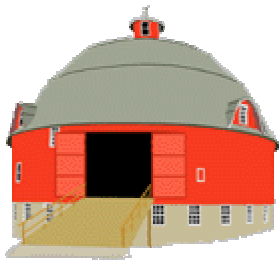


Oral History of Illinois Agriculture



Crop Report

What crops are grown in Illinois? Did you know that Illinois is a big grower of herbs and pumpkins as well as the popular corn and soybeans?

In the early 20th century, oats was a big crop, but not now. Sunflowers and castor bean plants were a cash crop.

Research and write a factual report on a crop grown in Illinois over the last century by viewing or listening to ISM oral history clips searched by topic and adding statistics from the Department

Illinois State Museum



[Http://avbarn.museum.state.il.us](http://avbarn.museum.state.il.us)

Illinois Crops

of Agriculture Statistics Service (<http://www.nass.usda.gov/>) and other sources.

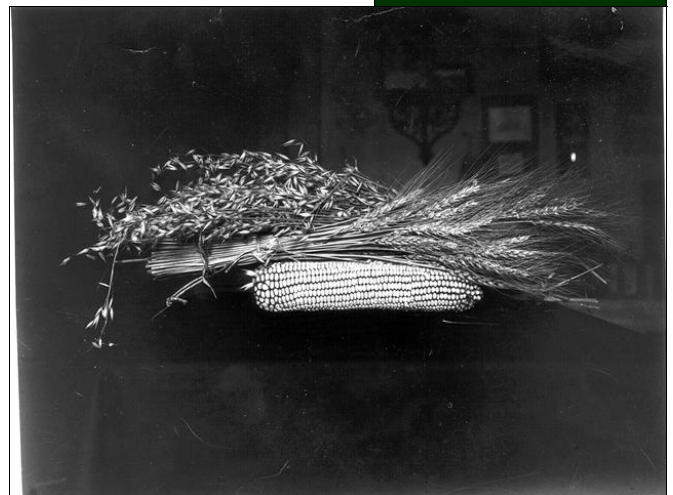
Interviews: ISM oral history interviews of farmers whose families farmed from 1900 to 2008 contain information about crops grown in Illinois. They show how the crops have changed as technology and society have changed.

For example: Oats were once a big crop because plow horses ate oats; when tractors

took over that task, farmers gave up horses and no longer needed to grow oats. Now oats are only grown as a specialty crop to make human cereals and other products.

*Frank Sadorus
Corn, Oats, and Wheat
Photograph
Ca. 1912*

These crops were the staples of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They fed farm animals and people.



Special points of interest:

- Illinois Crops
- Oral Histories
- Web Research
- Rubrics
- Learning Standards

Listening to/Viewing the Oral Histories

Search the oral history clips by the chosen search term - on oats, wheat, corn, soybeans, pumpkins, sunflowers, tobacco, cotton, potatoes and other fruits, vegetables, and

grains. Or browse the clips by category (plants) until you find a crop you are interested in (do you know what sorghum is?) They take notes on facts about the crop

mentioned in the clips. Find out when and where the crop was grown by the person talking.

After you have found out all you can from the histories, check the Internet, too.

Research on the Web

Go to the NASS (National Agricultural Statistics Service) web site and find statistics on their crop for Illinois (or by county and year) Make or finding a map. Take more notes. Make a graph.

Research print and online sources to find out more about the crop – soil requirements, growing conditions, uses for

the crop, etc. and take notes.

Organize the notes by subtopic, make a report outline, and write a draft, proof and edit it.

Here are the questions the report should answer:

What is the crop that was or is grown in Illinois?

When was is mostly grown in Illinois?

What caused it to grow or

drop in popularity?

Was changing technology involved in the increase or decrease of popularity of this crop?

How important was or is the crop (number of acres, bushels, farms involved)?

What products are made from this crop?

Does the crop require any special care?



Oregano on the conveyor belt at the Van Drunen Herb Farm in northern Illinois

Parents and Teachers: Rubrics for a Report

Here are some rubrics provided on the Web. They provide some guidelines to go by when researching and writing a report.
<http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/SCORE/actbank/projectrub.html>

The Illinois State Board of Education assessment rubrics for writing are at:

<http://www.isbe.state.il.us/assessment/writing.htm>



The Ackerman farm in Tazewell County grow pumpkins to sell to the Libby processing plant in Morton, where most of America's pumpkin is canned.



Harvesting sorghum on the Baumberger Farm in the 1920s. Sorghum was crushed for its juice, which was made into molasses for sweetening baked goods.

There are many crops to choose from in Illinois. From Apples to Wheat — from old crops to new. See how many you come across in the oral histories and the Image Galleries!

State and National Learning Standards

ISBE Standards for Language Arts – report writing:

Late Elementary and Middle School: Standard 3C2a; 3C3a

Write for a variety of purposes and for specific audiences.

National Standard for Language Arts

7: Conduct research on issues ...

gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from various sources and communicate discoveries.

ISBE Standards for Social Science – Geography

Late Elementary: 17.C.2b Describe the relationships among location of resources, population distribution and economic activities (e.g., transportation, trade, communications).

Middle School: 17.C.3b Explain how patterns of resources are used throughout the world.

National Standards in Social Studies

3: Geography: 5: Environment and society – humans modify the earth

National Language Standards 8: Technology use

Students use various technologies and information sources to gather and synthesize information and create and communicate knowledge.

- Wikis: If class has a wiki, upload reports to a page (or individual's wiki page) to create an e-book.
- Make a pdf of class reports to post on the class Web site.
- For older students, create a digital story using student-made slides and voiceover with iMovie or Moviemaker software. Include audio, images, graphs, captions.



Southern Illinois is famous for its peach crops. Here, Betty Sirles of Rendleman's Orchards supervises the picking of the crop.

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