



Clintonville Agriculture: Past and Present

Historical Context and Overview

When the first white settlers arrived in Ohio in the 1700s, the area was largely forest land, covered with thick and tall hardwood trees. In central Ohio, the dense forests were broken up by extensive prairies. After pioneer settlers cleared much of the land, farming became widespread across the state. The typical pioneer farmer grew wheat, corn, and other grains for livestock feed. In 1839, Ohio was the leading producer of wheat in the United States. By 1849, Ohio ranked first in corn production in the nation.

Livestock was also important to early Ohio farmers. Dairy farmers shipped milk to nearby markets, and butter and cheese to markets in other regions of the country. Beef cattle contributed to growing markets in southwestern and central Ohio, including Columbus. By 1850, Ohio was the top state in sheep population, with many of those driven to markets as far away as California. Ohio was also the national leader in horses and the fifth largest producer of hogs by 1850.

In the decades following the Civil War, many of Ohio's cities, including Columbus, rapidly industrialized. However, to the north of Columbus, in Clinton Township, agriculture remained the backbone of the economy in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Farmers grew a variety of grains and fruits, and especially made use of apples for production of apple butter. Clintonville was home to many orchards, vineyards, and distilleries. Dairy farming was also popular in the Clintonville area.

Today, Clintonville is mostly a residential neighborhood. However, many efforts have been made to connect with the agricultural heritage. The Clintonville Farmers Market and Clintonville Community Market provide popular venues for locally-grown food to help fuel the local economy. Other initiatives emphasize environmentally-friendly local agriculture.

Standards Alignment

Ohio's New Learning Standards: Social Studies

Grade 3

Content Statement 15: Both positive and negative incentives affect people's choices and behaviors.

Content Statement 17: A consumer is a person whose wants are satisfied by using goods and services. A producer makes goods and/or provides services.

Content Statement 18: A market is where buyers and sellers exchange goods and services.

Grade 4

Content Statement 10: The economic development of the United States continues to influence and be influenced by agriculture, industry and natural resources in Ohio.

Content Statement 23: Entrepreneurs organize productive resources and take risks to make a profit and compete with other producers.

Learning Objectives

- Discuss the importance of agriculture (past and present) in Clintonville (locally), in Ohio and the United States.
- Explain the workings of an economy, identifying producers, consumers, goods, services, buyers, sellers, etc., using Clintonville as an example.

Discussion Questions

1. How did the location of Clintonville not only help the farmers who lived there, but also appeal to the average citizen?
2. How has the agricultural influence remained in Clintonville through time? Give specific examples.
3. Clintonville is cited in the segment as an example of a local economy. Explain how this is an appropriate description.
4. Describe how citizens and businesses in Clintonville today are showing responsibility towards the environment and keeping old agricultural ways.
5. How is Clintonville different from the “average” city suburb? Is this a new pattern or has it always been this way? Explain your reasoning.

Extension Activities

- Take a trip through Clintonville (physically, virtually, or by using local newspapers or advertisements) and identify evidence of the heavy agricultural influence still present today. Collect and display this evidence in a physical or electronic format.
- As a class, make a bulletin board (or role play and present) demonstrating the “local economy”. Be sure to have students include all economic terms and concepts specific to their grade level.
- Interview current citizens of Clintonville about a number of items, including those mentioned in the segment and others of students’ choosing. Compare the viewpoints or concepts mentioned in the responders’ answers.

Additional Resources

- Agriculture and Farming in Ohio: http://www.ohiohistorycentral.org/w/Agriculture_and_Farming_in_Ohio?rec=1579
- Clintonville Farmers’ Market: <http://www.clintonvillefarmersmarket.org>
- Clintonville History: <http://clintonvillehistory.com>
- Clintonville Online: <http://www.clintonville.com>