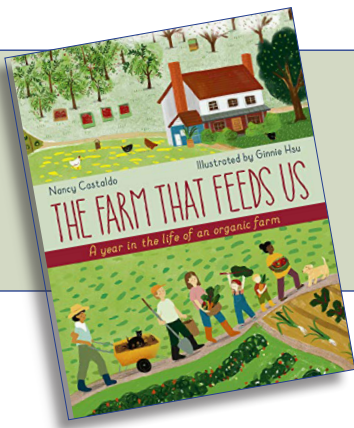


# THE FARM THAT FEEDS US



Age Range: 7 – 11 years  
Grade Level: Grades 2 – 6  
Publisher: Words & Pictures  
ISBN-10: 0711242534  
ISBN-13: 978-0711242531

## About the book:

Where does our food come from? What role do farms play? What's it like to be a farmer? In this charmingly illustrated book, follow a farm throughout the year to discover how the farmer grows fresh and tasty food for us to eat in a sustainable and natural way.

Explore the workings of a small-scale, organic family farm and experience the rhythm of farm life. In the spring, visit the chicken coop, till the fields, and tour the farm machinery. When summer comes, plant corn, meet the pollinators, and head to the county fair. In the fall, make pies and preserves, harvest pumpkins, and put the fields to sleep. Winter activities include trimming and pruning the orchard, seed shopping, and baking bread.

## About the author—Nancy Castaldo:

Nancy Castaldo has been writing books about the planet for over 20 years. Her award-winning titles have been Bank Street College of Education Best Books selections, National Science Teachers Associations Notable titles, and winners of the Green Earth Book Award. Nancy loves writing books that inform, inspire, and empower her young readers. She loves sharing her research and writing in schools and libraries. Learn more about Nancy by accessing her website at [www.nancycastaldo.com](http://www.nancycastaldo.com).



## About the illustrator—Ginnie Hsu:

Ginnie is an illustrator, a designer, an educator and a maker living in Upstate New York. Her work is often inspired by everyday life, nature, human living, and well-being. She loves mixing new and traditional media to create magic. If she's not in her studio, Ginnie can be found in the woods foraging or on her yoga mat practicing. She is currently a herbalist and yogi in training. Stop by her website at [www.helloginniehsu.com](http://www.helloginniehsu.com) to observe more of her fascinating artwork.



## Pre-Reading Discussion:

- Consider the illustrations featured on the front and back covers of the book. Notice the various geometric shapes depicted in the illustrations. Identify the different plants and animals included in each shape. Are there ways that the plants and animals associated in support of one another? Explain your answer.
- The word *ecosystem* is defined as a biological community of interacting organisms and their physical environment. Describe ways that a farm can be considered to be an ecosystem. Determine the role humans have in establishing, managing, and maintaining a healthy farming ecosystem.
- Discuss how patience, responsibility, teamwork, and a committed work ethic are as important to the establishment of a flourishing farm as livestock, equipment, rich soil, seeds, and sunshine.

## Post-Reading Discussion:

Some farmers grow crops like corn, tomatoes, and wheat. Some farmers raise animals, like pigs, chickens, and cows. Some do both (4).

- The term *agriculture* refers to the science and practices of farming. Examine reasons why farming is considered to be a scientific practice.
- The history of agriculture spans over thousands of years, beginning with gathering wild grains, to planting seeds, to domesticating livestock. Discuss how the science and practices of farming have changed, yet remained the same, throughout history.

Out comes the tractor pulling a plow behind it. The farmer climbs into the cab, starts the engine, and drives the tractor into the field (14).

- Land that is *arable* is suitable for farming. Explain what makes some land more arable than others.
- By tilling the soil, farmers are creating a new ecosystem, one that they must plan and care for. Discuss how various types of terrain, plant choices, water sources, and sunlight contribute to a farmer's agricultural decisions.
- The word *biodiversity* refers to various types of seeds and plants produced on a farm. Consider why producing a variety of crops benefits not only the farmer, but those who buy them.

Corn first grew wild in the Americas. Today, farmers plant corn for people to eat or for livestock to eat (28).

- Consider how the production of corn has changed throughout history, that it once grew wild and now is produced on a massive scale. Discuss how something as basic as corn has helped sustain life throughout history.
- The word *heirloom* means something valuable that is inherited, like an antique. Tell how plants, such as corn or tomatoes, can be considered to be valued heirlooms.

With their sweet nectar, flowers attract bees, butterflies, birds, and other wildlife that pollinate the plants (43).

- Examine the interconnectivity of plants and the pollinators. Discuss the importance of keeping a natural balance between them both.
- List ways that humans, as the care-takers of the farm ecosystem, protect the pollination cycle. What might happen if they do not?
- Distinguish the difference between helpful pollinators and pests that harm plants. Explain the careful balance between caring for pollinators, yet eliminating the risk of crop damage caused by the pests.

Snow may be falling, but spring is just around the corner (68).

- Farming is an unending enterprise. List ways that farmers continue to care for their crops, equipment, and livestock all year long. How are they constantly planning to keep their ecosystem vibrant and flourishing?
- Determine ways that consumers can continue to support farmers throughout the year, as well.

### Dropped Phrase Puzzle Answers

nyhhiopoesstt **p h o t o s y n t h e s i s**  
 21 16 30 24 1

teicpesdi **p e s t i c i d e**  
 22 14 32

otdeviryibis **b i o d i v e r s i t y**  
 8 12 19 15

catrgruulie **a g r i c u l t u r e**  
 11 2 20 34

mirloeho **h e i r l o o m**  
 6 26 31 13

detviisy **d i v e r s i t y**  
 9 25 27

relbaa **a r a b l e**  
 17 4 35 23

cefele **f l e e c e**  
 7

istoctiinab **a n t i b i o t i c s**  
 5 18 28

zeitflirr **f e r t i l i z e r**  
 10 29 36 33 3

**H u r r a h f o r f a r m s t h a t s u p p l y u s**  
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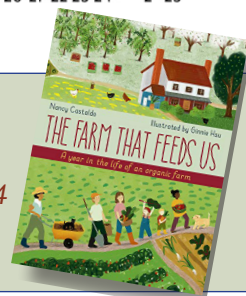
**w i t h t h e f o o d w e e a t !**  
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### ACADEMIC STATE STANDARDS ALIGNMENT:

Reading Literature: RL.1, RL.2, RL.3, RL.4, RL.5, RL.7, RL.10

Speaking & Listening: SL.1, SL.2, SL.4, SL.5 Next Gen Science: 3-LS4-1, 3-LS4.2, 3-LS4.3, 3-LS4-4

Guide created by Debbie Gonzales, MFA



Dropped Phrase Word Puzzle

Solve the word puzzle below by referencing the Glossary to discover the answers to the scrambled words below.

Discover the dropped phrase by associating the number clues between the scrambled words and the quote in the lower portion of the page.

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