

FOODPRINT MELBOURNE

INQUIRY 1

What are the characteristics of Melbourne's foodbowl?

WORKSHEET 3b

Investigating where food grows:
Using ABS data

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INTRODUCTION

Werribee South, Mornington Peninsula and the Casey-Cardinia region are all important areas for fruit and vegetable production on the fringe of Melbourne. Each of them is significant for growing different types of produce.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics collects data from farmers about what they produce. This enables us to see what crops are produced in each area of Melbourne's foodbowl. For livestock, they usually measure how many animals farmers have. For grains (like wheat) and oilseeds (like canola), they measure the tonnes produced. For fruit and vegetables, they measure production in either tonnes or kilograms (one tonne is 1000 kilograms). Crops produced in smaller quantities are usually measured in kilograms.

ACTIVITIES

Use Data Sheet 3 to complete the following activities:

1. Look at Table 1 and compare the types of crops grown in the three different regions of Melbourne's foodbowl.
 - a. The ABS collects data in different formats – some in kilograms, others in tonnes. To make direct comparisons about the quantities of different foods grown, convert the figures in tonnes to kilograms i.e. multiply the figures in tonnes by 1000.
 - b. What do you notice about the crops that grow in each region?
 - c. Why do you think some areas grow more of one kind of crop than another?
2. Figure 2 shows some soils which are important for food growing. Some relevant articles about the importance of these specific soil types are:
<https://theconversation.com/the-good-earth-boneo-leptic-tenosol-and-parsnips-16173> (Mornington Peninsula)
<https://theconversation.com/the-good-earth-peaty-black-vertosol-and-asparagus-13049> (Casey-Cardinia)
 - a. List the vegetables grown on the Mornington Peninsula in the sandy Tenosol soils.
 - b. What characteristics of the soil make this region a great place to grow parsnips?
 - c. Describe the Boneo Leptic Tenosol soil.
 - d. What is the advantage of this Tenosol soil to the vegetable grower?
 - e. List the other factors that make the Mornington Peninsula suitable for vegetable growing.
 - f. What are the features of the peaty black Vertosol soil for growing food crops?
 - g. The best asparagus can be grown on peaty black Vertosol soils. List the advantages of this soil for growing asparagus.
 - h. What is the future of growing vegetables on these black Vertosol soils near Koo-Wee-Rup?

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3. The right climate is also important for vegetable growing. A lack of rainfall can be supplemented by irrigation, but the number of days/nights below 2°C can be damaging to some crops due to frosts. Using figure 3, describe the areas of Victoria most likely to experience frost conditions and suggest how this might impact on the food crops grown.
4. From figure 4.
 - a. What does the term “perishable” mean?
 - b. Which types of fruits and vegetables grow on the city fringe?
5. Table 2 looks at two regional areas of Victoria.
 - a. What do you notice about the types of fruit and vegetables that grow in these areas?
 - b. How are they different to the fruit and vegetables that grow on the city fringe (table 1)?
 - c. Can you see SPC's food processing reflected in what is grown in that region?
6. What grows in your local area? Open the 'Victorian crops ABS data' Excel spreadsheet and look up your area. If you can't find it, look for other areas in your region or farming areas that you have visited.
 - a. What grows in your local area?
 - b. Is it perishable, or non-perishable?
 - c. How does your area's production compare to the areas mentioned in figure 1 and Tables 1 and 2?