What is fruit and vegetable farming?

Fruit and vegetable farming is the farming of plants for food. It is known as the horticulture industry. It includes fruit grown on trees, fruit grown on vines, root vegetables, nuts, leafy vegetables, and fruit that we think of as vegetables such as pumpkins, tomatoes and cucumbers.

Fruit and vegetable farming takes place in all states of Australia, although not all fruits or vegetables are grown in all states. Particular regions suit particular kinds of crops due to their climates.

Fruit products
Fruit is not only sold to be consumed fresh, but is also used to make fruit juice, dried fruit and canned fruit. Australia produces approximately one billion litres of fruit juice-based drinks a year and about 194,000 tonnes of canned fruit each year, including tomatoes, peaches, pears, apples and apricots.

Farm names
Farms have different names depending on what plants they grow. Many

Picking celery in a market garden
fruit trees are grown in orchards, and these include apples, mangoes and many nuts. Fruits that grow on vines, such as grapes and passionfruit are grown in vineyards. The farms that grow large plants such as pineapples and bananas are called plantations. Many vegetables are grown in market gardens and many fruits and vegetables are now grown hydroponically in greenhouses.

**Fruit**
Fruit is the fleshy, seed bearing part of plants that is used as a food. Fruit is usually sweet and juicy, however there are some fruits, such as tomatoes and cucumbers, that are not especially sweet. Nuts are the fruit of certain plants. The largest crops of fruit grown on Australian farms are oranges, bananas, apples, pears, pineapples, peaches, grapes, mandarins and tangelos.

**Vegetables**
Vegetables are the part of various plants that are eaten as food. Sometimes it is the leaves (spinach, lettuce, cabbage, parsley), sometimes the fruit of the plant (tomatoes, cucumbers, capsicum, eggplant, pumpkin), sometimes the stems (asparagus, celery) and sometimes the roots (carrots, parsnips, beetroot, radishes and sweet potatoes). Potatoes are an underground stem. Vegetables are the largest horticultural industry in Australia and the main crops are potatoes, tomatoes, carrots, onions and lettuce.

**Did you know?**
A person who grows plants is called a horticulturalist. Horticulturalists grow plants in small vegetable patches, market gardens, orchards, and greenhouses.