



## ORGANIC FARMING, FOOD AND PRODUCTS

### Lesson Ideas

These curriculum-linked lesson ideas and activity sheets offer a range of learning experiences for primary and middle years students in the area of organic farming, food and products.

### Broad Learning Outcomes

Using this curriculum material will assist students in achieving the following broad learning outcomes:

- Students will learn about the organic farming, food and products industry in Australia.
- Students will understand the differences between organic and non-organic farming, food and products.
- Students will discover some of the benefits of eating organic food.

### English

- Students to find definitions for the words and terms on the '**Organic Definitions**' activity sheet, then put each into a sentence.
- Students to investigate one of the organisations in Australia that certify organic produce and products, and write an explanation about the process involved to become certified.
- Students to brainstorm interesting aspects of organic farming in Australia on the '**Organic Farming PMI**' activity sheet.
- Students to formulate an advertising campaign to convince consumers that they should buy organic food or products, if they are available.
- Students to investigate how organic products are marketed to both Australian and overseas customers. Include print and electronic (television and web) advertisements. Is there a common theme in the advertisements? Are the products generally being marketed to a particular audience? Students to comment on their findings.
- Students to read the facts about organic farming and produce in the 'Facts for students' section (of the 'For Teachers for students' website), and answer the questions on the '**Understanding Organics**' activity sheet.
- Students to complete the '**Alphabet Grid**' activity sheet using words that relate to the organics industry (*farming, food and products.*)
- Students to read the reasons for buying truly organic food and products contained in the 'Facts for students' PDF. In small groups, select one reason and prepare a persuasive argument based on it to convince someone that it is a good idea to swap to buying organic products.



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### Mathematics

- Students to calculate the possible growth of Australia's organic industry over the next ten years and graph the results. Students to consider that our organic industry is currently growing by up to 13 percent each year.
- Students to survey their friends and family to discover what they know about the organics industry in Australia, eating organic foods and using organic products. They could work in pairs or small groups to devise a list of questions, conduct the survey and consider how they can present the results to the class.

### Science

- Healthy soil is essential in organic farming. Students to research what constitutes healthy soil. Discuss what things can affect the health of soil and what strategies organic farmers use to help keep soil healthy.
- Over the years food additives have become common place in many conventionally manufactured foods. You will see additives listed on food packaging as colours, preservatives, antioxidants, artificial sweeteners, flavour enhancers, emulsifiers, stabilisers and thickeners. Some also have numbers associated with them. Students to investigate what each of these terms mean and why they are used in many manufactured foods.

### Humanities and Social Sciences (History, Geography, Civics and Citizenship, Economics and Business)

- Students to research the history of one type of farming in Australia. Present a report to the rest of the class and include a comment on how farming has, and does, contribute to Australia's national identity.
- Students to investigate what is stated on an organic product label verses a similar non-organic product. What are the differences and similarities? Students to record their answers on the '**Organic verses Non-organic Venn Diagram**' activity sheet.
- Students to investigate the organisations in Australia that officially certify that a food product or a processed product truly is organic. This is important for consumers to know. What processes do farmers and processors need to go through in order to become certified and what do you think that means for their business?
- Students to select an organic food producer or an organic food processing business and research how they produce and sell their products to customers.



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### The Arts (Dance, Drama, Media Arts, Music, Visual Arts)

- Students to search through magazines and other forms of media and create a collage of statements and images that relate to the organic food and product industry in Australia. Be mindful of the use of 'natural' and other terms that do not necessarily mean that the item is in fact 'organically' grown or produced.
- Students to write a jingle to promote reasons for consumers to switch to supporting our organic farmers. They could 'rap it out' or put words to a familiar piece of music.

### Technologies (Design and Technology, Digital Technologies)

- Students to complete the '**Organics KWL Chart**' activity sheet.
- Students to design packaging for an organic product. The packaging must show that the product is genuinely organic.
- Students to research the role of chemical pesticides and fertilisers in farming. Students to also research some of the methods that organic farmers use to promote growth and protect their plants from pests and diseases.
- Students to consider and discuss traditional and contemporary farming methods, including those used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Look at similarities and differences between those methods and those used by organic farmers.
- Students to discuss the term cross-contamination. How does this term relate to organic farming? Students then design or build a model of an organic farm that might help protect against cross-contamination.

### Health and Physical Education

- Students to investigate the benefits of eating organically grown fruit and vegetables over mainstream fruit and vegetables. Discuss the outcomes and whether the class, overall, decides that eating organically grown produce is the way to go or not.
- Students to bring in some empty food packaging and conduct an ingredient investigation. This could include an investigation of some of the additives, the different terms for 'sugar' and what the first three listed ingredients are (*the largest amounts contained in the product*). Students to then discuss their findings.



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### Languages

- Students to research organic farming practices in other countries, including which countries have rapid growth in their organic industry.
- Students to learn how to say some common organic products and industry terms (listed below) in another language.
  - fruit
  - vegetables
  - organic
  - traditional
  - environment
  - healthy soil
  - animal welfare
  - apples
  - bananas
  - carrots
  - broccoli