As American as Apple Pie: Investigating the Ingredients in an American Favorite

Unit: The Apple Genomics Project

Lesson: As American As Apple Pie: Investigating the Ingredients in an American Favorite

Audience: This lesson is intended for use with upper elementary, middle, and high school social studies, agriculture, or family and consumer science classes. It could also be used with informal audiences from upper elementary school age and up, studying geography, food production, or apples.

General Objective: To teach youth about global involvement in food production.

Specific Objectives:

1. To learn the ingredients needed to make apple pie filling.
2. To identify on a world globe or map the origin of the ingredients needed to make apple pie filling.
3. To evaluate the accuracy of the adage, “As American as Apple Pie.”

Time Required: About 30 minutes.

Directions to Instructor:

This will be an instructor-led activity. Prior to the activity, gather the following ingredients needed to make apple pie filling, to display to students: apples, sugar, flour, cinnamon, salt, nutmeg, lemon juice. Also, display an apple pie and a globe or world map.

Divide students into two teams. Ask students what the phrase “as American as apple pie” means to them. Ask teams to guess from what country each ingredient in apple pie filling originates, and to identify on the globe or world map the countries they guess. Award points for the correct answers. Limit the number of guesses per team per ingredient. If students do not arrive at the correct answer within the limit of guesses, share the correct answer with them, and identify the correct location on the globe or map. Once the correct answer has been given (whether by the students or by the instructor), share the corresponding fact(s) with the students:

- **Apples**—The top apple-producing states are Washington, New York, Michigan, California, Pennsylvania and Virginia; these states produce nearly 85 percent of the nation’s apple supply each year.
- **Sugar**—Produced in at least 121 countries, as sugar beets and sugar cane; Australia is the largest producer of sugar cane, while Brazil is the largest exporter of sugar cane.
- **Flour**—Made from wheat; the United States consumes flour mostly grown within its own borders, with North Dakota, Minnesota, and Montana being the top wheat-producing states. Other top wheat-producing countries include Egypt, Japan, and Mexico.
• **Cinnamon**—Produced from the bark of an evergreen tree; grown and produced in Sri Lanka, Seychelles, Malaysia, and India.

• **Salt**—the United States is the leading producer of salt, followed by China and Germany; may be mined or artificially produced.

• **Nutmeg**—Derived from the fruit of a type of evergreen tree native to southeastern Asia; the leading nutmeg-producing countries are Indonesia and Grenada, followed by India, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, and some small Caribbean islands.

• **Lemon juice**—Produced from lemons, which probably originated in Persia; the world’s leading producers of lemons are Italy, Spain, Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, Lebanon, South Africa and Australia.

To conclude the exercise, ask students to reconsider what the adage “as American as apple pie” means to them, based on the information they learned from this exercise. Has their response changed?

Enjoy the apple pie as refreshment after the exercise. Or, as an added activity, have students make an apple pie using the ingredients gathered by the instructor prior to the lesson.

**Resources:**

• For a list of national academic standards met by this activity, see the “As American as Apple Pie” lesson on the apple genomics website where you downloaded this activity. The “As American as Apple Pie” lesson also has additional activities and information about apples.

• Recipe for “Classic Apple Pie Filling” from New York Apple Country:
  - [http://www.nyapplecountry.com/classicpie.htm](http://www.nyapplecountry.com/classicpie.htm)

• Sugar:

• Flour:

• Cinnamon:
  - [www.itdg.org/docs/technical_information_service/cinnamon.pdf](http://www.itdg.org/docs/technical_information_service/cinnamon.pdf)

• Salt:
  - [http://www.saltinstitute.org/](http://www.saltinstitute.org/) (includes salt-related curriculum)
  - [http://www.saltsense.co.uk/index.htm](http://www.saltsense.co.uk/index.htm)

• Nutmeg:

• Lemons:
  - [http://www.hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/morton/lemon.html](http://www.hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/morton/lemon.html)

• World agriculture: