



LESSON 18 Growing Our Own Food: Sustainable Agriculture

Grade Level: 8-10

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2. Overview A country which can feed itself is well on the path of development. Sustainable agriculture is therefore necessary for national development and growth. From a small garden to large farms, the basic principles of agriculture are the same. Preparation of the land, planting of good seeds, cultivation, harvesting and storage are useful ingredients in agriculture.

3. Purpose The purpose of this lesson is to demonstrate the application of the basic ingredients in agriculture which can be applied by farmers and the public at large.

4. Objectives Students will be able to:

- i. Identify the common food items in their community
- ii. Cultivate a small piece of land
- iii. Discuss how agriculture has helped growing nations.

5. Resources/materials The teacher should make available, national Reports on Agriculture. Visits to different farms in the locality.

6. Activities and Procedures In Lesson 7, the foods we eat was discussed leading to what is meant by a balanced diet. It is believed that a nation which can feed itself can become self reliant. Provision of adequate food for a nation has to be undertaken by the nation itself. People in any given community are always encouraged to make the best out of the food items that are locally produced. A balanced diet can be obtained from local food stuff.

For a community to be able to grow enough food for its people, agriculture must be pursued in a scientific way. A farmer who has scientific knowledge will be able to undertake sustainable agriculture. Whether the farming is being done in a small piece of land or in a large farm, application of science is important. The teacher should remind the students of the following. Good scientific agriculture should

- Take into consideration the soil on which planting will be done. Knowing the soil profile is important.
- Understanding the weather conditions prevalent in the environment is important. With that knowledge, the farmer will be guided on what and when to plant the selected crops.

- Aiding the growth of crops using appropriate fertilisers can increase yields
- Post harvest care of the crops is important so as to minimise loss due to pests and poor storage.

When science is applied to agricultural practices, the crop yield is invariably high. Nations that have been able to feed themselves adequately have been found to be also scientifically advanced. The excess of crop yields are exported and sold to increase the economy of the nation. Scientific farming is to be encouraged. The students should be made to see how they could, as farmers improve the economy of their nation.

7. Tying it all together Farming in most African countries need great improvement. The students should be able to contribute their own ideas on how farming could be improved in their community. Farming should therefore be seen as an important activity, even for the educated. Farming in Africa should not be seen as work for illiterate people.

When farming is generally discussed, it is limited to crop farming. The teacher should in this lesson broaden the scope of farming to include both fish farming and dairy farming. Soon it will be clear to the students that agriculture is wide.

8. Assessment The students will be able to first assess the food needs in their community. They should be guided to make a survey of how the main bulk of what is eaten in their community is obtained. Let the students themselves make concrete suggestions on how to improve food supply in their community.

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10. References Bethell, George et al. (1999). **Science in Zimbabwe A practical approach** Harare: John Murray Ltd. in association with Academic Books (Pvt) Ltd. Harare

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