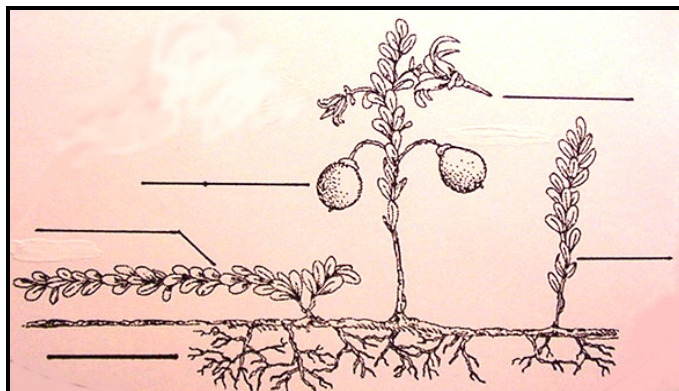




Cranberries

1. In what states are cranberries grown?
2. In which Maine counties can you find commercial cranberry growers?
3. What environmental conditions are needed for cranberries to grow?
4. How did cranberries get their name?
5. How were cranberries used by Native Americans?
6. Where in Maine was the first modern cranberry farm located?
7. Can you name some living things that are part of the cranberry wetland ecosystem (what kinds of plants and animals live in those places)?
8. Identify the steps in wet-harvesting cranberries. Place these steps in the correct order 1 – 5.
 1. ___ harvest the berries
 2. ___ flood the bed
 3. ___ take berries to warehouse
 4. ___ transport berries to market
 5. ___ process the berries
9. What kinds of cranberry products can be found in the grocery store?
10. Label this picture of a cranberry plant.

Berry
Blossom
Runner
Upright
Roots



ANSWERS (for questions 1 – 9)

1. Mostly in Wisconsin, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Washington, Oregon and Michigan, but there are also some small amounts in New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Vermont, Maine and Minnesota

Supplemental information: In 1947, New Jersey and Massachusetts together made up almost 87% (22,600 acres) of the U.S. cranberry acreage, with 57% from Massachusetts alone! Wisconsin, however, recently expanded its acreage more than any other state, and currently produces cranberries on about 4,000 acres, or 40% of the national average. In fact, the biggest harvests in recent years have come from Wisconsin rather than Massachusetts. The Pacific Northwest has also been increasing cranberry acreage. The region has increased from just 800 acres in 1947 to about 3,509 acres in 1996.

2. Washington County (over 84% of the acreage), Hancock County, Waldo County, Kennebec County, Lincoln County, Androscoggin County, Franklin County, Oxford County and York County.
3. Sandy and/or peat or boggy soils (with acid pH—between 4 and 5.2 is best), cool climates with chilly nights, plenty of moisture (either through irrigation or rainfall or both), and full sun during the day (the more sunlight the better)
4. The predominant theory is that the word ‘cranberry’ used to be written as ‘craneberry,’ and there is a fair amount of resemblance between the cranberry blossom (when it is hanging a certain way and before the petals have opened up much) and the head and neck of the sandhill crane, which is a bird that shares its habitat with cranberries in Massachusetts. Eventually, the ‘e’ in craneberry was dropped, leaving the word ‘cranberry’ that we use today.
5. The first time cranberries were cultivated was in 1816 by Captain Henry Hall of Dennis, MA (a Revolutionary War hero). It is a fact, however, that Native Americans were gathering and using cranberries long before that for such things as food (including a diuretic tea from the leaves), dyes for rugs and blankets, and medicine. They discovered, for example, that treating arrow wounds with raw cranberries helped to stop bleeding by contracting the tissue.
6. Jonesboro, in Washington County (1989) but there were also cranberry farms in Maine in the late 1800s and early 1900s before the collapse of the industry sometime after WWII. The first cranberry farm during that time was most likely somewhere in eastern Washington County, near Calais.
7. This is not an exhaustive list, but some of the creatures you might find would be: deer, moose, bear, coyote, fox, a large variety of birds (crows, gulls, kildeer, plover, partridge, sandhill crane, blue and grey heron, and many others), gopher, beaver, muskrat, mice (deermouse), moles, variety of snakes, and all kinds of insects (of course). As far as plants go: all sorts of wetland and other plants (cattails, loosestrife, meadowsweet, milkweed, poison ivy, hardhack, brambles of various sorts, cudweed, horsetail, clover, goldenrod, speedwell, St. Johnswort, sand spurrey, carpetweed, and many, many others)
8. The order of the steps is:
 1. 2 harvest the berries
 2. 1 flood the bed
 3. 3 take berries to warehouse
 4. 5 transport berries to market
 5. 4 process the berries
9. Lots of juices, “Craisins” (like raisins only they are dried cranberries), cranberry sauces, cranberry muffin mixes, cranberry quick-bread mixes, cranberry cookies (like Cranberry Fig Newtons if they still make them), cranberry cereal bars, cranberry ginger ale and a few other cranberry soda drinks, fresh and frozen bags of whole cranberries—especially at Thanksgiving time.

Prepared by Charles Armstrong, Cranberry Professional, University of Maine Cooperative Extension. © 2005



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