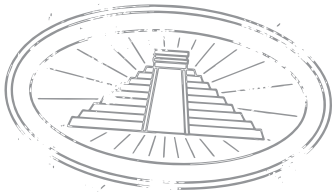
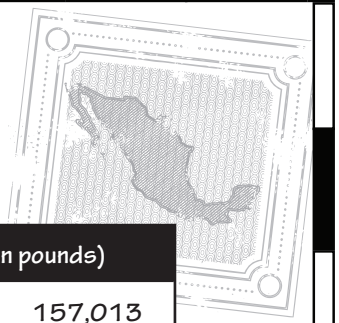


Worldwide Watermelon

Import/Export

Middle School Geography/Food Anthropology



Objective:
Gain an understanding of global interdependence

Materials:
- Political world outline maps
- Colored pencils
- Encyclopedias
- Web-based references for more extensive research

Introduction:
We depend on other countries in the world for food, including watermelon. Over 1,200 varieties of watermelon are grown in 96 countries. It's now easy to find this sweet, healthy treat any time of the year with so many countries importing and exporting.

In the U.S., watermelon is available from April-November, with peak production in May, June, July, and August.

1. How many pounds of watermelon do you think are produced a year in the U.S.? How many pounds do you think are grown in the world? (Keep in the mind the average weight of a typical watermelon available in your local supermarket.)

_____

2. If someone were to ask you where most watermelons are grown, what would be your answer? (There are no incorrect answers.) Share with the class.

_____

During our winter months, we can enjoy imported watermelon. Imported watermelon is available from October-June, with peak production in March, April, and May. Some of the countries that export watermelons to the U.S. are Mexico and other Latin American countries such as Honduras and Guatemala.

3. These are the actual top five watermelon-producing countries.

2006 (million pounds)	
China	157,013
Turkey	8,389
Islamic Republic of Iran	7,185
USA	3,789
Egypt	3,318

Locate the countries in the table on your map. Outline them and write how many pounds of watermelon are produced in each one on each country on the map.

4. When do you usually eat watermelon? How do you eat it? Do you eat anything with it?

_____

_____

People around the world enjoy watermelon in ways that might surprise you.

- *In Israel and Egypt, the sweet watermelon is paired with salty feta cheese.*

- *In China and Japan, people give watermelons as hostess gifts!*

5. Use other reference materials to discover additional information about the different countries that produce watermelon.

Suggested Research Topics:
1. Population
2. Climates
3. Cultures