

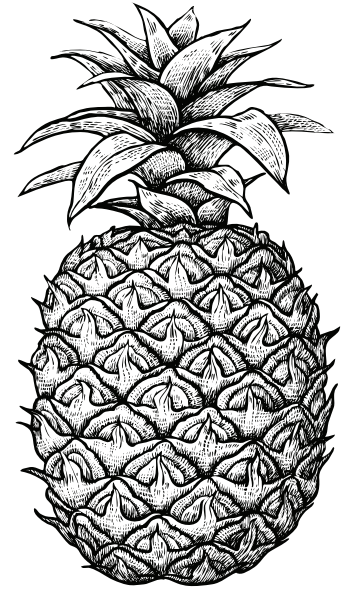
Corn



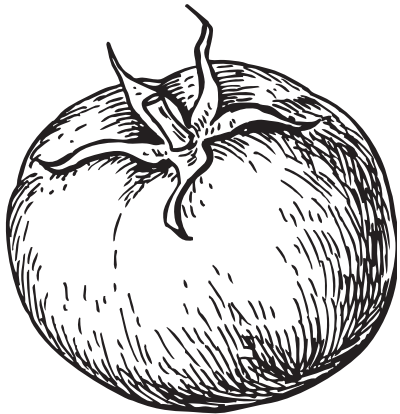
Quinoa



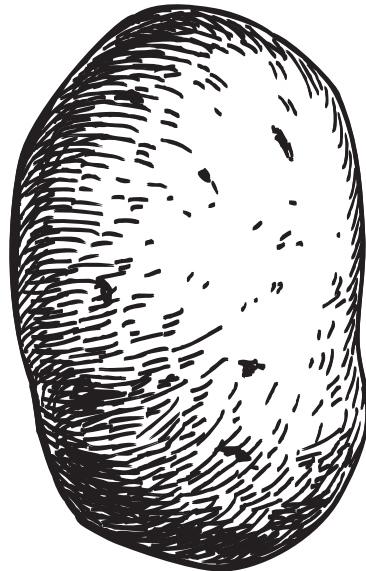
Amaranth



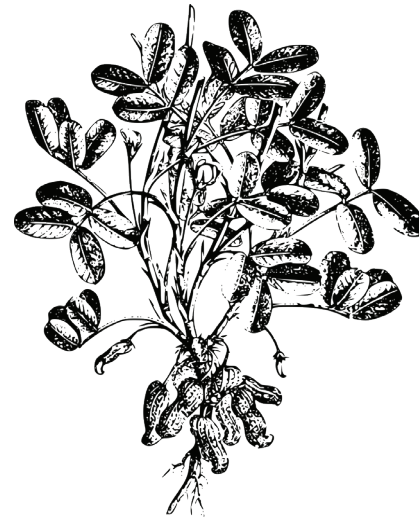
Pineapple



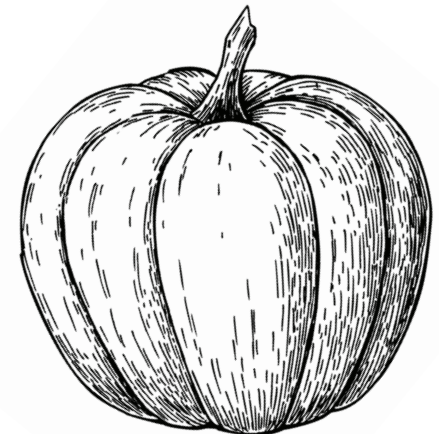
Tomatoes



Potatoes



Peanuts



Pumpkins

Where it's from: Brazil and Paraguay

History: Although pineapples originated in South America, they were first seen by Europeans in the Caribbean. Since they needed tropical climates to grow, shipping them to Europe, and later the American colonies, could be very expensive. They were only for the very rich.

Then, James Dole started growing the pineapple in Hawaii in 1900, making them more affordable and for decades Dole produced 75% of the world's pineapples.

Fun Fact: A single pineapple forms from many flowers – each eye is formed from a separate bloom.

Where it's from: Mexico and Central America

History: Pumpkins are believed to date back over 7500 years, with the oldest domesticated seeds found in Oaxaca, Mexico. The first pumpkins, though, were small, hard and bitter – but they could be stored for a long time.

Pumpkins are now grown worldwide (except Antarctica) for food, ornamental and commercial sales. There are five common species with dozens of known varieties. The Dallas Arboretum displays 90,000 each year.

Fun Fact: The world record pumpkin weighed over 1,800 pounds!

Where it's from: Argentina

History: Amaranth dates back to at least 7000-8000 years ago in Argentina, but the plant grew to significant popularity during the Aztec empire of present-day Mexico in the 1400 and 1500s.

Like quinoa, amaranth is actually a seed, but it contains twice the protein as rice or corn. Like corn, amaranth can grow quite tall, some varieties up to 9 feet!

Fun Fact: Amaranth is a popular food on the African continent today – but usually for its green leaves.

Where it's from: Peru or Brazil

History: Peanuts probably date back to at least 3500 years ago, and archaeological evidence shows their use by the Inca for ceremonial purposes as well as for a drink by native peoples in Brazil.

Early explorers took peanuts back to Europe from Mexico, eventually making their way to Asia and Africa.

Peanuts came back to the Americas on slave ships from Africa and by the 1800s peanuts were being grown as a commercial crop in the U.S.

Technological innovation, and the noted scientist George Washington Carver, brought peanuts into the mainstream in the early 1900s.

Fun Fact: Peanuts contribute over \$4 billion to the U.S. economy each year.

Where it's from: Andes Mountains

History: Quinoa has been an important crop in the Andes for at least 5000 years, and it is actually not a grain at all. Instead, it is more closely related to plants like spinach!

Quinoa leaves are edible, but people mostly know the plant for its seeds.

Fun Fact: For the Incas it is a sacred crop. They call it the mother of all grains or *chisaya mama*.

Where it's from: Peru and Bolivia

History: The Inca from Peru were the first to cultivate potatoes as early as 10,000 years ago!

The potato did not arrive to Europe until the 1500s, to both Spain and the British Isles. Then, it traveled to the American colonies in the early 1600s.

Idaho, the present-day largest producer of potatoes, didn't actually produce potatoes until 1836!

Fun Fact: The potato is the world's fourth largest food crop.

Where it's from: Mexico

History: Corn has been grown in the Americas for over 7000 years, but the look of it has changed a lot! While it started as a wild grass called teosinte, today's corn has perfect rows with around 800 total kernels.

There are many kinds of corn, including flint (the colorful ears), dent (called field corn and used as animal feed), sweet (the kinds most of us eat), and popcorn, of course!

Food is just one use of corn. It is also used in household products, like glue and shoe polish, and also as a biofuel to run cars!

Fun Fact: The origin of corn is important in the history of many indigenous/first peoples of the Americas.

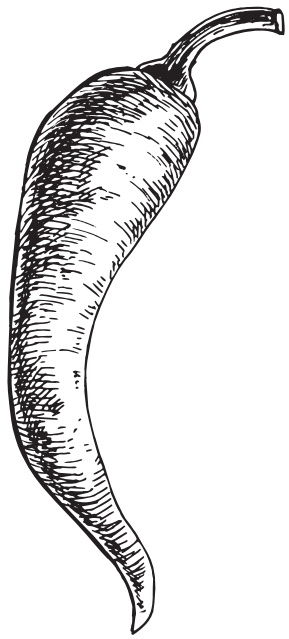
Where it's from: Andes Mountains

History: Although it originated further south, the tomato was domesticated by the Aztecs in what is now Mexico and Central America, where it remains a daily staple.

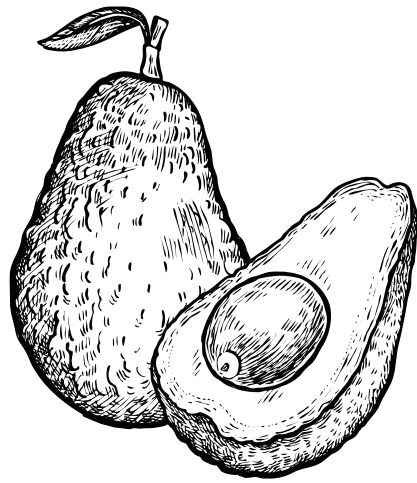
The tomato's use in Europe was not received equally across the continent. Some countries, like Spain, adopted the tomato early on, while others didn't utilize the fruit regularly until the 1700s. Much of the resistance was due to the thought that the fruit were highly poisonous.

Times have changed, though! Now more than 1.5 billion tons are grown each year.

Fun Fact: The tomato was introduced to the United States by European immigrants and not from Mexico as you might guess.



Peppers



Avocado



Blueberry



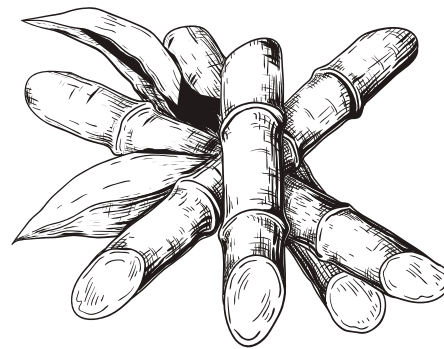
Wheat



Rice



Oats



Sugarcane



Bananas

Where it's from: Turkey

History: The earliest archaeological finds date the production of wheat to over 12,000 years ago.

Over time, the small-grained wild wheat has become the most planted food crop in the world with larger seed and better nutrition for humans.

For centuries, harvesting wheat was a manual chore. That is, until 1834, when Cyrus McCormick invented a reaping machine to automate the process.

Today, scientists are looking to produce wheats that require less energy input to grow.

Fun Fact: Wheat research includes projects that could create wheat-based plastics, packaging and fuel!

Where it's from: New Guinea

History: Originally domesticated from wild plants some 6,000-10,000 years ago in New Guinea, bananas spread throughout the tropics of Asia and Africa.

Bananas arrived to the Americas from West Africa in the 1500s, with slave labor used to maintain plantations.

Bananas were pricey and consumed at a small scale after the U.S. Civil War, but by the 1880s they were more commonplace. Today, massive companies have major commercial control of the market, with over 150 million tons of bananas (both sweet and plantains) produced a year.

Fun Fact: Bananas for export are picked green and ripened with ethylene gas upon arrival to their destination.

Where it's from: North America

History: Blueberries originated in North America after the last Ice Age, and have always been a part of the diet of Native peoples.

European arrival to the Americas led to distribution of blueberries back to Europe and beyond.

Blueberries weren't domesticated, though, until the early 1900s, by cranberry grower Elizabeth White and family. In fact, all highbush variety blueberries across the globe, can be traced back to these original parent plants.

Fun Fact: Blueberries are grown in Australia, New Zealand and South America, too!

Where it's from: New Guinea

History: While sugar cane was likely chewed on in pre-history, the first evidence of its cultivation as a crop is from 8,000 years ago. Two thousand years later it made its way by ship to India and the Philippines, with the first evidence of sugar production about 2000 years ago.

The Arab world quickly expanded the production and use of sugar, and by the year 1100, there is a sugar demand across Europe.

European expansion into the Americas created new lands to produce sugarcane and greatly fueled the slave trade.

In the 1900s, sugarcane-based sugar gained many new competitors including artificial sweeteners and corn syrup, but outside of the United States sugar is still the sweetener of choice.

Fun Fact: Sugar was first used as a medicine when it arrived to Europe.

Where it's from: Mexico

History: Wild avocados were eaten by humans as early as 10,000 years ago and they have been raised as a crop for at least 5000 by Mesoamerican peoples including the Inca, Olmec and Maya.

Eventually the unsweet fruit came to be known as the alligator pear for its bumpy green-brown skin.

In the early 1900s, when the fruit was planted for commercial sales in California the name was reverted back to the English version of the original ahuate.

While avocados were grown and eaten locally in California, Florida and Hawaii, they didn't become popular across the U.S. until the 1950s when they became a popular salad addition.

Fun Fact: The avocado is actually a single-seeded berry!

Where it's from: Southeast Europe or Asian Minor

History: Oats were one of the last major grain crops to be cultivated. They most likely were a weed mixed in to other grain fields, first being produced as a crop between 2000-3000 years ago.

Oats were less preferred than other grains for two reasons: a bland taste and a tendency to spoil quickly.

In North America, oats were a popular feed crop, but have declined in popularity due to soy beans. Human consumption has regained popularity with the recognition of oats as a healthy food in the 1980s.

Fun Fact: Oat milk has become a popular dairy substitute and it has a lower environmental impact than other options like almond milk.

Where it's from: Brazil and domesticated in Mexico and Costa Rica

History: Chile peppers most likely spread via bird droppings out of their wild state in Brazil. Birds, it turns out, can't feel the heat of the pepper!

When European conquistadors arrived to the Americas, chile peppers were widespread throughout Central America and the Caribbean.

The chile pepper spread worldwide very quickly, largely due to Portuguese trade routes. While native peoples in North America did use peppers, their spread across what is now the United States was due to trade of West African slaves.

Fun Fact: There are 26 known wild and 5 domesticated chile species.

Where it's from: China

History: Rice was domesticated from wild grass some 10,000-14,000 years ago in China, with much of the growing process still in use today.

It's production quickly spread into other parts of Asia, and may have even been introduced to the Mediterranean by Alexander the Great's expedition to India 2500 years ago.

By the time Europeans first came to the Americas, rice was well established – and its production was brought with them. The first evidence of rice production in the now-U.S. was in 1685, with both the technology and labor provided by African slaves.

Over 700 million pounds of rice is produced annually with over 90% produced in Asia.

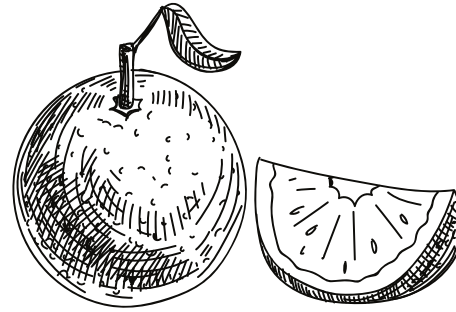
Fun Fact: The U.S. produces more than 100 varieties of rice across 6 states.



Millet



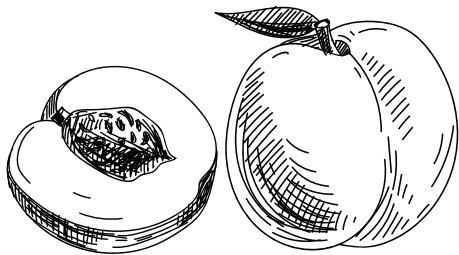
Watermelon



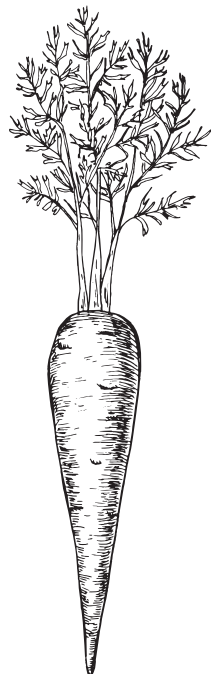
Citrus



Grapes



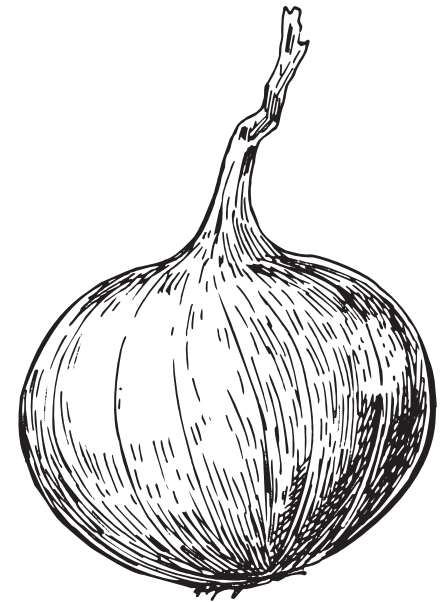
Peaches



Carrots



Cherry



Onion

Where it's from: Europe and Asia

History: Humans have produced grapes for at least 8500 years, with most of the production for producing wine, rather than fresh grapes for eating or drying. Table grapes (i.e. what we buy in the grocery store) did not gain popularity until the 1500s.

Native peoples across the present-day U.S. regularly consumed wild grapes when Europeans arrived. Europeans, though, brought their own varieties to grow for wine production

Today, over 70% of grape production is for wine, 27% for fresh fruit and the remainder for dried fruit.

Fun Fact: A raisin is any dried grape, but a currant is made from dried Zante Black Corinth grapes.

Where it's from: Central Asia, Pakistan or Iran

History: People have most likely been eating wild onions since before farming or writing were invented, but researchers believe onions were first cultivated around 5000 years ago.

Onions were an early crop for several reasons: it could grow just about anywhere and the root stores well.

While wild onions were in use in the Americas prior to European colonization, garden variety onions arrived with the Pilgrims in the late 1600s.

Fun Fact: Ancient Egyptians buried onions with the Pharaohs as a sign of eternal life.

Where it's from: Asia

History: Fossil records indicate that the citrus genus dates back to 7 million years ago, with all modern varieties related to 5 original species.

Citrus were planted in the Americas by European explorers. At the same time, improved varieties – that promised sweeter fruit – were developed in Europe and Asia.

The U.S. citrus industry took shape in the early 1800s when the Spanish gave up their U.S. holdings. By the 1880s Florida citrus was shipped across the country, while the California industry expanded with the 1849 Gold Rush.

Fun Fact: Texans have grown grapefruit, a cross between pumelo and orange, in the Rio Grande Valley for about 100 years.

Where it's from: Turkey

History: Originating in the Caucasus Mountains, wild cherries were likely consumed since prehistoric times. Cultivated cherries are reported to have been in Europe by 2000 years ago.

Cherries arrived to the Americas first in New Netherland (present-day New York) via Dutch colonists.

Cherries require a minimum number of chilling hours in winter, so most varieties are grown throughout the temperate latitudes worldwide.

Fun Fact: Sweet and sour cherry varieties are grown for different uses, with the latter being most used for baking.

Where it's from: West Africa

History: Originating from wild species, the watermelon was in cultivation by about 4000 years ago. It can still be found growing as a wild plant.

The spread of watermelon was readily accepted, due to the sweetness of the fruit. It arrived to the Americas via European colonists and African slaves. Today, there are more than 1200 varieties in production.

Watermelons are produced in 44 states of the U.S. with Florida being the top producer.

Fun Fact: Seedless watermelon varieties were developed by Japanese scientists in 1939, and today they represent nearly 85% of U.S. watermelon sales!

Where it's from: Iran and Afghanistan

History: While wild carrots are found in Europe and Asia dating as far back as 5000 years ago, the earliest cultivation of carrots probably dates back to 1100 years ago.

Wild carrots featured a much skinnier and intensely flavored root, and the original carrots were purple or white in color. Cultivation of the carrot created a much larger root that could be stored for a longer period of time, and the characteristic orange color of the root wasn't produced until the 1600s by the Dutch.

Fun Fact: Carrot popularity in the U.S. emerged after soldiers returned home from WWI, having eaten them in Europe.

Where it's from: Asia and Africa

History: It is thought that millet was domesticated from wild grain both in Asia and Africa around 7000 years ago.

One third of the world population eats the over 6000 species of wild and domesticated millet. They are used to make flatbreads, soups and even beverages.

Millet is an annual, warm weather cereals that are highly tolerant of drought and extreme weather conditions. Millet is also highly nutritious, often much more so than grains like rice and wheat.

Fun Fact: Corn is not the only grain that can be popped! Millet, quinoa, sorghum, amaranth and more will also pop!

Where it's from: China

History: The first peaches were cultivated along the Yangtze River in China as early as 8000 years ago, with their spread throughout Asia the Mediterranean region in the centuries that followed.

The peach first arrived to the Americas with Spanish explorers in the 1500s, and then made its way to England and France the following century.

Peaches have a limited growing range due to the fact that most varieties need 500 hours of temperatures below 50 degrees F.

There are hundreds of varieties of peach and nectarine cultivars in the world.

Fun Fact: There are two main types of peaches: freestone and clingstone. Freestones separate easily from the flesh when you cut the fruit open.

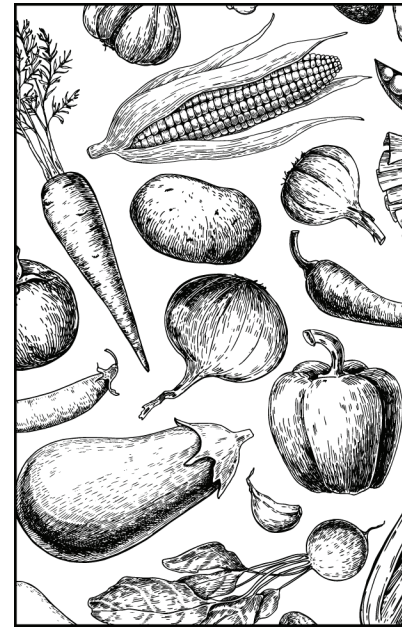


DALLAS ARBORETUM
AND BOTANICAL GARDEN

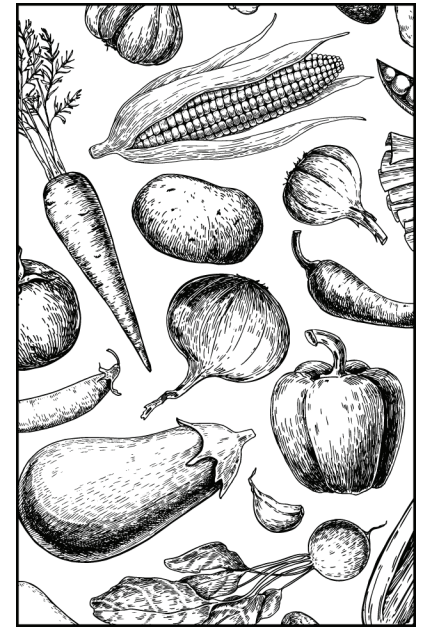
Sources



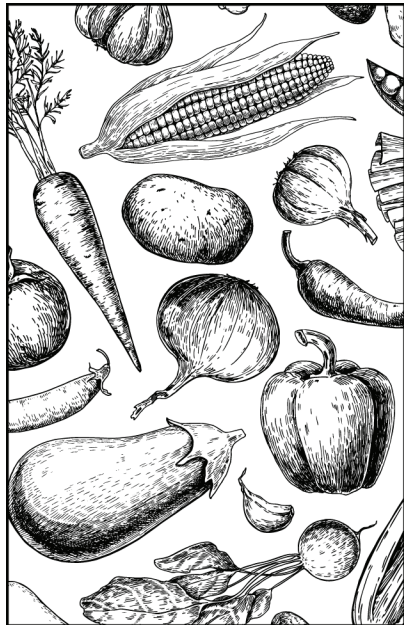
Quick Sort



Quick Sort



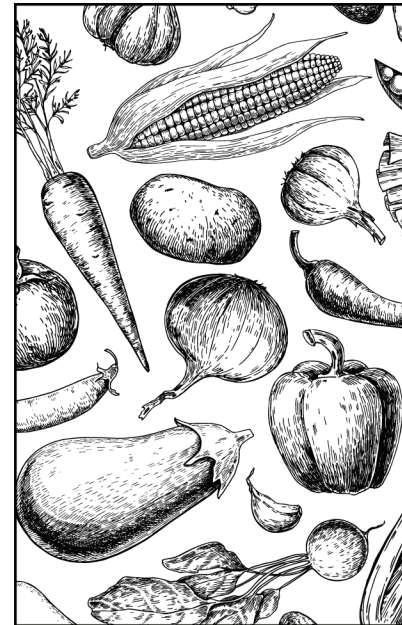
Quick Sort



Quick Sort



Quick Sort



Quick Sort



Talk About It

Sort the cards into crops from the Americas and crops from Europe, Asia and Africa.

Sort the cards into foods that you've tried before and foods that you haven't tried before.

Sort the cards into three food groups: fruits, vegetables and grains.

Sources

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www.alimentarium.org
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Find a food that you regularly eat at home.

You decide!

You decide!

Sort the cards by the color of the food.

Where does it come from?

How do you normally eat it?



Talk About It



Talk About It



Talk About It



Talk About It



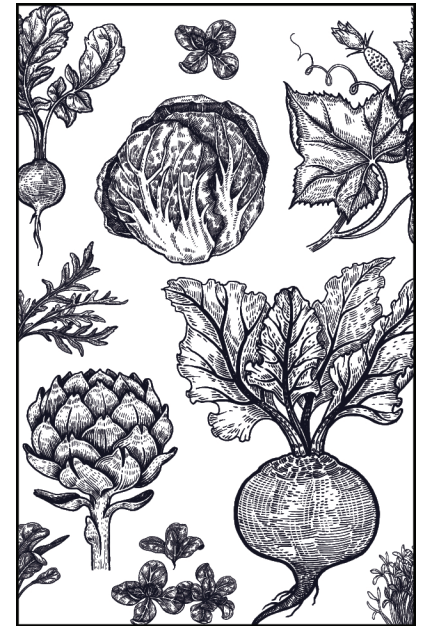
Talk About It



Further Research



Further Research



Further Research

Find a food that a family member likes but you do not.

**What food is it?
Where did it come from?**

How does your family eat it?

Find a plant that originally comes from the continent of Africa.

Where is it grown today?

What kinds of ways do people eat it?

Would it grow in Texas?

Can you find three foods that you eat together?

Ask a family member to tell you a recipe for a meal that uses these foods.

Find all the cards that are grains.

Where did they come from originally?

Which one do you eat most often?

If your family originally comes from somewhere else, what kinds of grain are grown there?

You decide:

Ask a friend or family member questions about a card that you choose.

Name 3 more fruits that are not included in the card deck.

What are they?

Where are they originally from?

Are they grown in other places now?

Can you buy them at the grocery in Texas?

Find a food from the Americas and a food from Europe, Asia or Africa that you normally eat together.

What is the meal that you make from these foods?

Where did the ingredients originally come from?

You decide:

Have a family member ask you questions about a card that you choose.



Further Research



Further Research



Further Research

What else do you want to know?

Create your own project from the card deck to explore a social or cultural issue of your choosing.

Do you like to include meat, fish, eggs or poultry in your meals?

What are some things that you eat that include meat and fruits, vegetables or grains?

Write a menu for a day that includes some of your favorites.

What else do you want to know?

Create your own project from the card deck to explore a social or cultural issue of your choosing.