

Teachers' Guide

2023

In collaboration with Protein Industries Canada, ECODA, Dalhousie University, and UPEI. This guide and accompanied worksheets have been developed in consultation with educators and practitioners in food systems, and are written by:

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LESSON PLAN & ACTIVITIES

A BEAN DIARY: GROWING WEBSTER FARMS' HERITAGE BEANS

Grades: 7-8

Sprouting pulses such as beans is a fun activity, and it requires few resources or time.

In this lesson, students will germinate and plant their own beans, while also documenting each stage of germination and growth. Once they have sown and sprouted the beans in the classroom, students can take the bean plants home to transplant in a garden or grow in a pot by a sunny window. They can also plant them in the school's community garden if one exists. Any beans will work, but we recommend using heritage beans from Webster Farms to highlight pulse production in Atlantic Canada.

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Learning objectives

Students will...

- be able to document and label a bean plant's growth from bean to embryo to plant, using terminology from plant biology.
- learn about pulses in relation to nutrition and health, agriculture and planting, and climate change and the environment.

Curricular links

This resource satisfies learning outcomes for Food and Nutrition 8, Healthy Living 9, Family Studies 10, and it supports learning themes for Science 7-9 related to sustainability, stewardship, and climate change.

Competencies from the Nova Scotia curriculum

- Citizenship
- Critical Thinking
- Communication
- Personal and Career Development
- Technological Fluency

Connections and teaching resources

This activity complements lessons on plant biology, agriculture and nitrogen-fixing, climate change, and nutrition. Below you will find a list of lesson plans and educational resources on these subjects:

- Growing Pulses, by Agriculture in the Classroom and Pulse Canada
- A Diagram of Pulses and Nitrogen Fixing, by Agriculture in the Classroom and Pulse Canada
- Video on Pulses and the Environment by LovePulses
- An introduction to pulses, What are Pulses? by LovePulses

CLICK UNDERLINED PHRASES



- Pulses and Climate Change by FAO
- Plant Parts and Functions, by Agriculture in the Classroom
- Infographic on Pulses by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization
- Teaching Resources on Pulses by North Dakota State University
- Pulses and Nutrition by Harvard University
- Digging Deeper Soils by the Government of Nova Scotia



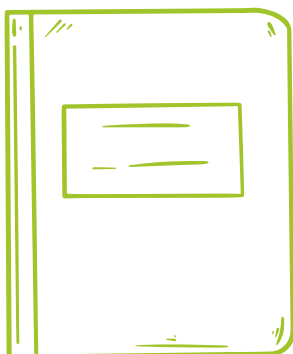
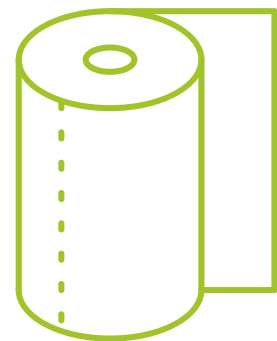
Vocabulary

Germination
Embryo
Sprout
Root
Seed Coat

Cotyledon
Rhizobia
Symbiosis
Nitrogen-fixing

Materials needed

- One or two bags of heritage beans, such as Soldier Beans, Jacob's Cattle Beans, or Yellow Eye Beans, from Webster Farms. There should be enough beans for each student to have around ten beans to sprout.
- A bowl to soak the beans.
- Paper towel or cheese cloth to continue the germination.
- Petri dishes, or small plastic containers or plates, one for each student
- Small plastic bags about the size of a sandwich bag. Enough for two or three bags per student.
- Potting soil, enough to fill the small bags for each student.
- Container of water.
- Notebook and coloured pencil for diagramming and recording the beans' growth.



ACTIVITY 1.1

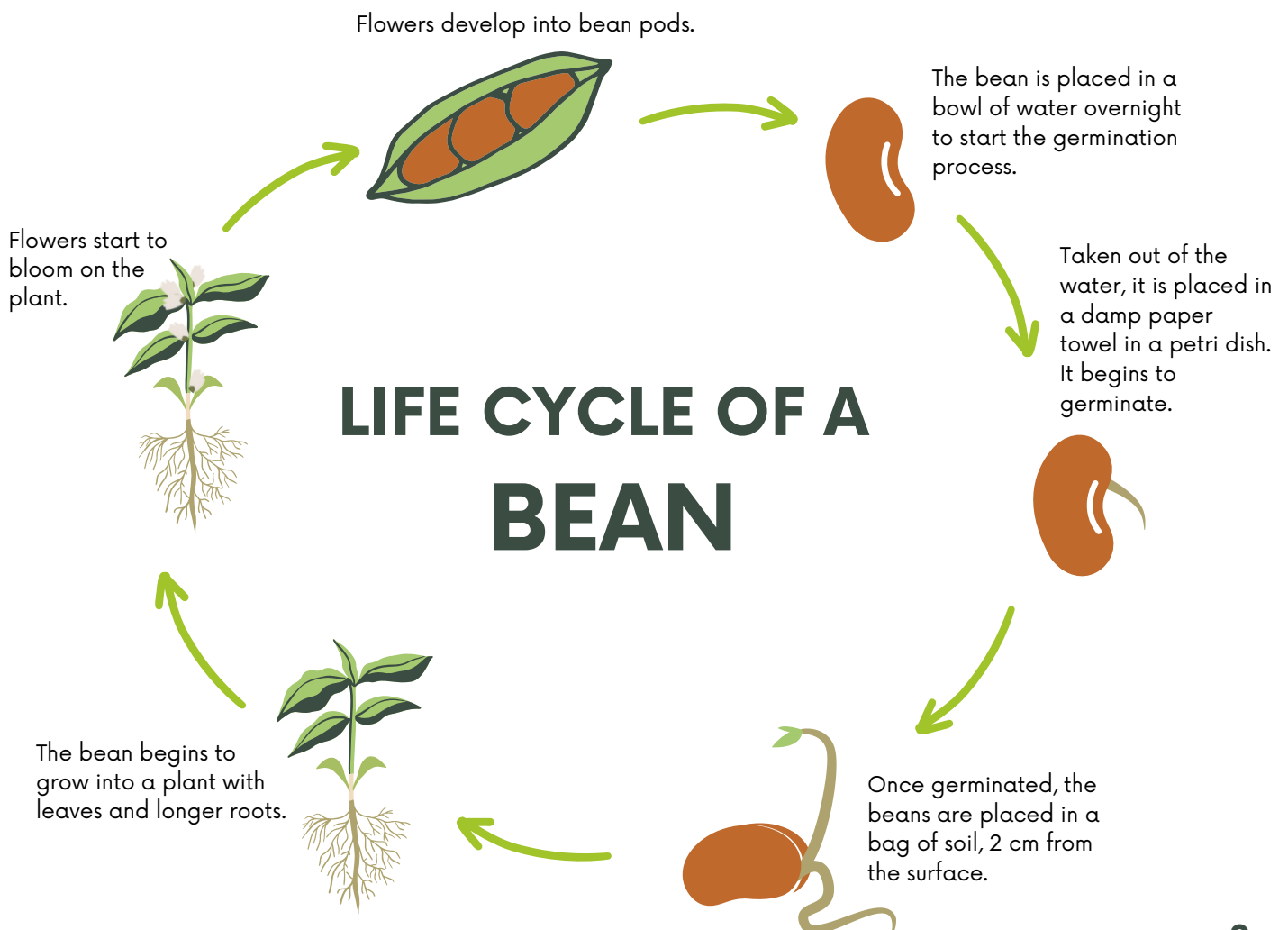
GERMINATING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Distribute among the students the beans, petri dishes, and paper towels. Each student should have 8-10 beans, a petri dish, two pieces of paper towel, and a small container of water. A quarter to a third of a cup of water is more than enough for each student. You can give the students different beans to observe differences in their growth.
2. Students can be asked to write their names and bean types on the petri dish.
3. To begin the activity with the students, they can learn about soaking the beans to kickstart the germination process. Instruct the students to place 8-10 beans in a plastic bowl and a third of a cup of water overnight and then to empty out the water the next day. They should not soak in the water more than 24 hours as they may become too waterlogged.
4. Have the students fold up one piece of paper towel and fit it into the bottom of their petri dish. Then ask them to dampen the paper towel with a small amount of water. Once their paper towel is soaked through, ask the student to press and mold it into the bottom of their petri dish to form a moist base for the beans.
5. Have the students distribute their beans evenly on the wet paper towel in the dish. Each petri dish should be able to fit about 8 evenly spaced beans.

6. Next ask the students to fold up the second piece of paper towel and lay it over the beans. Then have the students pour a small amount of water over the paper towel—enough water that it soaks the paper towel but not enough that it pools in the petri dish. Remind students that water is the first nutrient a seed needs to begin to germinate.
7. Place all the petri dishes together on a shelf or tray in the classroom. Monitor the beans and petri dishes every day for evidence of sprouting.

Student Worksheet Diagram:

Provides students a visual of what to expect with their projects.



ACTIVITY 1.2

PLANTING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Give each student two or three small plastic bags. You can fill the bags with soil in advance, or have the students add soil to the bags as an activity. Each bag should have around a cup of soil—enough soil to fill out the bag and for a bean to begin to take root. You can of course also use small planting pots, but small bags are cheaper, and their transparency allows the students to witness the roots' growth and structure. The bag method also makes transplantation later easier because the bag merely needs to be cut away from the ball of dirt and roots. Note: if you cannot find small sandwich bags, you can use larger bags and plant two beans per bag.
2. Once the bags are filled with soil they must be sealed off. If you have zip-lock style bags, merely have the students press them closed. If they are conventional bags, they will need to be tied off at the open end.
3. Next ask the students to lay their bags of dirt flat on their desk or a table and cut a small cross-shaped (+) incision in the middle.
4. Have them select the best two bean sprouts from their petri dish for planting.

5. Where they made the incision in the bag, ask the students to use their finger to press a small hole or indent in the soil about 2 centimetres deep. This impression is where they will plant their bean.
6. Instruct the students to carefully place one of their bean sprouts in the impression with the root end down in the soil and cotyledons emerging from the incision plastic bag. Ask them to gently press the soil around the root-end of the sprout to support it. Each student should have two or three bags of soil and planted bean sprouts to ensure they have at least one plant that takes root and survives.
7. The planting activity can be integrated into lessons on other important social and scientific issues. It offers a good opportunity to discuss the importance of soil and nutrients for plants. Refer to the resources on [Growing Pulses](#), [Nitrogen-Fixing](#), [Digging Deeper Soils](#) in the list of Lesson Plans and Resources above. Additionally, the importance of food and nutrition can be highlighted. Refer to the resources on [Canada's Food Guide](#). Finally, sprouting beans complements lessons on food affordability and food security. Refer to these fact sheets on [pulses and food security](#), [pulses UN FAO](#), and the [City of Halifax's Community Food Assessment Toolkit](#).



ACTIVITY 1.3

DOCUMENTATION

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Every two or three days allot time for the students to diagram and measure their beans' growth as the beans progress from unsprouted bean seeds to sprouts to small plants.
2. Ensure that the students record the date and length of the embryo, use the vocabulary of plant biology to label it, and note key developments on each day.
3. Alternatively, students can digitally photograph the embryo and upload the images to a photo editing program for labeling and documentation.
4. After they have recorded, measured, and documented the embryo's growth from bean to plant, ask the students to write a report summarizing their observations and findings. The report could include information on the type or species of bean they planted, the method they used to germinate, sprout, and plant it, the time elapsed for the germination, and the differences between their two or three bean plants.

LESSON PLAN & ACTIVITIES

GIVE PEAS A CHANCE

Grades: 7-8

Time: 2-3 periods

This lesson introduces students to the climate impact of food choices and explores the benefits of producing and consuming peas and other pulses. It leads students through a series of activities on sustainable development, greenhouse gas emissions, and the Canada's Food Guide, and then concludes with a fun, hands-on activity: making bean brownies!

Learning objectives

Students will be able to...

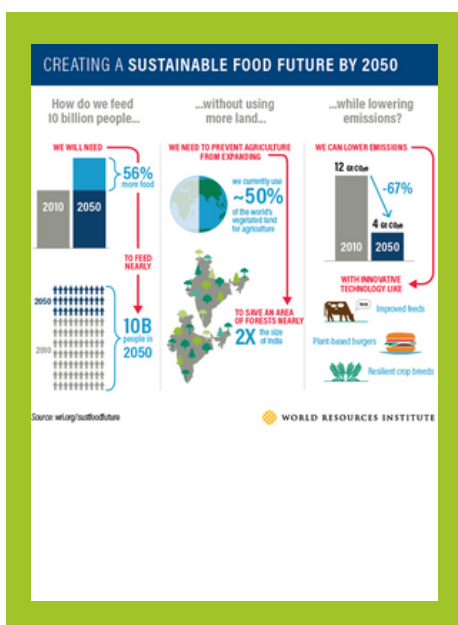
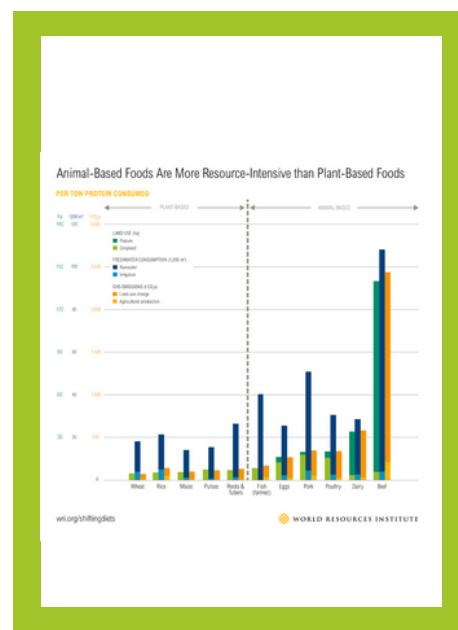
- describe the influence of food production and consumption on the climate
- explain the environmental impacts of different types of foods
- analyze how peas and other pulses can help advance the UN Sustainable Development Goals

Curricular links

This module supports learning outcomes for AgriFood 11, Science 10, which emphasizes sustainability and climate change, and Family Studies 10.

Materials needed

- Handouts on the Sustainable Development Goals, graphs from the World Resource Institute, and the Canada Food Guide.
- These handouts can be printed and distributed to students individually or projected on a screen as a power point slide for the class to view together.



ACTIVITY 2.1

PEA PRODUCTION IN CANADA

This short YouTube video on pea production in Canada introduces students to the importance of pulses in Canadian agriculture.

In this activity, students will watch the short video, “Why Canada is becoming the pantry of the world,” and engage in a series of discussion questions (below) about the video’s contents. Provide or display the discussion questions before students view the video.



CLICK ME



About this video

Grades: 7-8

Length: 3:09

Creators: This video was produced by CBC as part of a video series celebrating Canada's 150 anniversary of confederation. Hosted by chef Ricardo Larrivée, it explores the power and importance of pulse production in Canada.

Discussion questions

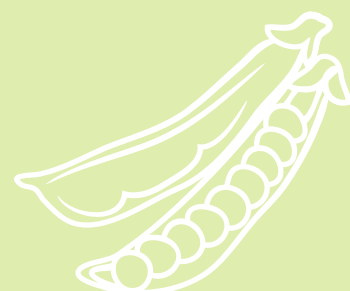
- Why did farmer Reg Roth begin growing peas on his farm instead of wheat?
- Where are Canadian peas exported and sold?
- What are some of their uses?
- Why are peas good for the land and soil?
- How much dried peas, in weight, does Canada export every year?

Background information on the sustainability of peas and other pulses grown in Canada:

- [Alberta Peas: A Win-Win Crop](#)
- [Pulses and Sustainability](#)
- [Pulses and Climate Change](#)
- [Agriculture in the Classroom: Growing Beans](#)



**CLICK UNDERLINED
PHRASES**



ACTIVITY 2.2 MAKING CONNECTIONS TO THE UN'S SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

This activity introduces the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Adopted by UN member states in 2015, the SDGs aim to achieve a sustainable, just, and equitable world by 2030.

- Distribute the handout on the Sustainable Development Goals and play the video for students.
- Explain the SDGs to students and elicit their ideas on why sustainability is important and how we can contribute to it.



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About this video

Grades: 7-8

Length: 1:24

Creators: This video was produced by the United Nations. It briefly explains the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Discussion questions

Discussion questions after watching the video and reviewing the handout:

- Why are the SDGs important?
- How can we help or contribute to them?
- How might the production of peas and other pulses contribute to the sustainable development goals?

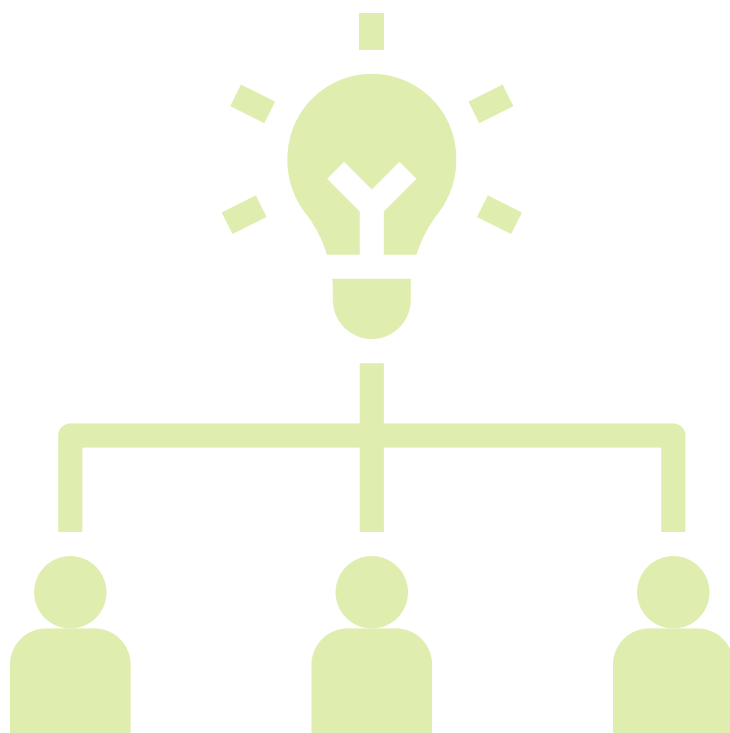
For more information on the SDGs, see the UN's webpage on [Sustainable Development](#).



Group exercise

Divide the students into small discussion groups and give each group a Sustainable Development Goal to investigate. Ask the students to determine how their SDG relates to food (its production, preparation, distribution, or consumption). Encourage students to think about how a sustainable, just food system can contribute to their assigned SDG.

For some of the SDGs, such as #2: No Hunger, the answer may seem obvious, but for others the connection is not so clear. For instance, #5: Gender Equality, may not appear to relate directly to food. However, women are the leading producers of food around the world and gender inequality is often expressed through unequal domestic labour in food preparation. Additionally, women around the world bear the brunt of poverty, food insecurity, and low-paying agricultural labour. A more equitable food system can support gender equality along with many of the other SDGs.



ACTIVITY 2.3 CREATING A SUSTAINABLE FOOD FUTURE

Distribute the handout with the graph from the [World Resource Institute](http://WorldResourceInstitute.org) or project it on the classroom monitor.

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Discussion

Walk students through the questions on the graph—for example, how do we feed 10 billion people? without using more land? while lowering emissions. Students can then explore possible solutions to these challenges and complete the exercise (on the handout or projected on the screen) on food choices. Encourage them to reflect on what values and beliefs influence their food choices, and to consider if sustainability is part of their decision-making.

Exercise questions

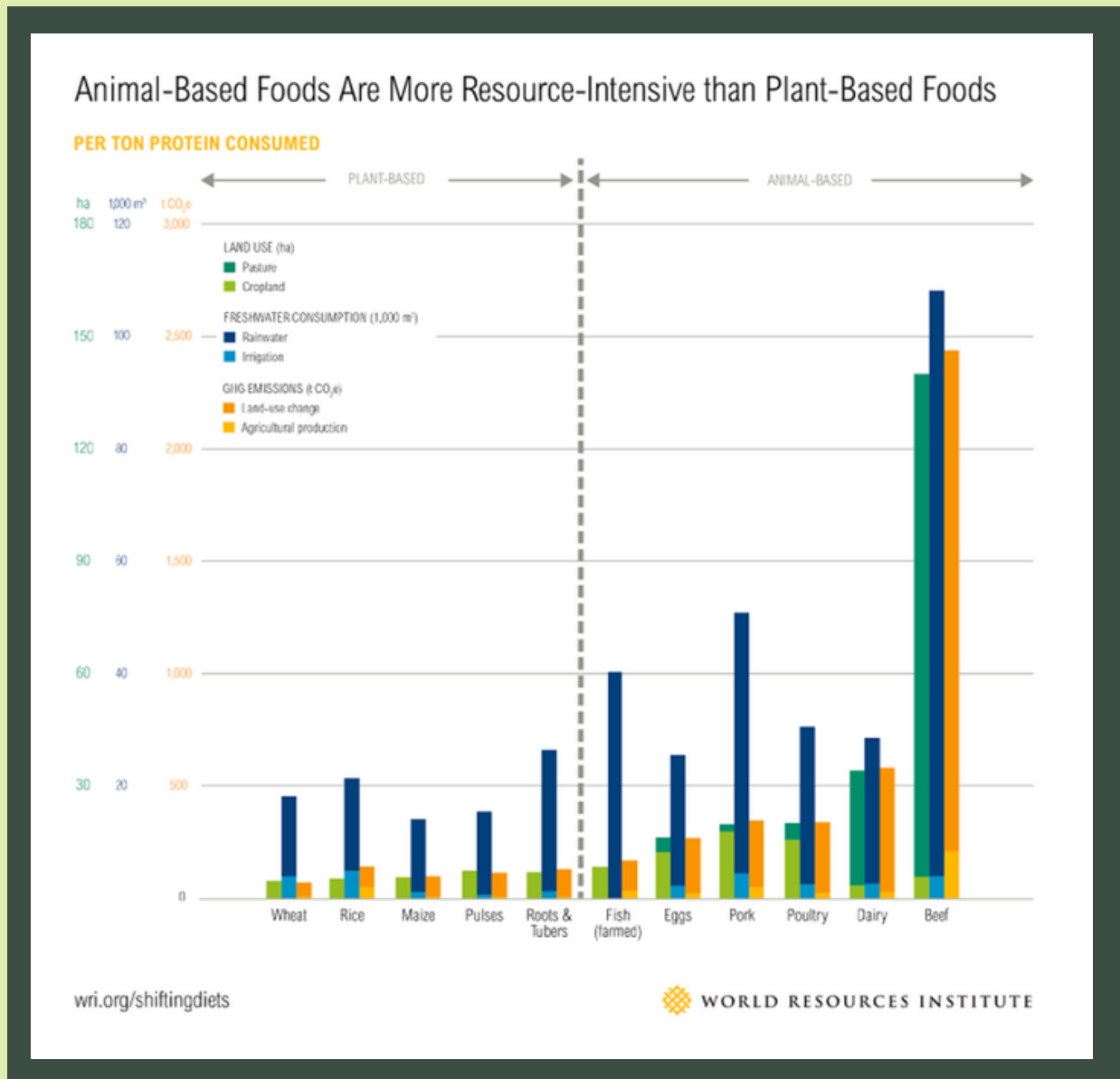
How do you choose the food you eat? Count the number of reasons from the list that your family uses.

1. We eat what mom or dad are willing to buy
2. We eat fast food
3. We go by taste
4. We count food miles
5. We think about the carbon footprint
6. We think about animal welfare
7. We think about our health
8. We choose comfort food, happy memories
9. We eat to build muscle
10. We eat foods from our culture
11. We have food restrictions due to allergies or health reasons
12. Other

After the students have completed these questions, bring up the second graph (as a handout or projected on the class monitor) from WRI on the relative climate impacts of plant and animal foods. Use this chart to begin a conversation about the impact of food choices and the relationship between sustainable and healthy eating.

Discussion questions

What does this chart tell you about the impacts of different types of foods? How are healthy eating and sustainable eating related?



Background on the World Resource Institute:

- [WRI's report on Shifting Diets](#)
- [Protein Scorecard](#)



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ACTIVITY 2.4

CANADA'S FOOD GUIDE

This activity introduces Canada's Food Guide, which is based on the latest scientific evidence for healthy eating. Distribute the pictorial representation of the Food Guide as a handout or project it on the classroom screen.

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Canada's food guide

Eat well. Live well.

Eat a variety of healthy foods each day

- Have plenty of vegetables and fruits
- Eat protein foods
- Make water your drink of choice
- Choose whole grain foods

Discover your food guide at
Canada.ca/FoodGuide

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Print: Cat. no. 6217-1/2018E - ISSN: 978-0-606-26124-4 PDF: Cat. no. 6217-1/2018E PDF - ISSN: 978-0-606-26127-7 Pub. 1-800-461-0824

Health Canada Santé Canada

Canada

Discussion questions

Ask students

- What stands out to them about the food guide or what seems new and different?
- How does it compare to their latest meal and to their meals overall?
- What category do peas fit into in the guide?
- How are health and sustainability connected in the Food Guide?

ACTIVITY 2.5

MAKING BEAN BROWNIES

In this activity, students will make delicious brownies by using beans, cocoa, nut butter and maple syrup or honey. No flour, no butter, no sugar are needed. A food processor or mixer is really helpful for making these. Students and eaters will learn that it is easy to make a delightful sweet treat that also is high in nutrients and low in calories and much lower in greenhouse gas emissions compared to a 'traditional brownie'. It is empowering to see that small changes can have a big impact on health and the environment.

Gluten-free black bean brownies

Recipe adapted from [Minimalist Baker](#)

Servings: 12 Brownies

Ingredients

- 2 heaping Tbsp flaxseed meal
- 6 Tbsp water
- 1 15-oz. can black beans (rinsed and drained // 1 can yields ~ 1 3/4 cups)
- 3 Tbsp canola oil or nut butter
- 3/4 cup cocoa powder
- 1/4 tsp sea salt
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract
- 1/2 maple syrup or honey
- 1 1/2 tsp baking powder

Optional Toppings

- Crushed walnuts
- Pecans
- Dairy-free semisweet chocolate chips

BAKING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (176 C). A smaller toaster oven can also work.
2. Lightly coat a baking tray with oil.
3. Prepare flax mixture by combining flax and water in the food processor. Pulse a couple times and then let rest for a few minutes.
4. Add remaining ingredients (besides walnuts or other toppings) and puree - about 3 minutes - scraping down sides as needed. You want it pretty smooth.
5. If the batter appears too thick, add one Tbsp of water and pulse again. It should be slightly less thick than chocolate frosting but nowhere close to runny.
6. Place the mix onto the oiled baking pan and spread out so not too thick. Optional: Sprinkle with crushed walnuts, pecans or chocolate chips.
7. Bake for 20 minutes or so. They should not be hard -as they will become more firm when they cool. They are like a mix of brownie and fudge.
8. Remove from oven and let cool for 30 minutes if you can wait that long.... The insides may be moist.
9. Store the extra in an airtight container for up to a few days. Refrigerate to keep longer.
10. Eat and enjoy the joy of a treat that is also good for you and the planet!

What is the footprint of bean brownies and conventional brownies?

- Food's carbon footprint, or foodprint, refers to the greenhouse gas emissions produced by growing, rearing, farming, processing, transporting, storing, cooking and disposing of the food you eat.
- Becoming more aware of food's environmental impact can help families to make some informed choices.
- This exercise provides one example of making a shift in one food that is good for health and the planet.
- To explain the concept of a foodprint to your students, this explanatory video can be helpful: [Foodprint.org](https://www.foodprint.org)

Instructions

- Show the students the recipes for conventional brownies and for bean brownies and invite them to discover any differences.
- Ask students, individually or in small groups, to input the ingredients for each recipe into this [carbon footprint calculator](#) by My Emissions.

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Note: when you make your calculations for each brownie, set the number of servings for each set of ingredients to twelve. This calculator also does not have a category for flax seeds so you can substitute a close equivalent such as chia seeds. Similarly, it does not have a category for cocoa powder, but it does have one for hot chocolate powder.

Conventional brownies

- 1/2 cup butter
- 1 cup white sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/3 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon baking powder

Frosting

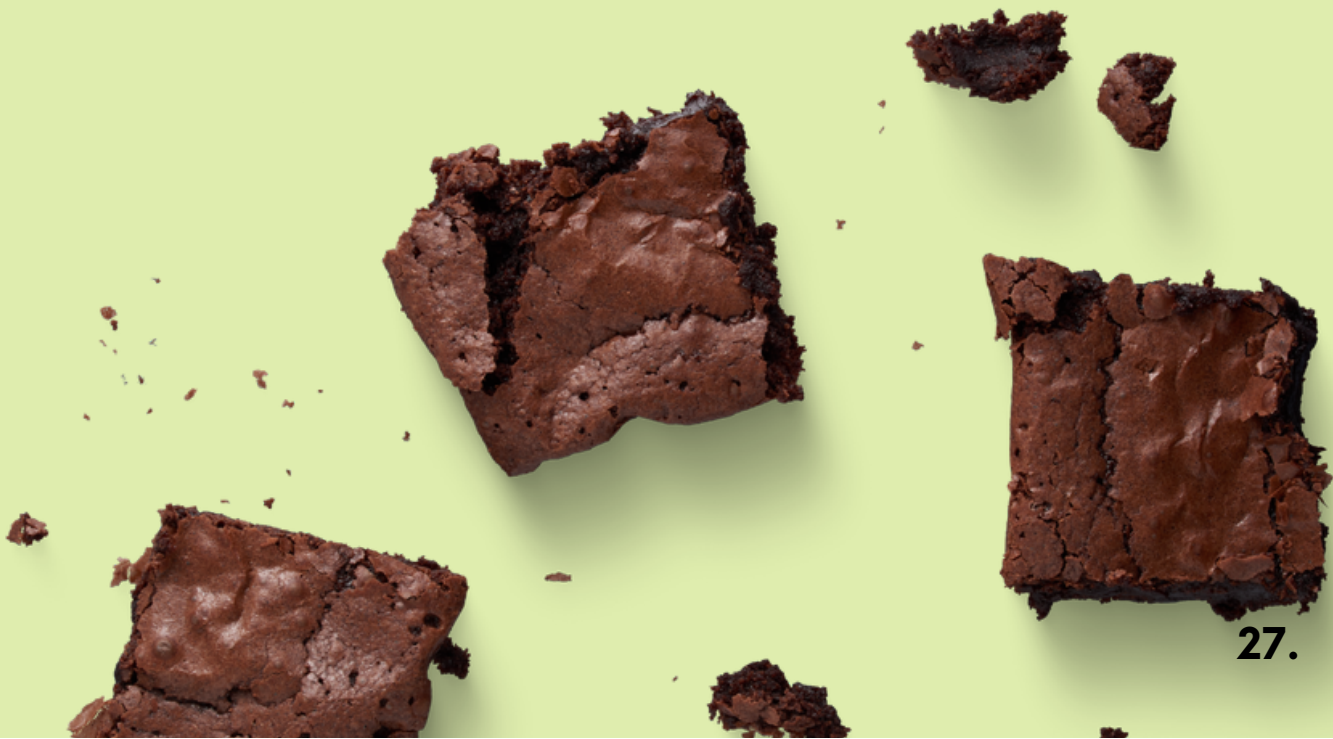
- 3 tablespoons butter, softened
- 3 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup confectioners' sugar

Bean brownies

- 2 heaping Tbsp flaxseed meal
- 6 Tbsp water
- 1 15-oz. can black beans
- 3 Tbsp canola oil or nut butter
- 3/4 cup cocoa powder
- 1/4 tsp sea salt
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract
- 1/2 maple syrup or honey
- 1 1/2 tsp baking powder

Optional Toppings

- Crushed walnuts
- Pecans
- Dairy-free semisweet chocolate chips



Topics for discussion: can we, should we, change our foodprints?



- Ask students to complete this [foodprint quiz](#) to get a broad sense of their food choices' impact on the environment, animals welfare, and human labour.
- After taking the test and learning about the impact of foods, you have more information about your food choices. What do you think, are there changes that we could or should make about our food, food choices, and foodprints?
- Should packaged foods be required to publish their carbon emissions just as they publish their nutritional information? Why or why not?
- Carbon footprints and foodprints are not without controversy when it comes to tackling climate change. Some argue that calculating your footprint individualizes the problem and limits collective action. When we focus on our individual acts of consumption, we see ourselves as private consumers and not as citizens capable of working together for radical change. Furthermore, fixating on one's carbon footprint or foodprint places responsibility for climate change on individuals and deflects attention away from the biggest polluters, such as oil corporations. See this article by [Rebecca Solnit in the Guardian](#), which summarizes the debate.
- Present the debate for your students and ask them to weigh in—what is a more effective strategy for social change, personal lifestyle adjustments or collective action, such as marches, demonstrations, and voting? Or should we aim for both?

LESSON PLAN & ACTIVITY

DIET AND CLIMATE

Grades: 7-8 and 9-10

This lesson plan introduces students to the climate impact of food choices and asks them to weigh the benefits and drawbacks of changing one's diet.

Learning objectives

Students will...

- describe the influence of food production and consumption on the climate.
- explain the environmental impacts of different types of foods.
- discuss the human causes of climate change and ways to mitigate its effects
- analyze complex problems by assessing the positives and negatives of different solutions.

Curricular links

This module supports learning outcomes for AgriFood 11, Science 10, which emphasizes sustainability and climate change, and Family Studies 10.

Materials needed

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- The ["Changing Diets" activity worksheet](#) from the California Academy of Sciences.

ACTIVITY 3.1

FOOD AND REDUCING CLIMATE CHANGE

This short video from Vox Media and the University of California explains the relationship between food choice and greenhouse gas emissions. In the activity, students will watch the short video, and consider some discussion questions based on the video's content. Students then can complete a worksheet on the benefits and challenges that come with food choices.



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About this video

Grade level: 7-8 and 9-10

Length: 5:39 minutes

Creators: This video was produced by Climate Lab, a partnership between Vox Media and the University of California. Hosted by Dr. M. Sanjayan, it explores the climate impacts of our everyday food choices by interviewing scientists and researchers working in the field of agriculture and climate change. For more information, visit [Climate Lab's website](#).

Discussion questions

After viewing the video, ask students to discuss these questions:

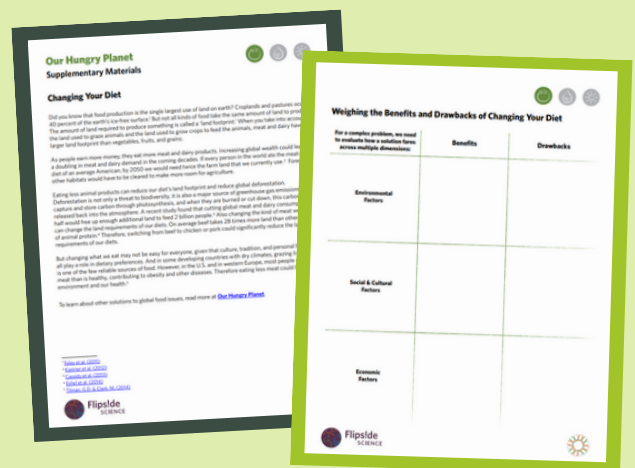
- How is food production and consumption related to climate change and the environment? What did you learn about this topic from the video?
- Why, according to this video, does meat production require more land and create more greenhouse gas emissions than plant-based foods (pluses, grains, fruits, and vegetables)?
- The video suggests that we all adopt a “Mediterranean Diet.” Teachers may want to further explain what this diet is, and ask the students:
 - How easy is it for someone to change their diet? What influences your food choices? Does everyone have the same food choices? What determines the foods a person has access to?

Problem solving activity

Give students time to read and complete the “Changing Diets” worksheet from the California Academy of Sciences.

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This worksheet asks students to list and consider the benefits and drawbacks of changing one’s diet in terms of environmental, social and cultural, and economic factors. In doing so, it teaches them how to approach complex problems.





LESSON PLAN & ACTIVITIES

CAREERS IN THE PLANT-BASED FOODS SECTOR

Grades: 8-10

Length: 2 periods

This lesson introduces students to potential career paths in the burgeoning field of plant protein agriculture and plant-based foods. Students will be invited to complete thinkAG's Hollande Code career personality quiz to identify their skills and interests. Using the results of their quiz, they will look into different careers in the plant protein sector.

Learning objectives

After this lesson, students will be able to...

- reflect on their own skills and interests in relation to sustainable career pathways.
- research and describe a potential career in the plant protein sector.
- explain the importance of sustainability in agriculture and food.

Curricular links

This lesson on careers in food and agriculture complements the aims and outcomes of Career Development 10, and Unit 6 of Family Studies 10, Career Pathways in the food industry. It also supports the units related to careers and industry in Agrifood 11.

Overview

Growing awareness of the food system's detrimental impact on human health and the environment has accelerated consumer demand for healthy and sustainable options, particularly plant-based foods.

Several major plant protein companies operate in Canada, such as Daiya Foods, Lightlife, Gardein, and Big Mountain Foods. Some involve expertise in expanding their production and distribution lines, others may be involved in research and development, and some may interact with customers trying out new plant protein foods.

The Canadian Government encourages these initiatives with funding and policy support. In 2021, the federal government launched the Protein Industries Canada Supercluster, which aims to foster the commercialization and development of plant protein technologies and products in Canada.

The plant protein sector continues to grow and innovate, and it offers exciting career opportunities for students.

Materials needed

- Computers or tablets with internet access to complete the [Hollande Code career quiz](#), or PDF printed copies of the quiz, [available here](#).

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ACTIVITY 4.1

THE HOLLANDE CODE PERSONALITY QUIZ

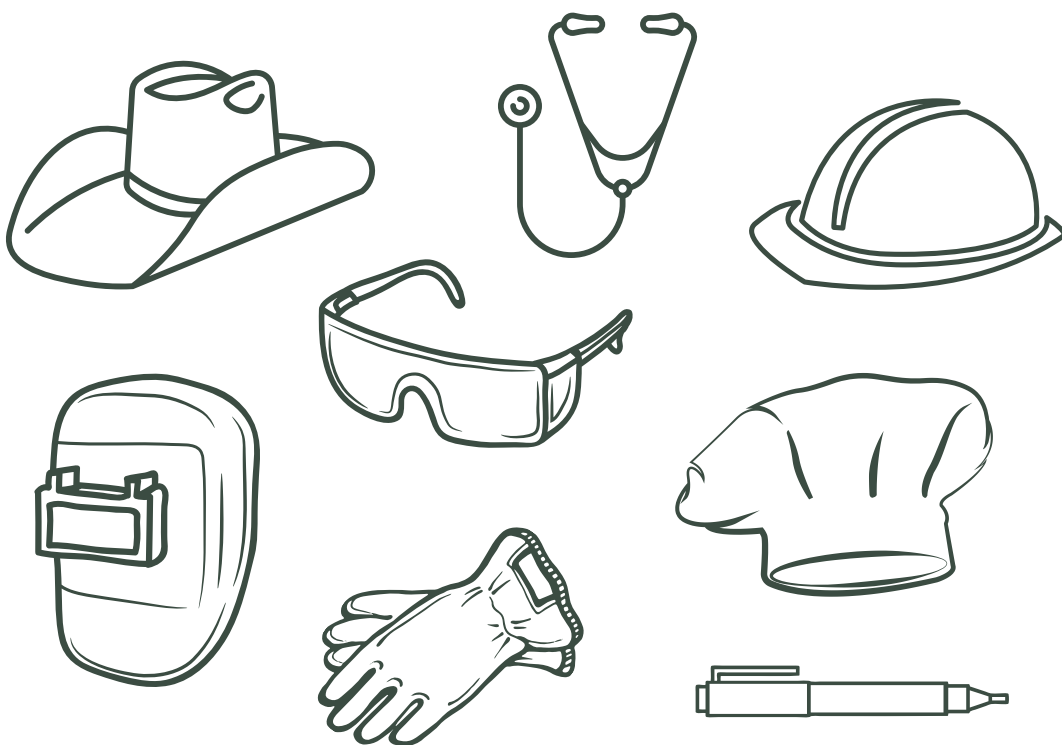
- Begin by asking students if they have heard about plant protein foods or tried plant-based foods.
- Explain that the plant protein sector is a growing industry in Canada that provides jobs for people with varied interests and skills.
- Show the students the short clip from Protein Industries Canada on the projected growth of this industry.
- Inform the students that they will be taking a short Holland Code personality quiz to see where they might fit into this industry.
- Distribute the Holland Code personality test either digitally or on paper.
- Ask students to complete the quiz by checking all the words in each interest category that they feel describes themselves.
- Once they have completed the quiz, students will add up the number of checks in each category—Build, Think, Create, Persuade, Organize, Help—to determine their interest area.

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ACTIVITY 4.2 CAREER PATH INVESTIGATION POST

- After the students have identified their area of career interest, they will use the [thinkAG website](#) to investigate different careers in this area. CLICK ME
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- Ask the students to select one career path in their interest area for further research.
- They will be required to create a poster—or, alternatively, write a report—that explains the skills, qualifications, and responsibilities of the position they are examining and how it contributes to the plant-based food sector. Furthermore, have them include information on how those jobs are working to limit greenhouse gas emissions, improve food security, or preserve health.
- Instruct students to use a combination of text and image to animate their topics. They may also want to include graphs, charts, or infographics.



ACTIVITY 4.3

INTERVIEW SOMEONE WHO WORKS IN YOUR FIELD

As part of this project, students will also identify and interview someone who works in their area of interest - be it production, processing, retailing, education, and beyond.

They may want to interview someone who works at a private company, at a university, in government, in health care and nutrition, in food processing and distribution, in the restaurant industry or cuisine, or in another field.

Some examples of careers in the plant protein sector include:

- Food scientist
- Agricultural scientist
- Food technologist
- Agricultural engineer
- Sales representative
- Marketing manager
- Food photographer
- Food journalist
- Quality control specialist
- Chef
- Nutritionist
- Sustainability manager
- Research specialist
- Development officer



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For more examples of plant protein-related career areas, direct students to the [list of Protein Industries Canada's partners and projects](#)

Interview questions

1. What is your position and how long have you been in it?
2. Why did you choose this work? What are the benefits and challenges of this kind of work?
3. What are your main responsibilities? What does a typical day look like?
4. What projects are you currently working on?
5. What's your favourite part of the job? What are some of the challenges that you face in your role?
6. What are your goals for the future?
7. What excites you about the plant-protein industry, and what do you imagine it will be like in ten or twenty years?
8. Do people misunderstand about the plant protein sector? What would you like people to know about careers in this area?