



What's Growing On In Virginia?

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About this Newsletter

What's Growing On In Virginia is a semiannual publication for Virginia elementary school teachers, published by the Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom.

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History cites plenty of pigs

Pork, which comes from hogs, is the most widely eaten meat in the world today.

Hogs were domesticated in China by 4900 B.C. and were being raised in Europe by 500 B.C., according to the National Pork Producers Council.

This country's pork industry can be traced to Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto, who brought 13 hogs to Florida in 1539. By the time of de Soto's death three years later, the herd had grown to 700, not including those that ran away or were given to indigenous peoples or consumed by his troops.

In the New York colony, semi-wild hogs became such a menace to grain fields that every owned hog 14 inches high had to have a ring in its nose. On Manhattan island, a long wall was constructed on the colony's north edge to control roaming herds of hogs. The area came to be known as Wall Street—and the name stuck!

Swine were finished (fattened for sale) on Indian corn

(maize) and driven to market in large numbers, over trails that later became the routes for major railroads.

After the Revolutionary War, pioneers took their hogs with them as they moved westward – often hanging a crate of young pigs from the axles of their covered wagons. The animals were not only food, but also a source of income.

The invention of the refrigerated rail car in 1870 enabled fresh pork to be shipped over long distances without spoilage. As a national railroad system was developed, pork processing became focused in major railroad centers, such as Chicago and Omaha.

Today, the United States is one of the world's leading pork-producing countries, with the majority of U.S. pork coming from the Midwest.

From the late 1880s through the last 1940s, consumer demand for lard, primarily for cooking, was high enough that pork producers raised relatively fat hogs to meet the

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Alkingtay igspay: Coming to terms with pork

The word "pig" refers to a young swine but often is used interchangeably with "hog" for all domestic swine. A mature female hog is a sow, and a male hog kept for breeding is a boar.

As common elements of daily life in Europe and the United States, pigs and pork have found their way into plenty of common expressions. Among them are:

Bring home the bacon: to earn money with which to buy groceries and other staple goods; to accomplish what one has set out to do.

High off the hog: To eat high off the hog is to eat the more choice cuts of ham or bacon, which are taken from high up on the animal's sides. In the American South, "living high off the hog" or "high on the hog" came to describe living comfortably.

Hogwash: As early as the 1400s, this was a synonym for kitchen swill, which was fed to pigs. In the 1700s it referred to bad liquor, and later in that same century it referred to cheap journalism. Today it is a synonym for the

continued on page 2.

Virginia pork production

In 1999 (most recent figures available), hogs were Virginia's 11th largest agricultural commodity in terms of cash receipts. According to the Virginia Agricultural Statistics Service, hog sales generated \$40.9 million.

Hogs are produced in all 50 states, among which Virginia is ranked 21st in terms of production.

On Dec. 1, 1999, there were 370,000 hogs and pigs on a total of 1,200 Virginia farms. The average value per head was \$66, and the average number of pigs per litter was 9.

The vast majority of Virginia hogs are raised on farms in the southeastern part of the state. Most hog farmers contract with pork processing companies, which own the animals the farmers raise.

The Old Dominion is known worldwide for Smithfield Hams, which get their robust flavor from being dry-cured in salt, smoked over hickory and oak fires and then hung to air-cure for at least six months. State law allows only long-cut hams cured by that method in the town of Smithfield, in Isle of Wight County, to be called genuine Smithfield Hams.

Pigs in history

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demand. During the two World Wars, pork fat also was used in making explosives.

After World War II, however, the market for lard and other by-products of pork fat declined as consumers became more health-conscious and wanted leaner meat products.

Hogs are fed ground corn, soybeans, wheat and grain sorghum. On modern hog farms, they live in temperature-controlled buildings, where they stay warm in the winter and cool in the summer. Because they cannot sweat, fans and sprinkler systems are used to keep them comfortable in hot weather.

Alkingtlay igspay:

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interjection "Nonsense!"

Pig in a poke: To buy a pig in a poke means to buy something sight unseen and get cheated. It refers to a market scam that involved selling a piglet in a sack ("poke") that actually contained a cat.

Pig iron: As far back as the late 1500s, "sow" and "pig" were used to refer to molten metal tapped from a blast furnace, possibly because pig iron is unrefined and requires further processing to be made into cast iron, steel or wrought iron.

Pig Latin: a language invented by schoolchildren that transposes the first consonant of an English word to the end of the word and adds the sound "ay" to it. Spoken rapidly, it sounds like gibberish to the uninitiated. The

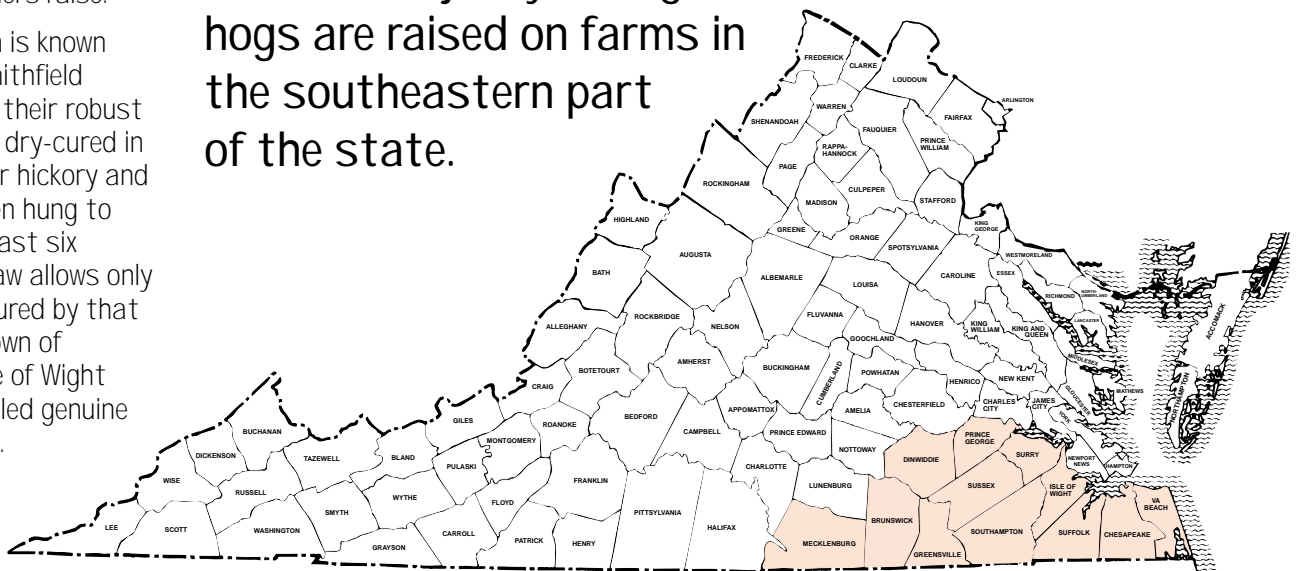
name has been traced to early 19th-century England, where Latin was still a basic part of the curriculum.

Pigtail: In the 1600s, a pigtail was tobacco twisted into a thin rope that resembled the animal's tail. In the 1700s, the term was applied to a twisted plait of hair worn by sailors, probably imitating a Chinese style. By the early 1800s, the style was worn by young girls as well.

Pork barrel politics: appropriations made by a legislature for projects that are not essential, but are sought because they pump money and resources into the local districts of the legislators.

Whole hog: One theory traces this term to use of the slang term "hog" for the British shilling. "Going the whole hog" meant spending the whole shilling at one time, going the distance or doing something thoroughly.

The vast majority of Virginia hogs are raised on farms in the southeastern part of the state.



The pig pages: Porcine protagonists in children's books

Pigs' prominence in common expressions pales beside their popularity in children's books and classic movies.

Porcine protagonists include Wilbur in E. B. White's *Charlotte's Web*; Piglet, best friend to A. A. Milne's *Winnie the Pooh*; and Babe, who was really portrayed by lots of similar-looking baby pigs in two motion pictures.

A quick search for "pig" in juvenile titles on Amazon.com yielded 190 titles. Among them were Jean Van Leeuwen's stories of Amanda Pig and Oliver Pig, and Nancy L. Carlson's Louanne Pig series, all of which put pigs in human predicaments.

A pig with a ring in his nose saves the day in Edward Lear's "The Owl and the Pussycat." And the classic tale of the Three Little Pigs gets turned around in Eugene Trivizas' retelling, *The Three Little Wolves and the Big Bad Pig*.

What are pigs used for?

A variety of swine byproducts have non-food uses. Some are sources of chemicals used to make lubricants, adhesives and many industries' specialty chemicals.

Heart valves from hogs have been used to replace damaged or diseased human heart valves.

Items in your classroom, such as crayons, chalk, glue and artists' brushes, are made with pig products. So are bone china, but tons, air filters, leather shoes and garments, and cosmetics.

Gross and gluttonous? Hogwash!

As early as the 16th century, the term "pig" was used to refer to a loathsome or slovenly person. "Swine" has served the same purpose.

Hogs are actually clean animals. Because they have no sweat glands, they roll in mud to keep themselves cool, which has earned them an undeserved reputation for filth.

As for their reputation as gluttons, biologists say pigs are not naturally inclined to overeat. They are, however, fed liberally on hog farms so that they will bring a good price when sold.

AITC premier teaching video before national farm audience

A fourth-grade teacher and her Newport News pupils shared the spotlight with farmers from across the United States at the American Farm Bureau Federation's 82nd Annual Convention in January.

Kathy Williams and her pupils at L. F. Palmer Elementary School appear in a new American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture video called "10 Things Kids Want to Know About Farming." The video, which was shown to convention attendees, was produced to help teachers answer children's general questions about agriculture.

Ms. Williams, who grew up on a dairy farm, has utilized

materials provided by the Virginia Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom in her classroom. Children at her school turned an unused courtyard on their campus into a garden and outdoor laboratory.

At the two video showings, Ms. Williams emphasized the importance of promoting agriculture education and the ability to use the video as a starting point for more complex lessons.

"Farmers are worried because 98 percent of our population have little or no contact with modern agriculture," said Michele Awad, executive director of the Virginia Foundation for AITC and president of the National AITC Consortium.

"They worry that people don't understand the practices necessary to produce the abundant and safe food supply we enjoy in America."

Farm Bureau members from other states were impressed with the video.

"I think it was outstanding for rural classrooms as well as city classrooms," said Kristen Burkhemper of St. Louis. "It gave a broad overview of farming and farm life and what each entails."

Carol Meyer of Randolph County, Ill., agreed. "I work with AITC in my county, and we get all sorts of questions from our students," she said. "This will certainly be another tool that we will use in our AITC program."

Need answers? Order your school's copy today!

The video "10 Things Kids Want to Know About Farming" uses interviews with farmers and footage shot on their farms to answer questions, such as:

- What can grow on one acre?
- What is a tractor used for?
- What is soil?
- What do kids do on the farm?
- What crop is grown the most?

Copies of "10 Things Kids Want to Know About Farming" are available for purchase. The cost is \$18.50 for one copy and \$15 each for two or more. Orders can be placed by phone at 847-685-8663, by fax at 847-685-8626 or by e-mail to marys@fb.org.

Foundation honors Greene County teacher

A fourth-grade teacher from Stanardsville is heading to the big city this summer, courtesy of the Virginia Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom.

Linda Cox, who teaches at Nathanael Greene Elementary School, is the Foundation's 2001 recipient of the C. Wayne Ashworth Teacher's Award. She will receive a trip to the Agriculture in the Classroom National Conference, June 27-30 in Chicago.

Named for the Foundation's first president, the C. Wayne Ashworth Award recognizes Virginia elementary school teachers for innovative efforts to incorporate agriculture into their lesson plans.

A chief element of Mrs. Cox's efforts this past school year was the construction of a Virginia Heritage Garden on her school's campus. The garden was designed to meet a number of Virginia's Standards of Learning goals in language arts, social studies, science and math. It featured tobacco, peanuts, cotton, herbs, vegetables and the big three crops raised by Indians and early Virginia colonists: corn, beans and squash.

This is the second teacher award the Virginia Foundation for AITC has given. Last year's recipient was Jennie Finney of Pittsylvania County.

Corn, Beans and City Scenes 2001 AITC National Conference

Do you need new agriculture-based classroom activities? Do you enjoy meeting teachers from other parts of the country? Do you enjoy traveling?

If so, consider a trip to Chicago this summer for the annual Agriculture in the Classroom National Conference. The conference, which will be held June 27-30 at the Hyatt Regency, will provide new agricultural lessons, field trips, time to

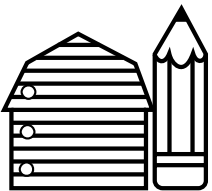
visit with teachers from throughout the United States, and ways to re-energize for a new school year. Participants will have the opportunity to visit the Chicago Fish Market, the Chicago Flower Market, the Chicago Board of Trade, and the city's Museum of Science & Technology.

Visit www.agclassroom.org for details and registration information.

Pork online

Pork-related Web sites that might be of use to teachers include:

- **Minnesota Pork Producers Association** – www.mnpork.com;
- **National Pork Producers Council** – www.freshpork.com; and
- **North Carolina Pork Council** – www.ncpork.org.



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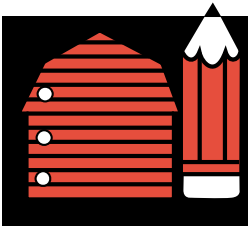
What's growing on in YOUR area?

Share your AITC stories, comments and suggestions with us for possible publication in the next newsletter!

For information, contact Wendy Strong at 804-290-1143 or e-mail aitc@vafb.com.



What's Growing On In Virginia?
is printed with soy ink.



What's Growing On In Virginia

Lesson Plan

OBJECTIVE:

The student will listen to and/or read Hog-Eye for comprehension. The student will discuss character actions and emotions. The student will sequence story events, including but not limited to the beginning, middle and end.

English SOLs:
K.1, K.8, 1.1, 1.11, 1.12, 2.1, 2.7, 2.8, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 4.4, 4.5, 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6

Hog-Eye.
Meddaugh, Susan.
Houghton Mifflin
Company. Boston,
MA. 1995.
ISBN 0-395-
74276-5

Hysterical hogs

Story Synopsis

A young pig has an adventure after deciding not to ride the school bus to school. She retells her adventure to her concerned family. As she walks home through the woods, the "big, bad wolf" captures her and threatens to make piggy soup. The young pig creatively outsmarts the wolf. Students will identify with the young pig's thoughtful but mischievous nature.

Activities

Day One

Read Hog-Eye. Have a class discussion about the story, including but not limited to the following questions.

- Who are the two main characters?
- What was the REAL reason the young pig did not want to ride school bus 37?
- Why didn't the young pig feel fear when choosing to take the path through the woods?
- Why do you think the wolf could not read?
- How does not being able to read affect the wolf's life? How could it affect a human being's life?
- Why did the wolf continue to follow the young pig's directions even though he was hurt by doing so?
- How did the school bus ride change for the young pig? Why?

Day Two

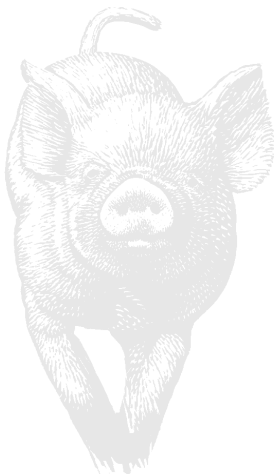
Reread Hog-Eye. Discuss the sequence of events. Have children complete the sequence boxes.

The first ingredients were

The second ingredients were

The third ingredient was

The fourth ingredient was



Day Three

Reread Hog-Eye. Focus on the young pig's characteristics. Brainstorm how she may have felt, thought and acted. Have each student create an alphabet list of descriptive words.

A	N
B	O
C	P
D	Q
E	R
F	S
G	T
H	U
I	V
J	W
K	X
L	Y
M	Z

Extension Activities

1. Create a story board incorporating components of the story, including the beginning, middle and end.
2. Have students rewrite the central portion of the story using a different "recipe."
3. Read *Flossie and the Fox* by Pat McKissack (ISBN 0803702507). Compare the two stories using a Venn diagram to depict similarities and differences.
4. Create student graph depicting which wolf mishaps the students think are funniest.
5. Have class act out the story with creative dialogue.