



### Teacher Overview

The Ohio State Fair is one of the largest fairs in the United States. For over one hundred and fifty years it has served as an important venue for farmers to learn about advances in agriculture, as well as showcase their achievements in farm production. Though the fair has changed over the years, it still functions to promote and advance agriculture in the state.

With the technological innovations of the Industrial Revolution in the 19<sup>th</sup> century came improvements, as well as change, in agricultural techniques. The state began looking at the challenges and changes facing Ohio's farmers as more and more farmers joined agricultural organizations. In response, the Ohio government created the Board of Agriculture in 1846, which organized a state fair for Ohio's farmers. The Ohio State Board of Agriculture enabled farmers to showcase their products and skills through the county fairs, and eventually the Ohio State Fair. It also opened lines of communication between farmers, helping them to spread improved farming techniques across the state and to increase the farmers productivity.

The first Ohio State Fair was held in Cincinnati in 1850. The purpose of the state fair was to give Ohioans an opportunity to share ideas, to learn from each other, and to improve the quality of their livestock and crops. Because travel in Ohio was still difficult, the organizers decided to bring the fair to the people, and held the fair in different locations around the state each year.

Shortly following the Civil War, the railroad industry grew in Ohio making travel easier and quicker. By the 1870s, the railroad system in Ohio had made travel to and from all regions of the state much more efficient. For this reason the Ohio Board of Agriculture decided to permanently move the fair to the state's capital city, Columbus, in 1874. To this day, the State Fair continues a one hundred fifty year old tradition each year in Columbus, Ohio.

### Video Synopsis

In this *Our Ohio* video segment, the hosts visit the Ohio State Fair to learn more about the fair's history and its importance to the development of agriculture in the state.

### Learning Objectives

Students will learn about the history of the Ohio State Fair, and its role as an educational venue for farmers and a vehicle for new agricultural practices and technology. Students will also learn how, in the beginning, the fair went to the people before the railroads came to the state, and how the fair has transformed over time. In addition, students will learn about agricultural innovation and how that has affected production.





## Ohio Academic Content Standards

### Grade

4

#### **Benchmark: Economics**

5. Markets: Explain how the local community is an example of a market where buyers and sellers exchange goods and services.

#### **Benchmark: Geography**

8. Movement: Identify systems of transportation used to move people and products and systems of communication to move ideas from place to place.

#### **Benchmark: Social Studies Skills and Methods**

1. Obtaining Information: Obtain information about local issues from a variety of sources including:
  - g. Documents
4. Thinking and Organizing: Read and interpret pictographs, bar graphs and charts.
6. Problem Solving: Use a problem solving decision making process which includes:
  - b. Gathering Information

### Grade

5

#### **Benchmark: Economics**

2. Scarcity and Resource Allocation: Explain that individuals in all economies must answer the fundamental economic questions of what to produce, how to produce, and for whom to produce.

#### **Benchmark: Social Studies Skills and Method**

1. Obtaining Information: Obtain information from a variety of print and electronic sources and analyze its reliability including:
  - A. Accuracy of facts
2. Differentiate between primary and secondary sources.
6. Draw inferences from relevant information.
7. Organize key ideas by taking notes that paraphrase or summarize.
8. Communicate research findings using line graphs and tables.

#### **Materials**

- ☐ DVD player
- ☐ Television/Monitor
- ☐ Library
- ☐ Internet Access

#### **Teacher Vocabulary**

agriculture    import    export  
technology    innovation



## Procedure

### **ACTIVITY A: Going to the Fair**

1. Start by asking students how we share new information with each other today. Write the word “Now” on the board and write down student responses. Now write “1850” on the board and ask students to offer ideas on how we shared new information in 1850.
2. Next, based on the information in the overview, review the importance of farming in Ohio. Explain that Ohio farmers came up with a way to share new information with each other that helped make farming more productive.
3. Now, ask if any students have been to the Ohio State Fair. Let them know that the fair started out as a way to share new technologies and farming methods with other farmers in the state of Ohio, and that this tradition continues today.
4. Show the video “The Ohio State Fair” and have students take notes.
5. Finally, pass out **Worksheet A** and have students complete the questions based on the video segment.

### **ACTIVITY B: Primary Source Analysis - A Look at the Fair in 1858**

1. Begin by reminding students how primary sources can tell us things about the past. Historians use primary sources to conduct research and make inferences about how people used to live.
2. Pass out **Worksheet B** direct students to analyze the primary source document from the Preble County Fair of 1858 to learn more about the fair’s role in agriculture. Students can work in groups to complete the questions.

### **ACTIVITY C: Agricultural Innovation**

1. Begin by asking students how farmers planted crops in the 1850s. Most were using horse powered plows and equipment to plant and harvest their crops.
2. Explain that technological innovations in agriculture allowed farmers to produce more crops with less labor.
3. Now, pass out **Worksheet C** and have students use the library and internet to conduct research on how agricultural innovations improved farming.

## Answer Key

### ACTIVITY A

#### Going to the Fair

1. 1850
2. Cincinnati
3. The fair moved each year because of little transportation access; the fair had to be brought to the people
4. Columbus, Ohio. The organizers thought that the fair should be in the state capital
5. The completion of the railroads allowed people to come to the fair from all over the state
6. The main purpose of the fair was for farmers to share ideas and innovations
7. Because of the influenza epidemic
8. The fair is more entertainment-oriented now
9. The fair is still concerned with promoting agricultural achievement and advancement
10. People still enter crops, livestock, crafts, food, and more

### ACTIVITY B

#### A Look at the Fair in 1858

1. You can learn about the types of crops planted and the types of machinery used
2. Corn
3. Tools were available; they were still horse powered
4. The competition would encourage them to be more innovative to try and win; also, they could share ideas and new technology
5. Soybeans
6. We need to maintain international trade for the success of Ohio's economy

### ACTIVITY C

#### Agricultural Innovations

##### John Deere Steel Plow

**When:** 1830

**How:** lighter more durable plow; sod did not stick to and was harnessed to a horse to make plowing easier, quicker, more productive

##### Steam Tractor

**When:** 1840-1870

**How:** Replaced field animals to pull farm equipment; did not require the same care as animals, made the job easier and quicker

##### Barbed Wire

**When:** 1874

**How:** Could restrain cattle; cheap and easy to install

##### Combine

**When:** 1830s

**How:** Harvested, threshed, and cleaned grain all in one; much more efficient

##### Gas Tractor

**When:** 1920s

**How:** Less problematic than steam tractors; easier to use with more power

##### Biotech Crops

**When:** 1990s

**How:** Weed and insect-resistant crops engineered using biotechnology



# Exploring Our Heritage

## OHIO STATE FAIR



### WORKSHEET A

## Going to the Fair

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** After viewing the "The Ohio State Fair," use complete sentences to answer the questions below based on the information in the video.

1. When was the first Ohio State Fair held?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Where was the first Ohio State Fair held?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Why did the fair move to different locations each year?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Where was the fair permanently located now? Why?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Why has the state fair been able to remain in one location since 1874?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. What was the main purpose of the state fair in the early years?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Why was the baby show cancelled?

\_\_\_\_\_

8. How has the fair changed over the years?

\_\_\_\_\_

9. How has the fair stayed the same?

\_\_\_\_\_

10. What kinds of things do people still bring to the show to enter into competitions?

\_\_\_\_\_



## WORKSHEET B

# A Look at the Fair in 1858

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Look closely at the information listed in the excerpt from a County Fair Book from Preble County held in 1858 to answer the questions in **Worksheet B** on **page 7**.

### Mechanical Department I. Farm Equipment

Best Plow for General Purposes .....	\$2.00
Subsoil Plow .....	1.00
Sod Plow .....	2.00
Harrow .....	2.00
Cultivator .....	2.00
Corn Drill .....	2.00
Corn Plow .....	2.00
Fanning Mill .....	2.00
Horse Rake .....	2.00
Grain Cradle .....	2.00
Corn Sheller .....	2.00
Straw Cutter .....	2.00
Threshing Machine .....	2.00
Farm Wagon .....	2.00

Best Hay Rigging  
Roller  
Corn Crusher  
Two Hand Rakes  
Two Hay Forks  
Reaper and Mower combined

### Field Crops (Confined to the County)

Best acre of Corn .....	\$8.00
Best acre of Wheat .....	5.00
Best acre of Barley .....	5.00
Best acre of Flaxseed .....	5.00
Best acre of Broom Corn .....	5.00
Best acre of Clover seed .....	5.00
Best acre of Timothy seed .....	5.00
Best acre of Irish Potatoes .....	3.00

(Preble County District Library)



Find the original document at: <http://www.ohiomemory.org/index.html>



**WORKSHEET B**

**A Look at the Fair in 1858**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What kinds of things can you learn about farming in 1858 by looking at this fair book?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Based on the prize amount, what two crops seem to be the most valued?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What conclusions can you make about farming technology based on the types of machinery available?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. How would a competition like this help farmers?

\_\_\_\_\_

Look at the table below to answer questions 5-6.

OHIO'S TOP AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS 2005
1. Soybeans and products
2. Feed grains and products
3. Wheat and products
4. Vegetables
5. Live Animals and Meats

*(Ohio Department of Agriculture)*

5. What field crop appears in the chart above that does not appear in the 1858 fair book?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Ohio's number one field crop is a major export. What conclusion can you make about the importance of foreign markets to the state's economy?

\_\_\_\_\_

**WORKSHEET C****Agricultural Innovation**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Use the library and Internet to research the history of each new agricultural technology. For each new technology, list when it was introduced and how it changed farming practice.

	<b>When</b>	<b>How</b>
<b>John Deere Steel Plow</b>		
<b>Steam Tractor (Traction Engine)</b>		
<b>Barbed Wire</b>		
<b>Combine</b>		
<b>Gas Tractor</b>		
<b>Biotech Crops</b>		