

A photograph of a red barn with a blue roof and a large bare tree in a snowy field. The barn has white doors and a small window. The tree is large and has many bare branches. The ground is covered in snow, and there is a white fence in the background.

# SCHOOL CALENDAR

Photos by Ken Kashian, Cyndi Cook - Illinois Farm Bureau®  
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## 2014-2015





POULTRY (Early Season)

**Words and terms to learn:**

Brooder, fertilized, protein, embryo, breed,  
incubator, albumen

**Recommended Reading:**

*Chicks and Chickens* by Gail Gibbons  
*Turkeys* by Rachael Bell  
*From Egg to Chicken* by Anita Ganeri  
*Diary of a Pet Turkey* by Joanne Ingis

# August 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28	29	30	31	1 Female chickens are called pullets for their first year or until they begin to lay eggs. Then, they are called hens.	2
3	4 Laying hens sit on eggs for 21 days until they hatch.	5 A baby chicken is called a chick.	6 Once chicks hatch they are put in a room called a brooder.	7 The egg shell may have as many as 17,000 tiny pores over its surface.	8 Only fertilized eggs will hatch.	9
10	11 Most eggs produced today will be at the grocery store within 72 hours.	12 As a chick embryo develops in a fertilized egg, the yolk provides nourishment and the albumen cushions the embryo.	13 Chickens need grit, which is a mixture of angular, hard crushed rock, in their diet to produce eggs.	14 Eggs contain the highest known quality food protein.	15 Hens usually need to eat about four pounds of feed to produce a dozen eggs.	16
17	18 The color of the egg is determined by the breed of chicken laying the egg and has nothing to do with their diet.	19 A poult is the name for a young turkey.	20 An incubator is a box which maintains a constant temperature and is used to hatch eggs.	21 Most eggs are laid between 7 am and 11 am.	22 The top 5 egg producing states are Iowa, Indiana, Ohio, California and Pennsylvania.	23
24 31	25 As a hen ages, her eggs increase in size.	26 An eggshell has a protective coating that prevents bacteria from entering the egg. To retain this coating, eggs should not be washed until just before use.	27 Eggs contain 13 essential vitamins and minerals.	28 A hen requires 24-26 hours to produce an egg.	29 You can tell whether an egg is fresh or stale by dropping it in water. A fresh egg will sink, and a stale one will float.	30





PEACH (Late Season)

**Words and terms to learn:**

Pit, rootstocks, scion, *Prunus persica*, acidic, cultivated, grafting

**Recommended Reading:**

*Peach & Blue* by Sarah S. Kilborne  
*From Pit to Peach Tree* by Ellen Weiss  
*James and the Giant Peach* by Roald Dahl  
*A Peck of Peaches* by Carol Crane  
*Ross and the Peach Tree* by Jill S. Hardin

# September 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31	1 Each peach has a hard stone called a pit in the center.	2 A peach pit has a seed inside. The pit needs to crack open before the seed can start to grow.	3 A large peach has fewer than 70 calories and contains 3 grams of fiber. It is also a good source of vitamins A and C.	4 Peaches were mentioned in literature as early as 79 A.D.	5 In China, the peach is a symbol of good luck, immortality and friendship.	6
7	8 The peach is a member of the rose family and is a close relative of almonds.	9 There are over 700 varieties of peaches. Some Chinese varieties are even flat like hockey pucks!	10 The peach originated in China and was introduced to the West through Persia.	11 Christopher Columbus brought several peach trees to America on his second and third voyages.	12 The nectarine is a variety of peach. It has one recessive gene which makes its skin smooth instead of fuzzy.	13
14	15 China is the world's largest producer of peaches, with Italy second. The United States produces 25% of the world's total supply.	16 The two basic types of peaches are clingstone and freestone.	17 Cling, or clingstone peaches, have a pit to which the flesh 'clings.' The flesh separates easily on a freestone peach.	18 The peach can have yellow or white flesh. White peaches are sweeter and less acidic than the more traditional golden peach.	19 The term "you're a real peach" originates from the tradition of giving a peach to your friends and loved ones.	20
21	22 <i>Prunus persica</i> , the peach's scientific name, is a direct reference to the fruit's travels from China to Persia along the Silk Road.	23 True wild peaches are only found in China. Unlike the cultivated fruit, the wild fruit is small, sour and very fuzzy.	24 Most peaches are cultivated by grafting different combinations of rootstocks to a young shoot or twig of a plant called a scion.	25 The juice from a peach makes a wonderful moisturizer, and it can be found in many cosmetics.	26 So many peaches are grown in Georgia that it is known as the Peach State.	27
28	29 California produces more than 50% of the peaches in the United States (and grows 175 different varieties).	30 Peaches do not gain flavor with cooking.	1	2	3	4





PUMPKIN (Late Season)

**Words and terms to learn:**

Angiosperm, pepitas, edible, cucurbits, varieties,  
potassium, continent, cross-pollination

**Recommended Reading:**

*How Many Seeds in a Pumpkin?* by Margaret McNamara  
*Too Many Pumpkins* by Linda White  
*It's a Fruit, It's a Vegetable, It's a Pumpkin* by Allan Fowler  
*Just Your Average Princess* by Kristina Springer

# October 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	29	30	1 Pumpkins are a member of the gourd family and are a fruit.	2 One vine on a pumpkin plant can grow up to 20 feet long.	3 It takes 110 days for a pumpkin vine to produce mature pumpkins.	4
5	6 Illinois farmers grow more pumpkins than anywhere else in the world.	7 Pumpkins can range in size from less than one pound to more than 1,000 pounds.	8 Illinois grows 90-95% of the pumpkins used for processing. Most of that processing takes place in Morton, IL, the Pumpkin Capital of the World.	9 Pumpkin vines develop big orange blossoms about a month after planting. Each flower has 5 petals and is edible.	10 Giant pumpkins can grow 5 pounds a day.	11
12	13 Pumpkins are 90% water.	14 Native Americans taught the Pilgrims how to grow pumpkins.	15 "Three Sisters," a method of growing corn, beans and pumpkins together in one place, was developed by Native Americans.	16 Pumpkins have been grown in North America for five thousand years.	17 The heaviest pumpkin on record weighed over a ton at 2,009 pounds.	18
19	20 Cross-pollination can be used to create brand new varieties of pumpkins.	21 Pumpkins are angiosperms, which is a fancy name for plants with flowers.	22 Pepitas is another name for pumpkin seeds.	23 Antarctica is the only continent where pumpkins cannot grow.	24 A pumpkin root, called a tap root, can grow 2 to 3 feet deep.	25
26	27 Pumpkins are low in calories, fat and sodium, and are a great source of vitamin A and potassium.	28 Pumpkins originated in Central America.	29 The name pumpkin originated from "pepon," the Greek word for "large melon."	30 A pumpkin is a member of the Cucurbita family, and is a squash.	31 Native Americans used pumpkin as a staple in their diets centuries before the Pilgrims landed.	1





DAIRY (Early Season)



**Words and terms to learn:**

Ruminant, silage, gestation, pasteurization, acute

**Recommended Reading:***The Milk Makers* by Gail Gibbons*Clarabelle* by Cris Peterson*Black and White* by David Macaulay*Ice Cream: the Full Scoop* by Gail Gibbons*MILK! Life on a Dairy Farm* by Ruth Owen

# November 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3 Each year, U.S. dairy farmers provide milk to make more than 1 billion gallons of ice cream and 7 billion pounds of cheese!	4 Dairy cows come in many colors. The black and white cows are Holsteins. Most of the dairy cows in the U.S. are Holsteins.	5 Dairy cattle are called ruminants because they have four compartments in their stomach.	6 A cow drinks 30-50 gallons of water each day.	7 Dairy cows eat hay, silage and grain. Silage is fermented corn, wheat or hay with the stalks and leaves.	8
9	10 Heifers are female dairy cattle. After 2 years a heifer gives birth, and is then called a cow.	11 All female dairy cows must have a calf to produce milk.	12 The gestation (pregnancy) period for cows is nine months, and newborn calves weigh 80-100 pounds.	13 It takes 10 pounds of milk to make one pound of cheese.	14 Louis Pasteur discovered the process called pasteurization; this process is used to protect the purity and flavors of milk.	15
16	17 Milk is a great source of protein and calcium; it is sometimes called nature's most nearly perfect food.	18 A typical dairy cow weighs 1,400 pounds.	19 Cows have an acute sense of smell and can smell something up to six miles away.	20 Plastic milk bottles were first introduced in the United States in 1967.	21 On today's farms, cows are milked 2-3 times a day with automated milking machines.	22
23 30	24 Illinois has about 102,000 dairy cows that produce close to 2 billion pounds of milk a year.	25 The udder is the part of a dairy cow that produces and stores milk.	26 Special trucks haul the milk from the farm to the dairy plant. The truck keeps the milk cold-like a giant thermos on wheels.	27 On average, one dairy cow can produce about 6.5 gallons of milk per day.	28 Milk remains fresh for 7-10 days after the expiration date if refrigerated at 35-40 degrees Fahrenheit.	29



PORK (Late Season)



**Words and terms to learn:**

Farrowing, insulin, manure, economy, litter

**Recommended Reading:**

*A Hog Ate My Homework* by Gary Metivier

*Pigs will be Pigs* by Amy Axelrod

*Pigs & Pork in the Story of Agriculture* by JoAnne Buggey and Susan Anderson

*Pigs to the Rescue* by John Himmelman

*Pigs* by Gail Gibbons

# December 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30	1 A baby pig is called a piglet. Mother pigs are called sows.	2 Piglets weigh about 2 1/2 pounds at birth and will weigh about 280 pounds by the time they are four to six months old.	3 Pigs are very smart; they rank as the fourth most intelligent animal.	4 Pigs cannot sweat, so farmers use sprinklers and fans to keep them cool.	5 In hog production farrowing means giving birth.	6
7	8 Insulin is made from pigs' adrenal glands and helps people with diabetes lower their blood sugar.	9 Hot dogs, made from pork, were first introduced to the public in 1904 at the St. Louis World's Fair.	10 A pig's tongue contains 15,000 taste buds. In comparison, a human tongue has only 9,000 taste buds.	11 A pig's diet is mostly made up of ground corn and soybeans.	12 Illinois ranks fourth in pork production behind Iowa, North Carolina and Minnesota.	13
14	15 There are more than 180 species of pigs. They are found on every continent except Antarctica.	16 Compared to ten years ago, pork has 30 percent less fat, 14 percent fewer calories, and 10 percent less cholesterol.	17 Most pigs are raised indoors to keep them safe from extreme weather conditions.	18 As pigs grow they can eat up to 9 pounds of feed per day.	19 A gilt is a female pig that has not given birth.	20
21	22 Pork is the food and products that come from pigs. Pork chops, bacon and ham are some examples of pork.	23 Manure is a great source of nutrients that plants need to grow. Hog manure is often spread on fields as fertilizer.	24 In old days, sea captains kept pigs on board because they believed that pigs always swam toward the nearest shore.	25 The pork industry contributes \$1.8 billion to the Illinois economy annually.	26 Pigs are one of the few animals that will not overeat.	27
28	29 An average litter includes about eight to twelve piglets.	30 Most sows will give birth to 2 - 3 litters of piglets each year.	31 Clinton County raises more pigs than any other county in the state of Illinois. There are 245,000 pigs in that county alone!	1	2	3



HORSE (Early Season)



**Words and terms to learn:**

Gait, enclosure, yearling, withers, Hippology,  
breed, foal, genus, equine

**Recommended Reading:**

*War Horse* by Michael Morpurgo  
*Leah's Pony* by Elizabeth Friedrich  
*National Velvet* by Enid Bagnold  
*Horses!* by Gail Gibbons

# January 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	29	30	31	1 A hand is a unit used to measure the height of a horse. A hand is equal to 4 inches.	2 Professionals that trim horses' hooves are called farriers.	3
4	5 A yearling is a horse that is one year old.	6 The average life span of a horse is 20-25 years, although they can live for up to 30 years.	7 A large enclosure to hold a horse is called a paddock.	8 A foal is a newborn horse.	9 Wild horses of the Western plains are called Mustangs.	10
11	12 The four natural gaits of a horse are the walk, trot, canter and gallop.	13 The height of a horse is measured from the ground to their withers. The withers are the high point between a horse's shoulder blades.	14 Hippology is the study of horses.	15 A filly is the name for a young, female horse.	16 Tack is the name given to brushes, saddles and other equipment used to ride and care for horses.	17
18	19 A thoroughbred horse can run a mile in 90 seconds.	20 A group of horses is called a herd.	21 There are more than 350 different breeds of horses and ponies.	22 Horses belong to the genus called equus, or equine.	23 Horses drink 10 to 12 gallons of fresh water every day.	24
25	26 The smallest breed of horse, the Falabella, grows to only 30 inches in height.	27 Gait is a term used to describe the way a horse moves.	28 Horseback riding is proven to have therapeutic benefits to humans with physical and mental illnesses, and provides assistance to people with disabilities.	29 Horses have strong teeth, sharp ears, keen eyes and a good sense of smell.	30 Horses' hooves need to be trimmed regularly (about every 6-8 weeks).	31





BEEF (Late Season)



**Words and terms to learn:**

Bovine, by-product, regurgitated, insulin,  
hooves, cud, aerate

**Recommended Reading:**

*The Beef Princess of Practical County* by Michelle Houts  
*Little Joe* by Sandra Neil Wallace  
*Life on a Cattle Farm* by Judy Wolfman  
*Amazing Grazing* by Cris Peterson  
*Beef Cattle: An A to Z Book* by Susan Anderson and JoAnne Buggey

# February 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 Cattle are called ruminants; their stomach has four compartments that help break down and digest their food.	3 A calf weighs 80-100 pounds at birth.	4 Many medicines, including insulin, are made from the glands of the cow.	5 Beef by-products help us to use 99% of every beef animal.	6 Partially digested, regurgitated food is called "cud."	7
8	9 Beef is a good source of ZIP-zinc, iron and protein.	10 The first cow in America arrived in Jamestown colony in 1611.	11 Stearic acid, used to make automobile tires hold their shape, comes from cattle.	12 Branding and ear tags are ways farmers mark their cattle for easier recognition.	13 Ground beef is the most popular form of beef.	14
15	16 Beef fat, called tallow, is an ingredient in soaps, cosmetics, candles, shortenings and chewing gum.	17 It takes the hide of 3.8 steers to make 72 footballs.	18 A cow's diet is mainly grass and hay with some feed supplements.	19 There are many breeds of cattle. The most popular breed is Angus, which is solid black and known for its high quality of meat.	20 Cows can see in color, just like us!	21
22	23 Cattle are part of the bovine (Bovidae) family which also includes sheep, goats, goat-antelopes and antelopes.	24 We use 40% of the average steer for beef; the remainder of the steer is used for beef by-products.	25 Cattle scatter seeds, trim wild grasses, and aerate the soil with their hooves.	26 The U.S. supplies 25% of the world's beef supply with 10% of the world's cattle.	27 Ground beef, roast, sirloins, steaks, ribs and chuck are cuts of beef.	28
1	2	3	4	5	6	7



WHEAT (Early Season)



**Words and terms to learn:**

Kernel, combine, harvest, spike head, yield

**Recommended Reading:**

*Bread Comes to Life: A Garden of Wheat and Loaf to Eat* by George Levenson  
*Food: Bread* by Louise Spilsbury  
*The Thing About Luck* by Cynthia Kadohata  
*The Wheat Doll* by Allison Randall  
*Grains* by Jill Kalz

# March 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 Illinois produces soft red winter wheat, which is used in cake mixes and pretzels.	3 Kansas produces the most wheat of any state, while Illinois ranks third in the nation.	4 One bushel of wheat yields 60 pounds of whole-wheat flour.	5 A wheat plant grows to be 2 to 4 feet high.	6 The head of a wheat plant is called a spike head and contains 50 to 75 kernels.	7
8	9 Wheat yields have improved by approximately 1/2 bushel per acre each year since 1900.	10 Wheat is grown in 42 states in the United States.	11 To "harvest" means to remove wheat kernels from the wheat plant.	12 A family of four can live 10 years off the bread produced from 1 acre of wheat.	13 A kernel of wheat, sometimes called the wheat berry, is the seed from which the wheat plant grows.	14
15	16 The wheat plant below the spiked head is called straw, which is bundled and used for animal bedding.	17 Wheat from area farms is collected at grain elevators and then shipped to flour mills.	18 Wheat is used in bread, pasta, cereal, pretzels and licorice.	19 More foods are made with wheat than any other cereal grain.	20 A modern combine can harvest 1,000 bushels of wheat per hour.	21
22	23 A new variety of wheat can take up to 17 years to develop before it is available for farmers to plant.	24 Wheat kernels are ground into flour.	25 America produces 12% of the world's wheat crop.	26 About 83% of the wheat produced in Illinois is grown in the southern half of the state, where there is a longer growing season.	27 A bushel of wheat makes about 90 one-pound loaves of whole-wheat bread.	28
29	30 A combine cuts the wheat and then cleans and separates the kernels from the plant.	31 Wheat contains a lot of protein, which is good for you.	1	2	3	4



APPLE (Early Season)



**Words and terms to learn:**

Antioxidants, ancient, variety, archeologist, export

**Recommended Reading:***Apples* by Gail Gibbons*Apple Picking Time* by Michele Benoit Slawson*From Seed to Apple* by Anita Garneri*Apples to Oregon* by Deborah Hopkinson and Nancy Carpenter*How Do Apples Grow?* by Betsy Maestro

# April 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30	31	1 The Illinois State Fruit is the GoldRush Apple. It is a yellow, sweet-tart apple variety.	2 Red Delicious apples are the most widely grown in the United States.	3 The Pilgrims brought the apple to the United States in 1620, and in 1730 the first apple nursery opened in Flushing, New York.	4
5	6 7,500 varieties of apples are grown in the United States.	7 Apples contain Vitamins A, C, B6, and B12, along with thiamin and niacin.	8 It takes about 15 years for a tree grown from a seed to produce an apple. Therefore, most apple trees are grown by grafting or budding onto already existing rootstocks.	9 Sunlight causes a chemical reaction in the sugar of apples. That is why they change colors.	10 A medium sized apple has 5 grams of fiber, 20% of the recommended daily allowance.	11
12	13 Washington, New York, Michigan, Pennsylvania and California are the top apple producing states.	14 Apples contain five seed pockets. Usually, each pocket contains a seed.	15 Tree leaves produce energy for fruit to grow. It takes more than fifty leaves to grow one apple.	16 Don't peel your apple. Two-thirds of the fiber and many antioxidants are found in the peel. Antioxidants help reduce cell damage.	17 The crabapple tree is the only apple tree native to North America.	18
19	20 Apples were the favorite fruit of ancient Greeks and Romans.	21 It takes 36 apples to create one gallon of apple cider.	22 Almost one out of every four apples harvested in the United States is exported.	23 The apple tree originated in an area between the Caspian and Black Sea.	24 In colonial times, apples were called winter bananas or melt-in-the-mouths.	25
26	27 Archeologists have found evidence that humans have enjoyed apples since at least 6500 B.C.	28 Apples will ripen six to ten times faster at room temperature than if they are refrigerated.	29 The average size of a United States apple orchard is 50 acres.	30 Apples are a member of the rose family.	1	2



CORN (Early Season)



**Words and terms to learn:**

Ethanol, environment, renewable fuel,  
biodegradable, evaporation, processed

**Recommended Reading:**

*Anna's Corn* by Barbara Santucci

*Corn* by Gail Gibbons

*Corn Belt Harvest* by Raymond Bial

*Awesome Agriculture Corn* by JoAnne Buggey and Susan Anderson

*The Life and Times of Corn* by Charles Micucci

# May 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26	27	28	29	30	1 The majority of corn grown in Illinois is field corn, which is used for animal feed and processing, and ethanol production.	2
3	4 Native Americans taught the settlers of Jamestown how to grow their own corn.	5 Dent, or field corn, is higher in starch and lower in sugar than sweet corn, the type of corn eaten as a vegetable.	6 Tassels, stalks, silks, husks, ears, leaves, roots and kernels are all part of corn plants.	7 America's corn farmers are the most productive in the world, growing 20% more corn per acre than any other nation.	8 An acre of corn will give off 4,000 gallons of water per day in evaporation.	9
10	11 There are several varieties of corn. Some of the more common are sweet corn, field corn and popcorn.	12 Ethanol is a high performance, renewable fuel that is made from corn.	13 One bushel of corn weighs 56 pounds.	14 Field corn can grow 15 feet tall in 2-3 months! The corn plant grows brace roots above ground to help support it.	15 Each corn kernel contains four major components: starch, protein, oil and fiber.	16
17	18 Processed corn is soaked and milled (ground) so the germ oil, starch, gluten and hulls can be separated.	19 Scientists created a road de-icer from corn that is environmentally friendly.	20 Field corn is processed to make many products we use every day.	21 An ear of corn will always have an even number of rows, usually between 8 and 36.	22 Iowa, Illinois, Nebraska and Minnesota produce more than half of the corn grown in the U.S.	23
24 31	25 After an average of 120 days of growth, the corn plant dies and is harvested with a machine called a combine.	26 Ethanol is biodegradable and does not pollute groundwater.	27 Americans today consume 16 billion quarts of popped popcorn each year, or 52 quarts per person.	28 Sweet corn is sweet because it turns starch into sugar.	29 One bushel of corn produces 2.8 gallons of ethanol.	30



SOYBEAN (Mid Season)



# Words and terms to learn:

Legumes, biodiesel, protein, bushel, taproot, edible

# Recommended Reading:

*Auntie Yang's Soybean Picnic* by Ginnie Lo  
*Oh Say Can You Seed?* by Bonnie Worth  
*Awesome Agriculture Soybeans: An A-to-Z Book* by Susan Anderson and JoAnne Buggy  
*One Bean* by Anne Rockwell  
*The Super Soybean* by Raymond Bial

## June 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31	1 Soy ink is used in over 95% of America's daily newspapers.	2	3 Soybean plants are bushy, green plants that grow 3-5 feet tall, called legumes.	4	5 The soybean is the highest natural source of dietary fiber.	6
7	8	9 Soybeans are good for crop rotation because they leave nitrogen in the soil for the next crop.	10	11 China uses more American grown soybeans than any other country.	12	13
14	15 Decatur, Illinois, is the Soybean Capital of the World.	16	17 One acre of soybeans can produce 82,368 crayons.	18	19 Henry Ford experimented with soy-based plastics in the production of his cars. In 1940, he swung an axe at a car trunk to demonstrate the durability of soy plastics.	20
21	22	23 George Washington Carver invented a process for making paints and stains from soybeans.	24	25 For thousands of years Asian countries have been eating soybeans and using by-products from its plant.	26	27
28	29	30	1	2	3	4

## July 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	29	30	1 One bushel of soybeans weighs 60 pounds.	2	3 During fall, the soybean plant turns brown, and the leaves drop off before they are harvested.	4
5	6 Biodiesel is made from soybeans and is good for our environment since it burns cleaner than regular diesel.	7	8 The livestock industry is the largest consumer of soy meal.	9	10	11
12	13	14 Each soybean plant grows 60-80 pods, and each pod has three beans inside.	15	16 One bushel of soybeans can produce one and a half gallons of biodiesel and 48 pounds of soybean meal.	17	18
19	20 During the Civil War, soybeans were used in place of coffee because real coffee was so scarce.	21	22 Soybean oil is the main edible oil used in the United States. Soybeans are the #1 ingredient in vegetable oil.	23	24 A soybean seed grows a little tail-like root called a radicle. The tail then becomes the main root, called a taproot.	25
26	27	28 Many countries use soybeans as a protein source rather than meat, eggs or cheese.	29	30	31	1

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