

GO PLUMS! GOTTA TASTE 'EM ALL

ITALIAN PRUNE PLUM



Look:
Dark purple skin with grey "dust"

Use:
Ideal for drying or eating fresh

Claim to fame:
BC's most popular plum

DAMSON PLUM



Look:
Round, shiny, black skin

Use:
Cooking

Claim to fame:
Surprisingly tart when fresh

GREEN GAGE PLUM



Look:
Small, shiny, yellow-green

Use:
Eating fresh or cooked

Claim to fame:
Super sweet colour changers

JAPANESE BEAUTY PLUM



Look:
Mid-sized, shiny, bright red

Use:
Eating fresh off the tree or cooked

Claim to fame:
Melt-in-your-mouth sweet

OUR FARMLAND: SECURITY FOR OUR FUTURE

About half of all the food we eat is produced right here in BC. This is important because it gives us food security: the confidence that we can produce enough safe and nutritious food to feed ourselves.

BC is a large province, but only a small percentage of our land offers the right combination of good soil, access to water, correct climate, and other factors needed for agriculture. That same land is in demand for many non-farm uses. With such a limited amount of land to grow the food we all depend on, our farmland is a precious resource.



SAVING LAND FOR AGRICULTURE

In the early 1970's, as BC's population grew, the province was losing valuable farmland to urban development. We needed a solution, so BC introduced a set of land-use rules to protect our remaining agricultural land called the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). All lands used for farming were mapped out into zones. Within each zone, farms of all types and sizes were given priority use of that land. The rules were strict, but it worked. The ALR continues to protect farmlands for future generations.

The ALR has preserved 4.6 million hectares of BC's rural farmland!

WHAT DOES THE ALR PROTECT?

AGRICULTURE LANDS

LOCAL FOOD SUPPLY

SOIL HEALTH

GREEN SPACES

WETLANDS

WILDLIFE HABITAT

PLACES FOR RECREATION

PARKS AND CONSERVATION AREAS

URBAN DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARIES

RURAL CHARACTER

SOCIAL STUDIES ACTIVITY: FARMING THEN AND NOW

Curriculum Connection: Social Studies - grades 4 to 7: Make ethical judgments about events, decisions, or actions that consider the conditions of a particular time and place, and assess appropriate ways to respond (ethical judgment). First Peoples Principles of Learning: Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.

Farming practices have changed over the last 80 years, and knowledge of climate, water sustainability, and pest control, as well as advances in technology and modes of transportation, have affected the way plum orchards in our province operate. Place students into small groups and give each group a topic (from the table below) to discuss, then have them share their thoughts with the class. Or, write each topic on a piece of chart paper and hang the papers around the classroom. Have students walk around, writing their thoughts down on each piece of paper.

THEN		NOW
Horse	Vs.	Tractor
Train	Vs.	Semi-trailer truck
Water gun irrigation	Vs.	Drip irrigation
Heirloom seeds	Vs.	Genetically modified seeds
Hand-picked fruit	Vs.	Machine-picked fruit

FOOD STUDIES ACTIVITY: PERFECT PICKLED PLUMS

Curriculum Connection: Applied Skills - grades 4 to 5: Skills are developed through practice, effort, and action. Food Studies - grades 6 to 7: Basic food handling and simple preparation techniques and equipment. First Peoples Principles of Learning: Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.

Review "Our Farmland: Security for Our Future" on the student side of the sheet with your class, then discuss how growing and preparing our own food in BC contributes to food security: knowing that we can produce enough safe and nutritious food to feed ourselves. In the old days, pickling was one way to ensure food security within a family, because fruits and vegetables harvested in the summer could be preserved and then enjoyed over the long, cold winter months. Today, because of refrigerators and commercial methods of food preservation, pickling is no longer a necessity, but it is still a delicious way to keep foods for long periods of time without having them go bad (pickled fruits and vegetables will keep for about five to six months in a jar stored in a cool place).

Try making pickled plums with your class, or send the recipe home with students to try with their families.

Ingredients

- 1 cinnamon stick
- 5 cardamom pods
- 4 cups sugar
- 2 cups apple cider vinegar
- 4 cups plums (pitted)
- small Mason jars (sanitized)

Directions

1. Place cinnamon stick and cardamom pods in a large stock pot. Turn the heat to medium and toast the spices for about 5 minutes, or until fragrant.
2. Add sugar and vinegar and bring to a very low simmer. Stir until the sugar is completely dissolved, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside.
3. Use a fork to puncture each plum. Fill the Mason jars half full with plums. Pour the liquid over the plums so that they are completely covered but leaving ¼ inch at the top.
4. Seal each jar tightly and refrigerate until needed.

MATH QUESTIONS

Curriculum Connection: Mathematics - grades 4 to 7: Connect mathematical concepts to each other and to other areas and personal interests. First Peoples Principles of Learning: Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational.

Orchardists have been growing plums in the Okanagan Valley since 1936. How many years is that? Is that longer than you have been alive? Longer than your parents have been alive? Your grandparents?

BC orchardists have been producing flavourful plums for over 80 years. Many BC families buy fresh plums by the box full for eating fresh, drying, canning, or cooking. If you have 75 plums in a box, how many do you think you could eat fresh? Can you write that number as a percentage? What would you do with the rest? Can you write those numbers as percentages? Create a circle graph to illustrate all the percentages. (Remember to use 100% [75 plums] when drawing your graph.)