

**Grade Level:** 3

**Title:** Who Grew My Strawberries? (Nov. - April)

**Purpose:**

Students will explain the role of the strawberry farmer as an entrepreneur in their community.

**Subject Area(s) Addressed:**

Social Studies

**Common Core/Essential Standards:**

**Social Studies:**

3.E.2.2 Give examples of entrepreneurship in various regions of our state.

**Vocabulary:**

business  
entrepreneur  
entrepreneurship  
region

**Teaching Strategy:**

**Essential Question:**

What is an entrepreneur?

**Activity:**

Have students read the following article about strawberry farming.

<http://www.cals.uidaho.edu/edComm/pdf/CIS/CIS0931.pdf> (Note: the production

system described (and the budget) are not for our region, however, growers' decision-making process is similar.) Have students discuss the article within a group or with a partner. Have students write the most important reasons to start a strawberry farm. Have groups discuss their choices.

Explain that farmers, like students and like other businesses, need to gather information, decide where they want to end up, and make a plan or at least have an idea for how to get there. How do farmers get information? (Cooperative Extension agents, meetings/conferences, the web, other farmers, their own experiences, and suppliers (eg of fertilizer, plants, chemicals) Do they weigh the information and compare it, the same way students do?

This is a good time to have a strawberry farmer visit. Students will be ready to engage in a discussion. If a personal visit is not possible, use the Strawberry blog to ask the farmer questions.

Next, have students develop a strawberry farm plan. How will they sell the strawberries they grow? Will they do anything else with them (eg make jam, have hayrides, etc.)? What would they need? What do they need to find out? Have them create a farm logo and signs, draw a farm map, etc.

Investigate where strawberry farmers sell their product. This could include roadside stands, farm stands, farmer's markets, and local grocery stores. How does this vary from region to region in the country? Where are farms near your school and how do these farmers sell?

### **Background Information:**

The marketing focus of strawberry growers varies by region of the country. Growers in California and Florida grow primarily for wholesale, and their berries are sold all over the country. (Florida produces a winter crop, with harvest season Dec-April; California provides berries much of the rest of the year, with different production areas up and down the state.) Oregon and Washington growers grow primarily for processing -- their berries are used in jam, ice cream, yogurt, and other products -- but also sell locally during their short, three-week harvest season. Growers in other states mostly sell their fruit locally, either direct to consumers or to local stores, restaurants, schools and supermarket chains. North Carolina is the largest (by value of production and pounds produced) of these states. There are about a dozen growers in NC who wholesale on a significant scale, and most of these sell direct to consumers as well. Direct-to-consumer options include pick-your-own, roadside markets or on-farm stands, and farmers markets.

Growers often combine several market outlets. If they sell to consumers, they may offer additional products at the farm (flowers, ice cream, etc.), which increases sales and helps bring customers in. They may buy some of these but also may choose to add value to their own strawberries by turning them into products like jam, smoothies, pies, strawberry bread, or ice cream. These can be made by the farm itself or contracted out to others, such as a neighbor who makes great pies.

### **Resources:**

Meet your Neighbor videos - produced by Harris Teeter; these talk about wholesale and show farmworkers and harvest. If you show them without the sound they are not as promotional.

Cottle Farms: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=-R2m0xmxnac](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-R2m0xmxnac)

Lewis Nursery and Farms: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hgub0tSLOCw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hgub0tSLOCw)

See the 4<sup>th</sup> grade NCSI lesson, "What's with the Market" for additional resources.

### **Assessment:**

Observation during discussions  
Strawberry farm plan

**North Carolina Strawberry Association – [www.ncstrawberry.com](http://www.ncstrawberry.com)**

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