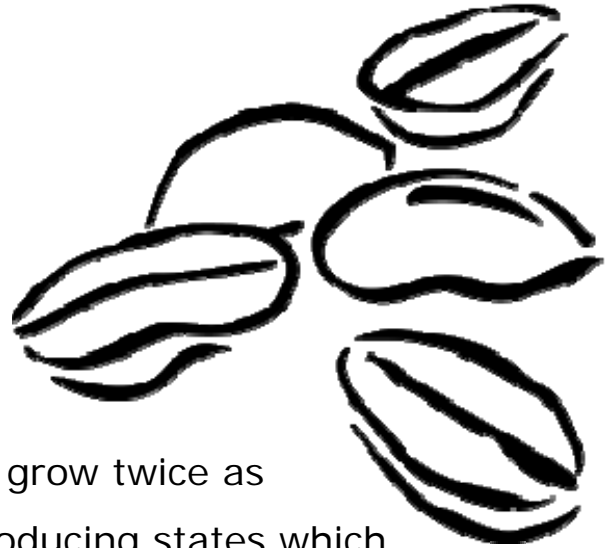


Name _____

What Are Soybeans?

The United States is the leading producer and exporter of soybeans in the world. Soybeans grow well in much of the United States, especially the Midwest. In fact, Illinois and Iowa grow twice as many soybeans as the next largest producing states which are Indiana, Minnesota, Missouri and Nebraska.



Soybeans are legumes like green peas or green beans that are staple American vegetables. Soybeans are available in the grocery store fresh, canned or frozen in an immature form but they are called edamame. Mature soybeans must be processed before they become edible by humans but lots of the soybean harvest is fed to cattle, poultry and hogs. Some soy products are found in cat and dog food and as food at fish farms.

Soybeans are an excellent source of inexpensive and low-fat protein. In other countries like China, many people obtain protein by eating tofu which is made from soybeans. Soy sauce, which originally comes from China, is a flavoring that is used in American foods.

Soybeans can also be processed to produce an oil that is low in saturated fat and high in healthy omega-3 fatty acids. Soybean oil is an ingredient in salad dressings, margarine, mayonnaise and vegetable shortening. Soybean oil accounts for



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about one-third of all the vegetable oils used in the United States. Soybeans can also be processed into flour that is found in commercially prepared pasta, bread, cookies, cakes and other snack foods.

Soybeans are not native to North America; soybeans originated in Asia. History tells us that Chinese farmers were growing soybeans in 1100 B.C.E. In fact, China is the leading importer of U.S. soybeans. History also tells us that Japanese farmers were cultivating soybeans in the eighth century C.E. When Europeans visited Asia they brought back soybean plants as specimens for botanical gardens.

Soybeans arrived in the United States during the Colonial Period. It is part of history that Benjamin Franklin sent soybean seeds from London back to Pennsylvania in 1770. American farmers did not grow soybeans to any extent until the late 1800s. It wasn't until the 1940s that soybeans became a major American crop.



Name _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Multiple Choice Questions

Circle the correct answer.

1. Where is most of America's soybean crop grown?
 - a. North
 - b. South
 - c. West
 - d. Midwest

2. Soybeans are similar to
 - a. Green beans
 - b. Peas
 - c. Both a. and b. above
 - d. None of the above

3. Soybeans are a good source of
 - a. Fat
 - b. Carbohydrate
 - c. Protein
 - d. All of the above

4. Soybean oil is
 - a. High in saturated fat
 - b. Low in saturated fat
 - c. Low in fatty acid
 - d. High in monounsaturated fat

5. Soybeans originated in
 - a. China
 - b. Japan
 - c. England
 - d. Europe

6. Which famous American send soybean seeds to the colonies?
 - a. George Washington
 - b. Benjamin Franklin
 - c. Thomas Jefferson
 - d. John Adams



Name _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Short Answer Questions

1. Look at the ingredient labels on a variety of packaged foods at the grocery store. Find ten items that contain soybean products. For example, Crisco vegetable oil is 100% soybean oil.
2. Do some research and write a short report about how tofu is made and how it is used in recipes.
3. Many Americans are allergic to dairy products and use soy milk as a substitute. Taste soy milk as an adventure in trying different foods.
4. Do some research and prepare a PowerPoint presentation on the life cycle of a soybean plant.
5. Do some research and explain the benefits of using soy ink to the environment and to the printing industry.
6. George Washington Carver is most famous for his work with peanuts but he also conducted research on soybeans. Do some research of your own and write a short report on uses George Washington Carver found for soybeans.
7. In 1941 Henry Ford, founder of the Ford Motor Company, introduced what he called the "Soybean Car." Do some research and write a short report about this unusual car.



Name _____

Answer Key

Multiple Choice

1. d.
2. b.
3. c.
4. b.
5. a.
6. b.

Short Answer

1. Individual response
2. Individual response
3. Individual response
4. Individual response
5. Individual response
6. Individual response
7. Individual response

