

Mission Plants & Gardens

Student Matching Activity

Match each plant or crop with the way it was used. California mission agriculture included fields, vineyards, orchards and gardens maintained largely through Indigenous labor.

Plants & Crops

1. Wheat _____
2. Corn _____
3. Grapes _____
4. Olives _____
5. Beans _____
6. Oranges _____
7. Herbs _____
8. Orchard Fruit _____

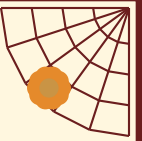
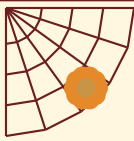
Uses

- A. Fresh and dried fruit
- B. Flour and bread
- C. Food and olive oil
- D. Cooking and traditional remedies
- E. Wine and fresh fruit
- F. Stews and meals
- G. Fresh fruit
- H. Food and ground meal

Think About It

Why were gardens, orchards and irrigation systems important to a mission community?





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Teacher Answer Key & Historical Context

Answer Key

1-B Wheat -> Flour and bread

2-H Corn -> Food and ground meal

3-E Grapes -> Wine and fresh fruit

4-C Olives -> Food and olive oil

5-F Beans -> Stews and meals

6-G Oranges -> Fresh fruit

7-D Herbs -> Cooking and traditional remedies

8-A Orchard Fruit -> Fresh and dried fruit

Historical Context

California mission agriculture included wheat, corn, grapes, beans, olives, oranges, gardens, orchards and livestock, although crops varied by location and time.

Indigenous Californians had their own food systems, ecological knowledge and land-management traditions long before the missions. Spanish colonization introduced or expanded European crops and farming practices while relying heavily on Indigenous labor.

Mission San Luis Rey records identify grapes, oranges, olives, wheat and corn among crops grown on its extensive lands. La Purisima State Historic Park also identifies wheat, corn, grapes and beans among crops introduced under Spanish rule.

Teacher Discussion Prompt

Ask students to compare mission agriculture with Indigenous food traditions that existed before colonization. What changed, what continued, and who performed the labor?

Sources

California State Parks - La Purisima Mission State Historic Park

National Park Service - San Luis Rey Mission Church, Oceanside, California

