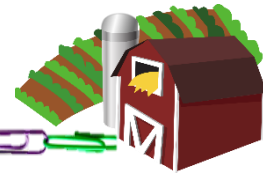




Links to Agriculture

Soybeans – The Renewable Bean



What would you say if someone asked you, “Do you eat seeds?” Your answer would probably be, ‘No!’ However, every day you most likely eat food from two very useful seeds – corn and soybeans. The plants that produce these seeds are very different, but they both provide us with things that we eat and use every day.

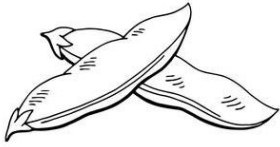
Soybeans belong to a special family of plants. The seeds from a soybean plant are packed in a pod somewhat like peas, peanuts, and lima beans. Beans and peas that grow in a pod belong to the plant family called **legumes**. The soybean plant grows to about 2 ½ feet tall. Each soybean plant produces 15 to 25 pods. Each pod contains 2 or 3 seeds, called beans. The leaves on the soybean plant grow in groups of three.



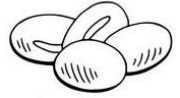
Soybeans are sometimes called the “miracle crop” because of their hundreds of uses. Each person eats 35 to 40 pounds of soybeans a year, but they may not look like the original crop. You may have had salad dressing with soy oil or even put soy sauce on your dinner. Maybe you’ve tried tofu, which is made from soybeans! People may eat soybeans in bread, cereal, or snacks as soy lecithin, an **emulsifier** that helps ingredients mix smoothly. Soy lecithin even keeps the chocolate in your candy bar smooth and creamy. Soybeans can also be found in shampoo, lotion, soap, crayons, and bio-diesel fuel.

Soybeans and corn are **renewable resources**. Renewable resources are resources that can be planted over and over again. When they are used up, we are able to grow more. **Non-renewable resources** are things like coal, oil, and gas which take many years to produce. When these resources are gone we cannot get any more for hundreds of years. So, we must always be looking for new ways to use **renewable resources!**





How Well Did You Read?



1. What was the author's purpose for writing this article?

2. What two seeds provide food you eat and products you use every day?

3. Name two seeds other than soybeans that grow in pods.

4. What is a renewable resource?

5. Why are renewable resources important to us?

6. Which soybean fact did you find most interesting? Why?



Soy Salad Dressing

(Get adult supervision!)



This activity will allow you to make salad dressing with ingredients from your kitchen. First, check your bottle of cooking oil. It can be one of several different kinds. It could be corn oil (from corn), canola oil, or vegetable oil (from soybeans). Any one of these oils will work but since this is about soybeans, use the vegetable oil from soybeans!

Ingredients:

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 2 TBSP sugar | 1 ½ TBSP ketchup |
| 1 TBSP vinegar | 2 TBSP water |
| 3 TBSP soybean oil | Small jar with lid |

Directions:

1. Put the sugar and vinegar in the jar and seal the lid. Shake until the sugar dissolves.
2. Add the oil and water to the jar. Shake again.
3. Finally, add the ketchup and shake one more time.
4. Use your salad dressing on a salad or as a dip for fresh vegetables. It's especially good because you made it yourself!

In addition to soybeans, what other farm products are included in the recipe?



Have you ever eaten these?

These are "**edamame**" (ed-uh-'mah-may), or **immature soybeans**. They are native to East Asia and were introduced to Japan by China in the 8th century. The Japanese then used soybeans to develop soy sauce. Now, both **edamame** and soy sauce are enjoyed by people all over the world!

Soybean Trivia

- There are over 2500 varieties of soybeans that come in many sizes, shapes, and colors.
- A bushel of soybeans weighs 60 pounds.
- Soybean oil is also used to make machine oil, paint, candles, and beauty products.



Did You Know ...?

- Soybeans have been grown in Asia for centuries. They were first brought to North America in 1765.
- Henry Ford grew soybeans to make enamel paint for his cars. This paint is still used today.
- Soybeans are an excellent source of fiber. Fiber helps to keep our digestive system healthy.
- In the US, the top soybean producing states are Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, Minnesota, Nebraska, Missouri, and Ohio



Joke Time

How many soybeans can you put in an empty bag?



Joke Answer:

One. Once you add one bean, the bag is no longer empty.



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