

National FFA Ag Census Lesson Plans

NASS 3.1

Lesson Title: Why is it important to participate in the Agriculture Census?

Precepts:

Decision Making

N1. Demonstrate the decision making process

Action

A8. Evaluate and reflect on actions taken and make appropriate modifications

Relationships

B5. Participate effectively as a team member

National Standards

NL-ENG.K-12.2 – Reading for Understanding

NL-ENG.K-12.6 – Applying Knowledge

NSS-C.9-12.5 – Roles of Citizens

Student Learning Objectives

As a result of this lesson, the student will ...

1. Understand the benefits of participation
2. List and explain the benefits the census will bring to the agriculture community.

Time

Instruction time for this lesson: 60 minutes.

Resources

National FFA “Essential Learnings,” 2003

USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service, www.nass.usda.gov

USDA’s Census of Agriculture, www.agcensus.usda.gov

Tools, Equipment, and Supplies

Envelopes with pros and cons of census completion

Index cards with scenarios

Crayons or colored pencils

Key Terms

The following terms are presented in this lesson and appear in bold italics:

Census

Interest Approach:

Before class begins, strategically place scenario cards around the room as well as prepare envelopes with positive and negative results.

I am so excited that you are all here and on time, because we will take the next few minutes to talk about the television show American Idol. Clap one time if you have heard of American Idol. *CLAP*. Ok great, so most of you are familiar with the show. As we know, audience participation is key in helping determine the fate of the contestants. Now clap twice if you have ever called in to vote for your favorite singer on the show. *CLAP CLAP*.

So it sounds like we have a few participants.

Could someone who just clapped twice share with us what inspired them to participate?

Allow time for response. Responses could be – I thought a certain contestant was cute. I liked their voice the most. I really didn't like someone's attitude so I wanted to give someone more votes.

We appreciate your candid response.

Now let's imagine that I am a contestant on American Idol (Kelly Clarkson/ Clay Aiken) *or ask them what contestant they should be. Suggestions might be Fantasia, Josh Turner or Carrie Underwood.*

Take five seconds and think to yourselves how participating (voting) in the contest affects the outcome.

Ok, now take another five seconds and think about how NOT participating would affect the outcome.

I appreciate how we quietly and diligently thought about the proposed questions.

Turn to your neighbor and share one effect of participation and one effect of not participating.

Let's share as a group: If the whole class votes, how will it affect the outcome?

Answers: Everyone's opinion will be heard, a consensus of the class will win, everyone benefits and a majority rules

If only part of the group votes, will that impact the outcome?

Answers: Only those who participate will benefit, the overall favorite singer may not win, it is not a true representation of everyone's opinion.

Great ideas on the pros and cons of voting in American Idol! The American Idol example allows us to see why people participate and see the benefits of the outcomes of participation.

Yesterday we learned about the Census of Agriculture; today we are going to continue on the voyage and discover why we should participate in the census and encourage others in the agriculture community to do the same.

Summary of Content and Teaching Strategies

Prepare envelopes using AS.A worksheet.

Objective 1. How participation affects an outcome.

When I say “Partner,” you will have 30 seconds to quietly find a partner and focus your attention to the front of the room. Questions? Partner!

Wonderful! When I say “Decisions,” you will have four minutes to read the cards and decide with your partner if it is a positive or negative result. What questions are there? Decisions!

Please wrap up the decision making process as we have 30 seconds left.

Great, let’s see if we made wise choices.

Read each card and have one person say if it was a positive or negative result. Or, have one person read all of the cards they selected as positive and have another student read all the cards they selected as negative and see if the class agrees.

*Pros: You help others understand the importance of agriculture to your community’s economy
You obey the law.*

As a result, the zoning regulations are changed in your area to benefit livestock producers.

An equipment company moves into town after years of driving more than 20 minutes to buy parts.

Cons: You could be fined if you do not participate.

You are afraid of sharing personal information.

You are unable to watch television one evening this week to make time to fill out the census.

Those answers were great! We can now better understand where our priorities are and how being an active participant is important.

Have you ever heard the phrase, “The world is run by those who show up?” Well, this is true in all clubs and organizations from the local level all the way up to the national level, and the same is true with the Census of Agriculture.

Those who fill out the form will have the opportunity to have a say in such priorities as:

- The delivery of local services
- Needed legislation
- Identifying the importance and diverse dimensions agriculture brings to our communities.

Objective 2. Determine the benefits the census brings to the agriculture community

We have just discovered on our voyage the importance of participation and setting priorities. Let's take a deeper look at the census and see how and why it is the agricultural community's voice, future and responsibility.

Pass out activity sheet AS.B

Using the Crayon Moment, supply students with colored writing tools to provide a visual representation of important words within the notes.

When I say, "Color," gather two colored writing tools from the supplies at your table. Use one color to highlight those items which are the main bulleted points. Use a second color to underline key words within the description. What questions are there? Color!

Crayon Moment: Show TM.A as you go through these main points.

Participation is important because:

- **It is the Law:** All residents administered the census must fill it out according to the law.
- **Accurate Maps:** The data from the census permit the creation of accurate maps of rural populations and all commodities produced.
- **Local Programming:** With the information gathered, local- and state-funded agencies can develop specialized programs based on needs.
- **Defining Rural:** The definition of rural has changed throughout the years. As America continues to change and develop, we need to continue to know the needs of our rural populations.
- **Evaluating National Supply and Demand:** An accurate tally of food produced and dollars spent on agriculture.
- **Production vs. Capabilities:** As a nation, we need to know how much food we are producing vs. our capabilities
- **Government Funding:** The government needs to know the economic value that agriculture and all of its components brings to the nation.

Thanks for your undivided attention. Now that everyone's notes are colorful and bright, it is easy for us to see why it is important to participate in the Census of Agriculture.

Review/Summary

Go Get It Moment

Index cards should be strategically placed around the room. Each group needs to find one set of cards and return to its seats. Have each group take turns reading its card aloud. The groups should work together to respond to each scenario.

When I say "Group," you will have five seconds to quietly get into groups of four and focus your attention back to the front of the room. Questions? Group!

Thank you for quickly getting into groups. When I say “Find,” you will have 15 seconds to select one person to find a set of index cards lying around the room and return to your group. What questions are there? Find!

Now that we have our index cards, when I say “Begin,” we will have five minutes to go through all of the scenarios and capture the answers to the posed questions. Could someone please repeat what we are to do in our groups? Fabulous! Begin!

We have 30 seconds left so wrap up your discussions.

5-4-3-2-1 - Thank you for working so diligently!
Let’s discuss our answers as a class.

Call on different groups to answer the questions following each scenario.

Scenario 1: Mr. Soybean receives a letter from his county extension office about an upcoming seminar on breeding and feeding alpacas. He doesn’t know why he received this letter as he has never raised alpacas. A few weeks later the county pays to fly an alpaca specialist in for a workshop and only one farmer shows up.

1. Do you think the county spent its money wisely?
2. Do you think the agriculture community in this county had a high percentage of census participants?

Scenario 2: The state of Iowa wants to create a television commercial to promote agriculture in the state. They found out they are the #1 producers of corn.

1. How do they know they are the #1 producer of corn?
2. Is this an accurate source? How could it become more accurate?

Scenario 3: Mr. Natural wants to start an organic vegetable farm. He goes to the county library to find statistics on how many other organic vegetable farms are in the area. The last census reported no organic vegetable farms in the area. Mr. Natural goes through the process of converting his land to organic and is extremely excited several years later when he can finally go to the farmers market and sell his niche crop. When he gets to the farmers market, he finds that half of the vegetable producers there are selling organic vegetables. He learns they have been there for years and have already formed relationships with established customers.

1. Why did Mr. Natural not find organic farms in the statistics he researched?

Scenario 4: There is a hay shortage in northeast Tennessee. Horse owners know that it is more cost efficient to purchase hay locally and want to know how much hay is being produced annually and if the area has the capability to produce more hay. They also want to know how many acres are idle or not being harvested.

1. How could this information be collected?
2. How could the horse owners find other hay dense areas?
3. What other factors could be the cause of the hay shortage that would be discovered by a census?

Application

Extended classroom activity:

1. *Have students journal why it is important to participate in the Census of Agriculture*
2. *Create an advertisement for the agriculture community about why they should participate: What will your ad say? What information about the census and the future will be of interest to your target audience? What would be a convincing reason for your targeted audience to participate in the census? How will your target audience affect ad placement? List three places you would want to display your ad. You may wish to offer students the opportunity to select the type of ad they want to work on. They might want to do a print ad, a radio ad or a television ad. A print ad should include visual elements. A radio ad should be written in a formal script. A TV ad should contain a script as well as a storyboard of visuals. Have your students tell others why they should participate.*

FFA activity: *At the next FFA meeting during role call, have each member tell why they participate in FFA. This allows the younger members to learn more about the chapter and gives everyone the opportunity to learn about the value of FFA to others*

SAE activity: *Identify five reasons for participating in an SAE*

Evaluation

Pass out AS. C

Please answer the following questions:

Circle true if the sentence is true and circle false if the sentence is false.

1. True False: Filling out and returning the Census of Agriculture form is optional to those who receive the survey.
2. True False: The data collected from the Census of Agriculture are used to benefit the community.

Circle ONE answer.

3. The agriculture census data are used to create accurate _____.
 - A. lawn mowers
 - B. maps
 - C. calculators
 - D. thermometers

4. The Census of Agriculture data are NOT used at the national level to assess:
 - A. Government funding
 - B. Production vs. capabilities
 - C. School crime
 - D. National supply and demand

5. Write three sentences about what you would say to a neighbor or friend about why they should participate in the Census of Agriculture. Please provide supporting facts.

Answers to Test:

1. F
2. T
3. B
4. C
5. I think it would be a good idea for my neighbors involved in agriculture to participate in the agriculture census because if they don't, they will be breaking the law. They should participate to make all levels of government aware of local programming needs. Also by participating we are able to have accurate geographical and production maps.

Participation is important because:

- **It is the law:**
 - All residents administered the census must fill it out according to the law.
- **Accurate Maps:**
 - The results of the census create accurate maps of rural populations and all commodities produced.
- **Local Programming:**
 - With the information gathered, local- and state-funded agencies can develop specialized programs based on needs.
- **Defining Rural:**
 - The definition of rural has changed throughout the years. As America continues to change and develop, we need to continue to know the needs of our rural populations.
- **Evaluating National Supply and Demand:**
 - An accurate tally of food produced and money spent on agriculture.
- **Production vs. Capabilities:**
 - As a nation, we need to know how much food we are producing vs. our capabilities
- **Government Funding:**
 - The government needs to know the economic value that agriculture and all of its components brings to the nation.

Make as many copies as there are partners. Cut along the lines. Place strips of paper in an envelope.

You help others understand the importance of agriculture to your community's economy.

You obey the law.

As a result, the zoning regulations are changed in your area to benefit livestock producers.

An equipment company moves into town after years of driving more than 20 minutes to buy parts.

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Evaluation Quiz

Name _____

Please answer the following questions:

Circle true if the sentence is true and circle false if the sentence is false.

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2. True False: The collected data from the Census of Agriculture are used to benefit the community.

Circle ONE answer.

3. The agriculture census data are used to create accurate _____.
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 - F. maps
 - G. calculators
 - H. thermometers
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5. Write three sentences about what you would say to a neighbor or friend about why they should participate in the Census of Agriculture. Please provide supporting facts.