

Finding a Needle in a Haystack

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The Fun Way to Learn All About Alfalfa!

For ages 8 and older

Directions:

How to make the game:

- 1) Items you will need: one box of **toothpicks** (make sure it's a box of more than 30 toothpicks), 3 by 5 inch **index cards**, a **colored marker**, a **small box** (like a cube-shaped Kleenex box), and **tape** or **glue**
- 2) Using the colored marker, color one toothpick- This toothpick symbolizes the needle
- 3) Color the box and decorate it like a bale of hay, or click the website below to use the link to use hay bale color sheets to glue on the outside of the box:
- 4) <http://www.wpclipart.com/working/agricultural/haystack.png> Put all the toothpicks in the box, including the colored one

- 5) Put questions about alfalfa on the index cards with answers on the back. On the last page there are sample questions that can be printed, cut out, and glued onto the index cards. More can be made if necessary.

Purpose: To answer the most questions about alfalfa correctly so that you can draw a toothpick out of the box. The first team to draw the colored toothpick wins. Also, the goal is to teach students about the importance of alfalfa, while learning fun facts.

Number of Players: Two or more people/ teams

How to Play:

- 1) One person/team reads aloud the alfalfa trivia questions while the other person/team answers. (Flip a coin to decide which team/person gets to answer a question first).
- 2) If the question is answered correctly, the person/team gets to blindly choose a toothpick from the box. Remember only if the question is answered CORRECTLY you can draw a toothpick.
- 3) If the toothpick is the colored toothpick, the game is over. The team/person with the colored toothpick wins!
- 4) If the toothpick is non-colored, then the game continues. A new person/team asks the next question.
- 5) The game continues until the colored toothpick is drawn. The team who draws the colored toothpick wins!

This game allows kids to have fun and want to answer the most questions about alfalfa correctly so that they can draw a toothpick. The suspense of who will pick the colored toothpick creates the fun! 😊 Try it out for yourself!

*Prizes may be given to the winners if preferred!



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Cut out these sample questions and answers to glue onto the index cards! ☺ The answers are the ones right next to the question! Enjoy!

What is alfalfa?

It is a plant that is mainly grown by farmers to make hay!



What is this plant?

Alfalfa!

Does alfalfa grow by itself after it's planted?

Yes! Alfalfa is a perennial crop which means it can grow for years after the seeds are planted!



What is important about this house?

It is where alfalfa was 1st grown successfully in Minnesota! (It is Wendelin's Grimm's House)

Does alfalfa keep water clean?

Yes! Alfalfa absorbs nitrogen through its roots so that it doesn't move into the water underground, in rivers, or in lakes!

The one in the middle is Corn. The one that is taller and is next to the corn is wheat. The short plant is alfalfa.



This picture is of alfalfa, wheat, and corn. Match the names with the different plants.

Do any organisms live in alfalfa?

Yes! Bacteria live in alfalfa roots. They eat some of the nutrients it absorbs.

Does alfalfa grow in water?

No! Alfalfa likes to grow in dry areas.

Is alfalfa important in dairy and meat industries?

Yes! Alfalfa is a main food product for many of the animals that produce our dairy and meat products!

Who was the man that first grew alfalfa in Minnesota?

**Wendelin Grimm
(A farmer from Germany that came to Minnesota)**

What is the oldest known crop in the world?

Alfalfa! It is the oldest named forage crop that most likely originated in the 10th millennium

	B.C.!
Does alfalfa produce flowers?	Yes! Alfalfa produces blue, purple, yellow, or white flowers in its blooming season!
Is alfalfa grown everywhere or just in Minnesota?	Alfalfa is grown just about everywhere! It is grown in 6 of the 7 continents!
Does alfalfa survive in droughts? (Times when there is no or very little rainfall)	Yes! Its roots can reach to underground water to stay healthy!
What is alfalfa used for? (Name 3 things)	<p>1) Food for humans</p>  <p>2) Feeding Animals, especially dairy cows</p> <p>3) Providing soil nutrients and fixing nitrogen</p> <p>Other answers can also be accepted! Example? –To Keep Water Clean and prevent water pollution from nitrate -To keep soil good for other crops in crop rotations</p>

	- To make hay
Which crop has the longest roots? Wheat, corn or alfalfa?	Alfalfa! Its roots can grow up to 30 feet underground! Alfalfa roots are extremely long to help absorb nutrients and water!
Do humans eat alfalfa?	Yes! Many humans eat alfalfa sprouts!
Which two counties in Minnesota produce the most alfalfa?	Stearns County And Otter Tail County
Which crop has the scientific name <i>Medicago sativa</i>?	Alfalfa!
Is Wendelin Grimm's first house still standing? (He is the man who brought alfalfa to Minnesota)	Yes! It is preserved by Three Rivers District Park in Carver County and people can still visit it today!
Does Grimm's Alfalfa still exist today?	Not really! Grimm Alfalfa is not used anymore. New kinds of alfalfa are now used today!
What is alfalfa mainly used for?	To make Hay to feed animals including horses and cattle
Is alfalfa expensive?	Yes! Alfalfa is very expensive. It costs about \$133-165 dollars per ton. This is because there are not many alfalfa fields.

Does Wendelin Grimm's great grandchildren still grow alfalfa today?

Yes! The Kelzer Family (who are great grandchildren of The Grimms) has been growing alfalfa for over 60 years.

Does alfalfa help in water pollution?

Yes! Alfalfa absorbs nitrate that usually runs off the fields and goes into the water



Can alfalfa clean up the liquid nitrogen spill from this train wreck?

Yes! Actually it already did! In North Dakota a train derailed. Alfalfa was planted next to the site and absorbed 45,000 gallons of liquid nitrogen from the train wreck.

Can people get sick from eating alfalfa?

Perhaps, if they are not careful. Alfalfa sprouts are the number one cause of foodborne illness. It may be very healthy but must be grown correctly!