

Kansas vs the U.S.

Grade Level: 7-8

Length of Activity: 1-2 class periods

Outcome: The learner will demonstrate an understanding of the physical and political geography of Kansas through the use of maps, readings, and film.

Vocabulary:

- livestock: animals raised for consumption
- row crops: plants raised for human or livestock use
- poultry: pertaining to domestic fowls; chickens, ducks, etc.
- dairy products: farm products such as milk, cheese, butter
- barley: cereal grass used in making malts, soups, etc.
- sorghum: cereal grass grown for grain, syrup, fodder, etc.
- cotton: soft, white, fibrous substance around the seeds of certain mallow plants
- wheat: cereal grass having spikes containing grains used in making flour, cereals, etc.
- hay: grass, clover, etc. cut and dried for fodder
- fodder: coarse food for cattle, horses
- soybeans: plant grown for its seeds, which contain much protein and oil
- corn: cereal plant with kernels; maize
- mallow: any of a family of plants with large, showy flowers; hollyhock, cotton, okra

Introduction: Wheat, sorghum, soybeans, corn, sunflowers, cotton, barley, and hay are all grown in Kansas. Consumers use wheat to make various products. For example, bread and cereals come from wheat. What other products do we get from wheat? Sorghum is mainly used in KS as a livestock feed, but what other products come from sorghum? Soybeans are grown a lot around the Jefferson County area. What do we use soybeans for? What products come from soybeans? (ex: Sprite, Coke, oils) Corn is grown a lot in Jefferson County too. A lot of the reason why is due to the amount of rainfall eastern KS receives. What products, besides corn flakes, come from corn? Sunflowers have been grown in KS, though more in the southern part of the state. Of course we develop sunflower seeds from these, but what else? Cotton too is grown a little bit in the southern part of KS. What do we use cotton plants for? Barley is not a crop we hear much about. What product might use the barley seed? Hay is produced in our state quite a bit. Hay is similar to sorghum in that it is usually a livestock feed. What other purpose might it serve for us? (students will often lead the discussion after simply prodding them with questions for examples) The mission is to familiarize the students with the crops and their many uses. Students will also generate discussion when defining the vocab terms. This can be done orally, with students taking notes on a separate run-off copy. Discuss the fact that KS produces large amounts of these crops that not only feed our needs, but the country and the world.

Materials:

1. copies of 2001 Farm Facts - Kansas Dept. of Agriculture - pg. 11 (pg. 11 is from 2000 Farm Facts)
2. Farm Facts - American Farm Bureau Federation - booklet - pg. 8
3. internet site - www.nass.gov/ks/
4. 17" x 20" white construction paper
5. colored construction paper
6. colored pencils/ markers
7. rulers
8. pens
9. scissors
10. drawing compass
11. calculators

Activity:

- After discussion of products we develop from our many crops grown in KS, each student will receive a copy of the 2001 Farm Facts booklet produced by the KS Dept. of Agr. in Topeka. (students may also use the internet site listed)
- Students will record the number of "acres harvested" for each of the following crops: wheat sorghum, soybeans, corn, sunflowers, cotton, barley, and hay. Info may be found on pg. 11, or under the title of "state summary" on the web site.
- Students will use their Farm Facts booklet from the Am. Farm Bureau Federation to attain number of row crops harvested in the U.S. for each of the eight crops.
- Students will then calculate the percentage KS harvests for each crop out of the national total. The students will record their numbers.
- Finally, the students will design a graph or chart to show the national total, KS total, and percentage of KS share, in the harvesting of the eight identified crops. Students will be assessed on accuracy of numbers, clearness of graph or chart, color, neatness, and whether an appropriate title is used.

Discussion Questions:

What crop is leading the pack in reference to harvesting nationally?

What is the most harvested crop grown in KS?

How does it rank nationally?

Rank the order of crops grown in KS from highest to lowest and compare its order with crops harvested nationally? Is there a difference?