China and Rice

How do advances in agriculture shape culture?

New tools + quick growing rice → improved agriculture

Rice surplus: an excess of production → trade and commerce

Population growth → urbanization

Culture:
- Art
- Technology
- Religion + philosophy
- Architecture
- Food

Urbanization
Vegetable Fried Rice takes students to Song Dynasty China, where innovations in agriculture produced a rice surplus, creating cultural, technological, and scientific developments that profoundly shaped that period of human history.

### What Are Students Learning?

#### Communication
With a focus on seasoning and flavors, students advocate for their own preferences and account for others’ to arrive at a solution that works for everyone at the table.

#### Sustainability
Students study the advantages of biodiversity and selecting for traits in crop varieties that respond well to particular growing conditions and methods, while ensuring sustainable production.

#### Cooking Skills
Students learn to cut vegetables into small, uniform pieces, that cutting on the bias increases surface area to speed cooking time, and to not overcrowd the wok, because high heat is essential to the flavor of the dish.

#### Nourishment
Students study how consistent and ample access to food in Song Dynasty China enabled major scientific and cultural development, and how a delicious, quick-to-cook organic vegetarian meal with readily available leftovers can support their own health and well-being.

#### Academics
Students study agricultural developments in Song Dynasty China.

This fulfills: History & Social Science content standards; Common Core State Standards for collaborative discussion, integrating information in different formats, speaking and listening, and language; and Health & Wellness standards for choosing healthy foods; safe food handling; and preparing nutritious foods.

### Ingredients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Item</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 tbsp</td>
<td>olive oil</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 cloves</td>
<td>garlic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 tbsp</td>
<td>fresh ginger</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 cups</td>
<td>assorted vegetables (bok choy, tatsoi, carrots, chard, scallions, celery, peas, squash), washed and chopped</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 cups</td>
<td>cold cooked long grain brown rice</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 tsp</td>
<td>toasted sesame oil</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 eggs</td>
<td>lightly beaten</td>
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<tr>
<td>¼ cup</td>
<td>soy sauce</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salt and pepper</td>
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### Directions

In a large, heavy bottomed frying pan or wok, heat the olive oil over medium heat.

Add the garlic and ginger and cook for 30 seconds. Add the crunchy vegetables (carrots, celery, etc.) and sauté for about five minutes until cooked through but still a little crisp.

Add the leafy vegetables (bok choy, scallions, etc.) and cook for a few more minutes.

Add the rice and sesame oil, stirring to combine. When the rice is hot, add the eggs and soy sauce, cooking until the eggs are dry.

Season with salt and pepper.

Serves 10 students as a tasting portion.