



United States
Department of
Agriculture

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Recent Children's Books on Agriculture: A Selected List

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Every child is unique and reads at his or her own reading level. The categories into which these books are arranged are only a guide. Note, too, that in the section for primary grades, some books are for first readers and some are adult read-alouds.

There are many, many books about farming and ranching for children. These are just a few of those published in the last ten years. Happy reading!

For the Very Youngest

Everywhere a Moo, Moo. New York: Children's Press, 2010. A board book that toddlers can sing along to.

Farm Animals. Lucy Cousins. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 2004, c. 1990. A board book from the creator of the popular *Maisy* series. Touchable cover.

Farm Trucks. Betsy Imershein. New York: Little Simon, 2002. A board book with photographs of all kinds of farm trucks, tractors to combines.

I Love Animals. Flora McDonnell. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 2001, c. 1994. "A charming [board] picture book filled with a small child's joyous love for all the animals on her farm. Large, bold illustrations and a clear text fairly explode with exuberance." –School Library Journal

Usborne Look and Say. Farm. Jo Litchfield. Tulsa, OK: EDC Pub., 2004. A board book on the sights and scenes of the farm.

Picture Books

Chickens to the Rescue. John Himmelman. New York: H. Holt, 2006. The amazing chickens on the Greenstalk farm race to help various family members and farm animals.

Golden Delicious: A Cinderella Apple Story. Anna Egan Smucker. Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman & Co., 2008. This is a charming and true tale of the discovery and development of the Golden Delicious apple variety.

I Drive a Tractor. Sarah Bridges. Minneapolis: Picture Window Books, 2007. Tells about modern tractor technology, structure, and operation.

I Want to Be a Cowgirl. Jeanne Willis and Tony Ross. New York: Henry Holt, 2001. With bright illustrations and in rhyming text, a little girl explains her desire to head for the wild, wild West.

My First Farm Book. DK Publishing, Inc. New York: DK Pub., 2000. Labeled illustrations help to enrich vocabulary and develop early reading skills.

On the Farm. David Elliott. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 2008. Gives a view of the world of a family farm.

Punk Farm. Jarrett Krosoczka. New York: Knopf, 2005. "After a long day of work, Farmer Joe goes home to bed. But meanwhile, back at the barn . . . Cow sets up her drums. Pig plugs in his amp. Goat tunes his bass. Chicken sets up her keyboards. And Sheep checks the microphone. They are Punk Farm and tonight they're ready to ROCK! With adorable farm animals - and a surprise tribute to Old MacDonald - this rollicking tale is sure to have kids cheering--and singing--along."

Punk Farm on Tour. Jarrett Krosoczka. New York, Knopf, 2007. Cow, Sheep, Pig, Goat, and Chicken are getting ready to rock across the U.S.A.

Senses on the Farm. Shelley Rotner. Minneapolis: Millbrook Press, 2009. Vivid photographs help you see, hear, taste, smell, and touch your way through a season on a working farm.

The Story of Calvin Cotton. Paula Carvalho and Christine Johnson. Kerman, CA: Chrispaul Publishing Co., 2001. Explains cotton farming and how cotton becomes products with which our daily lives are involved.

Ten Red Apples. Pat Hutchins. New York: Greenwillow Books, 2000. A picture book for the youngest. In rhyming verses, one animal after another makes its signature sound as the eaten apples are counted down from 10 to 1.

This Little Chick. John Lawrence. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 2002. In rhyming text, a little chick shows that he can make the sounds of the animals in his neighborhood.

Tough Chicks. Cece Meng. New York: Clarion Books, 2009. A trio of smart, fearless, adorable chicks show the other farm animals why it's good to be different.

Tractor Day. Candice Ransom. New York: Walker & Co., 2007. Simple rhyming text describes a child's day spent riding on the tractor with Daddy at their small farm.

Wake Up, Big Barn. Suzanne Tanner Chitwood. New York: Scholastic, 2002. Rhyming text describes a rowdy rollicking farm where piggies love a mud bath, farm frogs rock hop, and Owl's on the night shift, shooby, hooby, hoo!

Primary Grades

Apples for Everyone. Jill Esbaum. Washington: National Geographic Society, 2009. Stunning photographs, very simple text, great for teachers.

Bean. Louise Spilsbury. Chicago: Heinemann Library, 2005. Excellent photographs and very simple text show how a bean becomes a plant.

The Berenstain Bears Down on the Farm. Stan and Jan Berenstain. New York: HarperCollins: 2006. In this "I Can Read" book, the Bear family visit Farmer and Mrs. Ben's farm and learn about life there.

Biscuit's Day at the Farm. Alyssa Satin Capucilli. New York: HarperCollins, 2007. Biscuit the dog helps out by feeding the hens and the goats and encouraging a piglet who wants to roam to stay in his pen instead.

Bring Me Some Apples and I'll Make You a Pie: a Story about Edna Lewis. Robbin Gourley. New York: Clarion Books, 2009. "Edna Lewis, the granddaughter of an emancipated slave who founded Freetown,

Virginia, grew up to become a famous chef of southern cuisine. Inspired by Lewis' childhood, this debut children's book by an artist and cookbook author celebrates the growing seasons and the irreplaceable pleasure of fresh food shared with family."

Cattle Kids: A Year on the Western Range. Cat Urbigkit. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mill Press, 2007. Explains the work on cattle ranches and how kids help out.

Century Farm. Cris Peterson. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mill Press, 1999. In photographs and anecdotes, tells the story of a 100-year-old family farm in Wisconsin and the three generations of Petersons who have owned and farmed the land.

The Chicken-Chasing Queen of Lamar County. Janice N. Harrington. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007. Meet one smart chicken chaser. But she can't catch Miss Hen, who later disappears.

Chickens on a Farm. Abbie Mercer. New York: Rosen Publishing, 2010. Very simple text with a photograph on the facing page.

Corn/Maiz. Doreen Gonzales. New York: Rosen Publishing Group, 2009. Pages of brief information in English and Spanish alternate with bright photographs. Includes a glossary.

Down on the Farm: Cows. Hannah Ray. New York: Crabtree Publishing Co., 2008. With photographs and drawings, explains why cows are important and looks at how they live.

Down on the Farm: Goats. Sally Morgan. New York: Crabtree Publishing Co., 2008. Did you know goats can jump as high as five feet?

Down on the Farm: Pigs. Hannah Ray. New York: Crabtree Publishing Co., 2008. Like the other books in this series, presents a craft idea at the end of the book.

Down on the Farm: Sheep. Hannah Ray. New York: Crabtree Publishing Co., 2008. Farm fact: A lamb will always know which sheep is its mother by her bleat.

Fantastic Farm Machines. Cris Peterson. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mill Press, 2006. Introduces children to twelve types of farm machinery.

Goats on a Farm. Abbie Mercer. New York: Rosen Publishing, 2010. Very simple text with a photograph on the facing page.

Growing Seasons. Elsie Lee Splear. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2000. Born into an Illinois farm family in 1906, Elsie Lee Splear describes how she, her parents, and her sisters lived in the early years of the twentieth century and how the changing seasons shaped their existence.

Horses on a Farm. Abbie Mercer. New York: Rosen Publishing, 2010. Very simple text with a photograph on the facing page.

In the Cattle Yard. Patricia M. Stockland. Edina, MN: Abdo Publishing, 2008. Simple text describes the lives of cattle.

In the Pig Pen. Patricia M. Stockland, Edina, MN: Abdo Publishing, 2008. Fun fact: pigs are very clean animals, and will always use the same corner of their pen for a bathroom.

In the Sheep Pasture. Patricia M. Stockland. Edina, MN: Abdo Publishing, 2008. Like the other books in this series, presents bright pictures and limited text.

Life on a Cattle Farm. Judy Wolfman. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books, 2002. Includes photographs of the narrating boy as he cares for livestock.

Pigs on a Farm. Abbie Mercer. New York: Rosen Publishing, 2010. Very simple text with a photograph on the facing page.

Plants Need Sunlight. Christine Petersen. Ann Arbor, MI: Cherry Lake Publishing, 2009. Contents: What do plants eat; Making food; Sunlight in your food. Includes a glossary.

Sheep on a Farm. Abbie Mercer. New York: Rosen Publishing, 2010. Very simple text with a photograph on the facing page.

Tractor (Machines at Work). Carol Bingham. New York: DK Publishing, Inc., 2004. Filled with photographs and explanations.

What Happens at a Horse Farm? ¿Que' pasa en una granja de caballos? Amy Hutchings. Gareth Stevens Publishing: 2009. Presents a photograph facing a page of one or two sentence text. (In English and Spanish)

Where Do Chicks Come From? Amy E. Sklansky. New York: HarperCollins, 2005. Describes what happens day-by-day for the three weeks from the time a hen lays an egg until the baby chick hatches.

Working on a Farm. Katie Marsico. Ann Arbor, MI: Cherry Lake Publishing, 2009. Includes a "Find Out More" section listing other books and web sites.

Upper Elementary

American Indian Contributions to the World. Food, Farming, and Hunting. New York: Facts on File, 2005. Provides a panorama of little-known information about the rich inventiveness of indigenous peoples of North, Central, and South America.

Anna on the Farm. Mary Downing Hahn. New York: Clarion Books, 2001. In the summer before World War I, nine-year-old Anna is happy to spend a week at her aunt and uncle's Beltsville, Maryland, farm until she meets Theodore, who calls her a "city slicker" and spurs her to prove that she's just as clever and brave as he is.

Bananas! Jacqueline Farmer. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 1999. Describes the growth, distribution, history, and nutritional value of the banana. Includes recipes, poems, and jokes!

The Biography of Corn. L. Michele Nielsen. New York: Crabtree Publishing, 2007. Includes discussion of how corn spread around the world; how corn is grown and harvested; hybrid and GMO corn; and products made from corn.

The Biography of Potatoes. Ellen Rodger. New York: Crabtree Publishing, 2007. Partial contents: How potatoes grow; Ancient potatoes; The potato and Ireland; The great hunger; Back to the New World; From tubers to fries.

The Biography of Wheat. Jennifer Lackey. New York: Crabtree Publishing, 2007. Includes information on the dust bowl and the green revolution.

Cesar Chavez: Labor Leader. David Seidman. New York: Franklin Watts, 2004. Discusses the life and work of Cesar Chavez, an American labor leader who organized the farm worker's union, United Farm Workers.

Cows, Cats, and Kids: A Veterinarian's Family at Work. Jean L. S. Patrick. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mill Press, 2003. Describes how the kids help their dad, a mixed-animal veterinarian in South Dakota.

Different Kinds of Soil. Molly Aloian. New York: Crabtree Publishing Co., 2010. Discusses soil chemistry; textures and types; soil and climate, nature, and people; caring for soil.

Farmer George Plants a Nation. Peggy Thomas. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mill Press, 2008. From the book: "He planted the seed of freedom on the battlefield, and with his ingenuity as a farmer and his leadership as the nation's first president, the United States grew into a world leader in farming."

Farms. Adele Richardson. Mankato, MN: Creative Education, 2000. A book in the "Let's Investigate Economics" series, provides photos and descriptions of different types of farms.

George Washington Carver: Agricultural Pioneer. Stephanie Macceca. Mankato, MN: Compass Point Books, 2010. Includes information about modern scientists.

Harvesting Hope: the Story of Cesar Chavez. Kathleen Krull. New York: Harcourt, Inc., 2003. A biography of Cesar Chavez, from age ten when he and his family lived happily on their Arizona ranch, to age thirty-eight when he led a peaceful protest against California migrant workers' miserable working conditions.

Has a Cow Saved Your Life? Deborah Underwood. Chicago: Raintree Press, 2007. Describes how Edward Jenner found a vaccine for smallpox with the help of sick cows and the scientific method.

Gregor Mendel and the Discovery of the Gene. John Bankston. Hockessin, DE: Mitchell Lane Publishers, 2005. A biography of the nineteenth-century Austrian monk who discovered the laws of genetics.

How Did That Get Here Series? New York: Crabtree Publishing. Titles include the Biography of: Bananas; Chocolate; Corn; Cotton; Potatoes; Rice; Rubber; and more.

How Is Soil Made? Heather L. Montgomery. New York: Crabtree Publishing Co., 2010. Discusses, among other topics, humus, soil nutrients, water and air, weathering, and conservation.

Inventions and Discoveries: Agriculture. World Book, Inc. Chicago: World Book, Inc., 2009. Sample topics: the domestication of plants and animals; the plow; the horse harness; hybrid crops; genetically modified food.

The Journal of C.J. Jackson, a Dust Bowl Migrant. William Durbin. New York: Scholastic, 2002. In the Oklahoma panhandle, C.J. and his parents are struggling through the Dust Bowl.

Kids' Container Gardening: Year-Round Projects for Inside and Out. Cindy Krezel. Batavia, IL: Ball Publishing, 2005. "You can garden in bowls, drinking glasses, aquariums, - even an old hat!" Presents 18 projects.

The Life and Times of Corn. Charles Micucci. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2009. Well-researched, fun to read, and jam-packed full of facts about corn.

The Life and Times of the Peanut. Charles Micucci. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1997. Well-researched, fun to read, and jam-packed full of facts about peanuts. Includes a section called "Three Thousand Years of Peanut Butter."

Life in Farming Community. Lizann Flatt. New York: Crabtree Publishing, 2010. Particularly focuses on Monticello, Wisconsin and dairying and cheesemaking activities there.

Return to Sender. Julia Alvarez. New York: Knopf, 2009. In this novel, Tyler's family is forced to hire migrant Mexican workers after Tyler's dad is injured in a tractor accident. "Despite his reservations, Tyler soon bonds with a worker's daughter, who is in his sixth-grade class. His problems seem small compared to Mari's: her family fears deportation, and her mother has been missing since re-entering the States months ago."—Publishers Weekly Review.

The Seed Vault. Bonnie Juettner. Chicago: Norwood House Press, 2010. "The seed vault in Norway houses plant seeds from around the world to be stored in the event that the plant needs to be re-introduced into the food supply." —Publisher.

The Shepherd's Trail. Cat Urbigkit. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mill Press, 2008. Domestic sheep graze in migratory flocks on rangelands throughout the western U.S., moving with the seasons.

The Super Soybean. Raymond Bial. Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman, 2007. Readers will be amazed to learn how much contact they have in their daily lives with soy; as Bial notes, "the versatile bean is used in foods, plastics, medicines, fuels, inks, crayons, and zillions of other products."

Survival in the Storm: the Dust Bowl Diary of Grace Edwards. Katelan Janke. New York: Scholastic, 2002. Fierce, dust-filled winds ravage the Texas plains and threaten the agricultural livelihood of Grace's home.

Working Horses. Mary Packard. New York: Bearport Publishing, 2007. With photos from draft horses to Lipizzaners.

Middle Grades and Up

Construct a Greenhouse. Felicia Lee. Arlington, VA: National Science Teachers Association, 2000. For high schoolers to learn how to construct a bench scale prototype greenhouse.

Exploring Agriscience. 3rd ed. Ray V. Herren. Clifton Park, NY: Thomson Delmar Learning, 2006. "Written to be used as a core text in a middle school agriscience curriculum."

Food and Farming – (The Global Village). John Baines. London: Evans Brothers, Ltd., 2008. Partial contents: Our global food store; Globalisation and free trade; Food producers around the world; Food for the global market; Can free trade be fair trade? The future of farming; The great debate.

On Good Land: The Autobiography of an Urban Farm. Michael Ableman and Cynthia Wisheart. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, c1998. "Funny, inspiring, and educational, takes the reader into the fields of Fairview Gardens where natural wonders (and minor catastrophes) await."

Our Farm: Four Seasons with Five Kids on One Family's Farm. Michael J. Rosen. Plain City, OH: Darby Creek Publishing, 2008. "How would your year be different if you had ninety acres to mow, two hundred hay bales to lift, five hundred tons of manure to move – plus school work, wrestling practice, baseball, and all the other things that go with being a kid?"

Outdoor Careers. Amanda Kirk. New York: Checkmark Books, 2009.

Rainmakers: A Photographic Story of Center Pivots. Groundwater Foundation. Lincoln, NE: Groundwater Foundation, 2005. Presents the history and complexity of center pivot irrigation.

Sheepwagon: Home on the Range. Nancy Weidel. Glendo, WY: High Plains Press, 2001. Tells the story of the home on wheels used to house a shepherd as he follows his flocks across grasslands and mountains. Includes over 100 photographs.

Superfood or Superthreat : the Issue of Genetically Engineered Food. Kathlyn Gay. Berkeley Heights, NJ : Enslow, 2008. Describes how genetically engineered food is developed, produced, and marketed, and presents both sides of the argument regarding whether or not such food is harmful.

The Worst Hard Time: The Untold Story of Those Who Survived the Great American Dust Bowl. Timothy Egan. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006. In this National Book Award winner, Egan follows a half-dozen families and their communities through the rise and fall of the High Plains region, going from sod homes to new framed houses to huddling in basements with the windows sealed by damp sheets in a futile effort to keep the dust out. He follows their desperate attempts to carry on through blinding black blizzards, crop failure, and the deaths of loved ones.