cattle ranching dates back to the 1800s in Arizona. While the technology has changed, one thing has not... Americans love a great steak on the grill, so it's a big part of Arizona agriculture. Roasts, burgers, sausage and steak are the favorite ways to enjoy beef. Byproducts of beef include leather, marshmallows, soaps, jello, make-up, crayons and more. In fact, 99% of the cow is utilized thanks to the many byproducts.

Ranchers not only produce beef for us to enjoy, they also protect the environment, feed and water wildlife, improve rangelands and provide open space.

DAIRY

Got Milk? Arizona does... in fact Arizona has some of the largest dairy herds in the country. The steady climate and access to high quality feeds helps Arizona lead the nation in gallons produced per cow. Milk is a healthy part of a great diet and the United States Department of Agriculture recommends having 3 servings a day. Milk is used to make milkshakes, cheese, yogurt, whipped cream, butter, and sour cream, just to name a few.

There are over 190,000 dairy cows in Arizona, each producing over 24,000 pounds of milk per year. A gallon of milk weighs 8.6 pounds.



GOATS

Have you ever wanted to milk a goat? Well, you can! Dairy goats are growing in popularity. Meat goats and angora goats, raised for their fine fibers, also call Arizona home.

HORSES

There are an estimated 100,000 horses in Arizona and they are used for pleasure, horseracing, horse shows, trail rides, rodeos and breeding.

Prescott, Arizona, claims to have the world's oldest rodeo, dating back to 1888. No horses, no rodeo!

POULTRY



Hickman's Family Farms is one of Arizona's only commercial egg ranches. This high-tech family farm cares for over 10 million laying hens. Their hard boiled, liquid and shelled eggs (brown and white) can be purchased at retailers throughout the state.

A chicken lays an egg about every 26 hours.

RATITES

Ostriches and emus are members of the ratite family. It was once thought that their lean meat would outpace beef. While it has not, many people enjoy the flavor and low fat meat ostriches and emus provide. Their eggs can be eaten and are utilized by famous chefs.

Feathers are another byproduct that is utilized. Pillows, decorative hats and feather clisters are some common uses.

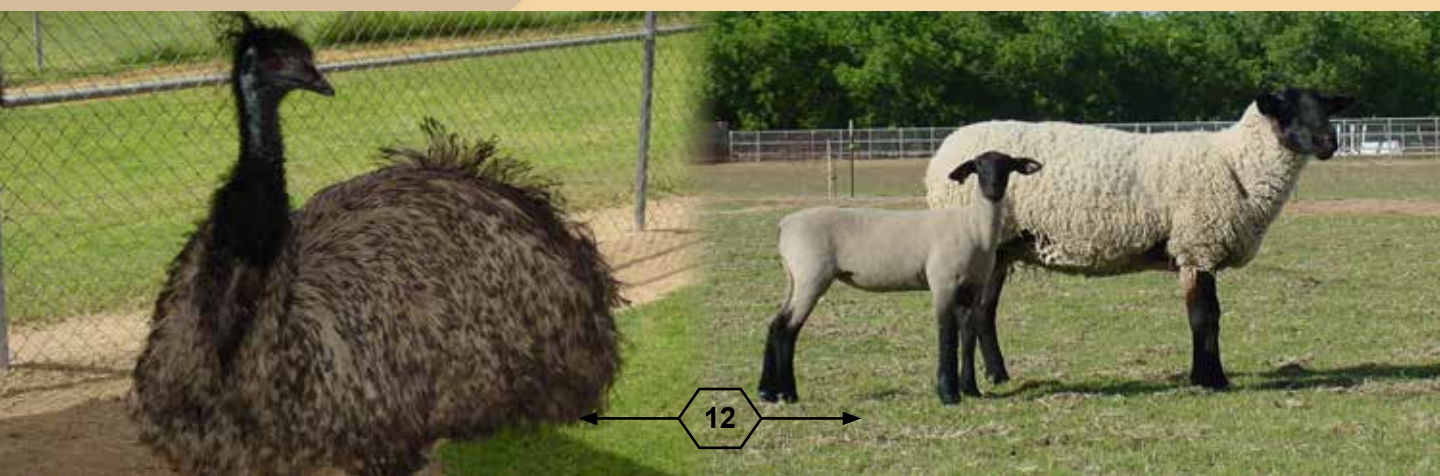
SHEEP

Sheep provide us with not only great meat, but also wool. Enjoy a rack of lamb at your next holiday feast. Then warm up on the couch with a nice wool blanket or slip on a wool sweater when the temperature dips.

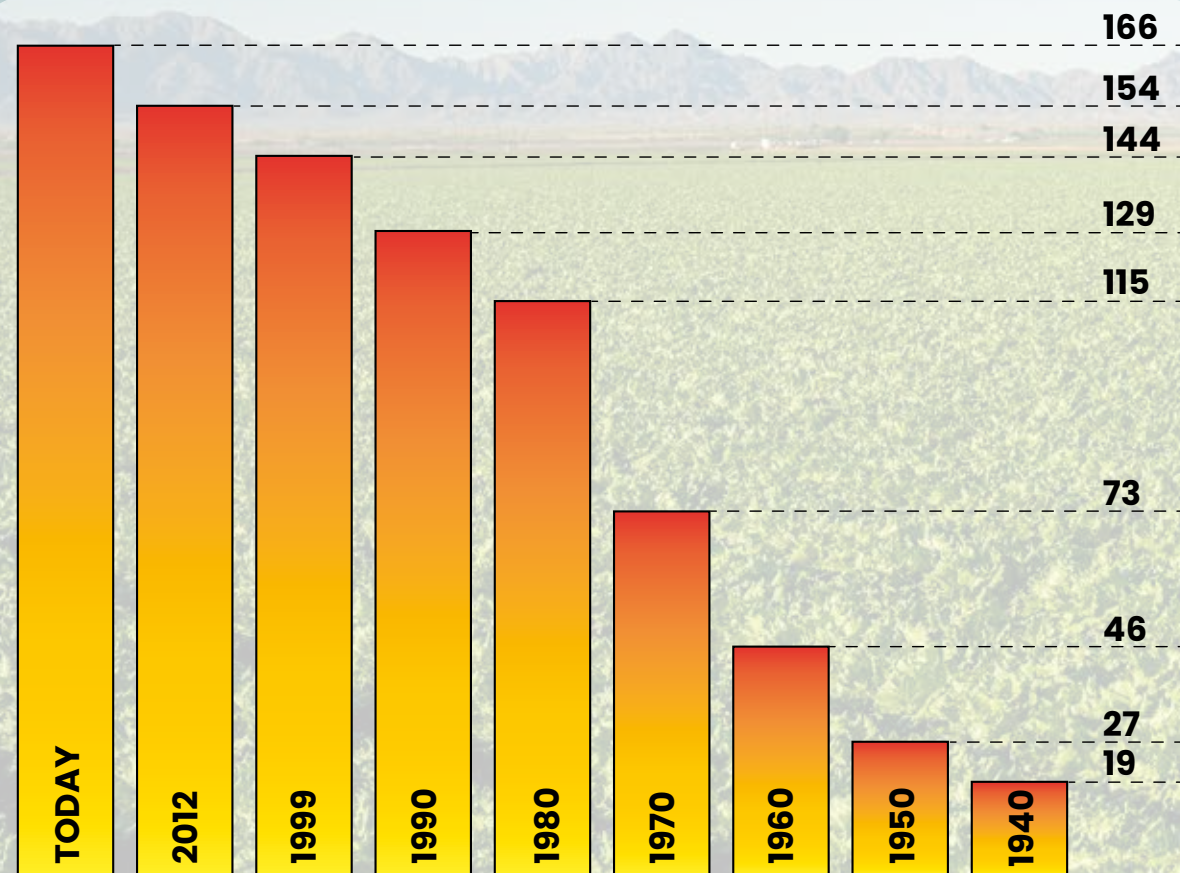
SWINE

While the Midwest is known for raising the bulk of hogs in America, there are several pork producers in Arizona. From spiral cut ham and cheese or ham and eggs, Arizona farmers provide you with the freshest pork available.

Little is wasted when animals are processed for consumption. Even the pigs ears are utilized as chew toys at your favorite doggy grocery store.



American Farmers. Feeding America and the World.



Today's farmers are the world's most productive. Today, each U.S. farmer produces enough food and fiber for 166 people. Farmers are business people, community leaders, environmentalists, animal caretakers and family men and women.

Where Does Your Food Dollar Go?

Farmers and ranchers only receive about 8 cents out of every dollar spent on food that is eaten at home or away from home. In 1980, farmers received 31 cents out of every dollar spent on food in America.

**OFF FARM
TOTAL \$.92**

**ON FARM
\$.08**

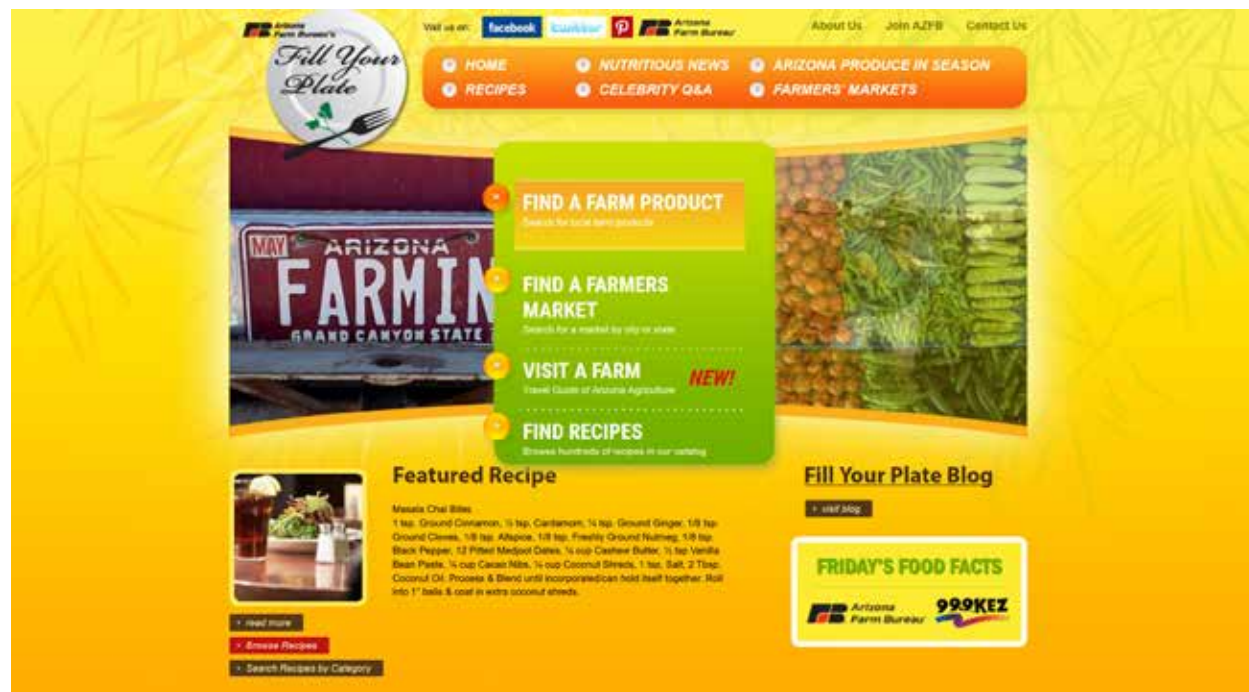


Fill Your Plate Program

The Arizona Farm Bureau launched *Fill Your Plate* to assist in helping the general public connect to Arizona's farmers and ranchers. The program provides chefs and the public with an opportunity to find and purchase locally grown food products using the online directory search tool. *Fill Your Plate* offers all sorts of entertaining opportunities to engage beyond just the searchable product-based database. You can post a question on our Farmer Forum, search for those delicious recipes, read what local celebrities are saying about food and much more! *Fill Your Plate* even provides information about how food prices are trending and nutritious tidbits that highlight Arizona fruits and vegetables and meat products.



Visit *Fill Your Plate* to see featured farm families through their Video Vignettes. Go to www.fillyourplate.org to discover Arizona's farm and ranch families.



Agriculture in the Classroom



The average consumer is 3-4 generations removed from the farm and ranch. That is a lot of disconnect! To help bridge the gap between the consumer and the producer, Arizona Farm Bureau launched the Agriculture in the Classroom (AITC) Program. AITC connects the public with where their food, fiber and fuel are coming from.

The AITC Program provides free standards-based resources and materials to grades K-12 and beyond. Whether it is through an interactive classroom presentation, a self-guided Curriculum Kit or by writing letters and having online interaction with a producer, AITC is out there sharing agriculture's story.

For more information on how you can take advantage of the free resources from AITC, go to www.azfbaitc.org or email us at aitc@azfb.org.



Your Arizona Agriculture is Diverse and Abundant!





This guide was created by the Arizona Farm Bureau Federation. Additional copies are available by calling (480) 635-3608 or email aitc@azfb.org.