Farm to Table – Cracker Pizza Activity

# Purpose

Students will learn about the sources and healthfulness of several common foods.

## Interest Approach or Motivator

Students will have the opportunity to build their own “cracker pizza” and eat it while exploring the sources of the food they are eating.

# Materials

Each student will need:

* Two crackers
* Pizza sauce

Students will have the option of choosing any of these to put on their “cracker pizza”:

* Different types of cheese (cheddar, mozzarella, etc.)
* Ham
* Pepperoni
* Other pizza topping options (vegetables, other meats)

# Background – Agricultural Connections

Almost everything on a pizza comes from a farm! The flour in the crust or cracker comes from wheat, which can be grown in Iowa. Most wheat in the United States is grown in Kansas and North and South Dakota. Tomatoes from California are in the sauces, and spices are manufactured in places like Tone’s Spices in Ankeny, Iowa. Tone’s produces Italian seasoning, oregano, onion powder, garlic powder, basil and cayenne pepper, which can all be found in pizza sauce.  Ham and pork are Iowa products, and Nebraska and Texas are states that produce a lot of beef!

# Procedures

1. Have students recall and discuss the different animal products they eat.
   1. Cheese comes from milk. Milk comes from cows.
   2. Pepperoni is processed beef and pork; Beef comes from cattle and pork comes from pigs.
   3. Eggs come from chickens.
   4. Chicken meat also comes from chickens.
   5. Goats can give us milk as well. Butter is made from milk, which comes from cows.
2. Have students build their own “cracker pizza” with the food items offered. As students make their pizzas, have them name the source of the different food items and any processing used to make the products.
   1. Optional: Expand lesson by having the students research states that produce the most of each product. Which state is #1 in pork production? In tomato production?
3. Talk with students about other foods that often appear on pizzas. Some ideas might be peppers, mushrooms, pineapple, and bacon. Some people make specialty pizzas with different cheese, lettuce, and olives. Write different pizza topping options on a whiteboard, SMARTboard or chalkboard, and have students name what food groups they belong in.
   1. Peppers are grown primarily in California. They grow on plants and are harvested in the summertime.
   2. Most mushrooms are grown in Pennsylvania. They are grown in greenhouses and grow very low to the ground.
   3. Many pineapples are grown in Hawaii, because they need a tropical climate to grow. Most are harvested from May to July. Most pineapples are still harvested by hand.
   4. Bacon comes from pigs, and Iowa is the largest pork producing state! Bacon comes from the belly and side of the pig.
4. Discuss with students the importance of a “healthy pizza” with a variety of toppings that are from different food groups.
   1. Adding vegetables such as peppers, mushrooms and whole tomatoes can make a pizza healthier.
   2. Fruits can make pizzas healthier, too! Many people enjoy pineapple on their pizzas.

# Did you know? (Ag Facts)

The #1 state in the US for:

* Pineapple: Hawaii
* Bacon/Sausage (pork): Iowa
* Peppers: California
* Tomatoes: Florida
* Dairy: California
* Mushrooms: Pennsylvania

# Extension Activities

* Have students create different kinds of pizza; some could be a breakfast pizza with yogurt and different fruit or desert pizza with chocolate chips and fruit.
* For older students, have students work in groups of 2-4 to research a specific pizza topping source (plant or animal) and share their findings with the group.
* Create a “pizza book” with every page outlining a different pizza topping, its source, and its nutrition information.

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**Agriculture Literacy Outcomes:**

* Food, Health and Lifestyle Outcomes, K-2, Health: Identify healthy food options
* Plants and Animals for Food, Fiber & Energy Outcomes, K-2, Science: Identify animals involved in agricultural production and their uses (i.e., work, meat, dairy, eggs)
* Culture, Society, Economy & Geography Outcomes, K-2, Social Studies: Trace the sources of agricultural products (plant or animal) used daily
* Culture, Society, Economy & Geography Outcomes, K-2, Social Studies: Identify plants and animals grown or raised locally that are used for food, clothing, shelter and landscapes.

**Common Core Connections:**

* RI.1.2 identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.
* 21.K–2.HL.4 Essential Concept and/or Skill: Identify influences that affect personal health and the health of others.