

Worldwide Watermelons

Grades 5-6 or customize for lower grades

Subject: Geography/ Social Studies

Objective:

Students should gain an understanding of global interdependence.

Materials:

Political world outline maps, colored pencils

Lesson:

Give world outline maps to students and tell them you will be discussing how we depend on other countries in the world for food, using watermelon as an example.

Introduction:

Over 1,200 varieties of watermelon are grown in 96 countries. It's now easy to find this sweet, healthy treat any time of the year with so many countries importing and exporting. In the U.S., watermelon is available from April-November, with peak production in May, June, July, and August. Imported watermelon is available from October-June, with peak production in March, April, and May.

1. Ask students where they think most watermelons are grown? List answers on the board.
2. Tell students the countries that are the top five for producing watermelons, including how many are grown in each country. Ask them to locate the countries on their maps and color.

	2004 (million pounds)
China	150,576
Turkey	8,818
Iran	4,189
USA	3,682
Egypt	3,527

3. Next, ask students how they usually enjoy watermelon. Then, share how people in other countries enjoy watermelon.

- In Israel and Egypt, the sweet watermelon is paired with salty feta cheese.
- In China and Japan, people give watermelons as hostess gifts!

Extension: Students may use maps and other reference materials to learn additional information about the different places that produce watermelon.