

Minnesota's Edible State Symbols

Pre-reading

Questions:

- What are some state symbols of Minnesota?
- Which state symbols can you eat?

Definitions:

- Edible – able to be eaten as food
- Bill – a proposed law that has not yet been voted on
- Propose – to present or suggest as an idea



Reading

State Drink

2 Milk is Minnesota's state drink. There are more dairy cows than lakes in the state. There is one cow for
22 every nine people. Minnesota's 545,000 cows **produce** a lot of milk! The state ranks fifth in dairy
39 production in the United States. The state drink is used to make many dairy products. More than 80 percent
58 of the state's milk is used to make butter, cheese, ice cream, and yogurt.

State Muffin

72 Thanks to a class of Minnesota third-graders, the state muffin is the blueberry muffin. These children were
74 studying how a bill becomes a law. They wrote a bill proposing the blueberry muffin be the official state
92 muffin. Since Minnesota had a state drink, why not a state food? Blueberries are found in many wooded
111 areas of northern Minnesota. They are a favorite fruit of many people. Wheat is used to make muffins.
129 Farmers across the state grow wheat. The blueberry muffin seemed like a great addition to the list of
147 Minnesota's state symbols. The state's government leaders agreed. In 1988, the school children's bill was
165 signed into law.
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State Fish

183 The walleye is the "Land of 10,000 Lakes" state fish. More than one million fishermen and women try to
185 catch this tasty fish every year. Walleye live in waters in all parts of the state. But, most live in the large,
204 cool lakes of northern Minnesota. Their eyes are **sensitive** to light. They go to deep waters during the day
226 and move to shallow areas at night. Minnesota's record walleye was caught in the Sea Gull River in 1979.
245 It weighed 17 pounds 8 ounces.
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State Grain

270 Wild rice became Minnesota's official state grain in 1977. For hundreds of years wild rice has been a **staple**
272 for the Indians of northern Minnesota. It is an important crop and food for the Native American people.
291 Wild rice grows naturally in the shallow waters of lakes in the northern half of the state. It is harvested from
309 lakes in the traditional Indian way. Sticks are used to bend the wild rice grass into a canoe. The stalks are
330 then gently hit to knock the grains loose into the canoe. For many years, all the wild rice produced in the
351 world came from Minnesota. Minnesota is still the nation's top producer of natural wild rice.
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* Wild rice grain photo courtesy of Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station

