Name _____

George Washington Carver: A Scientist Who Changed Agriculture



George Washington Carver was a brilliant scientist, teacher, and inventor. He is best known for his work with peanuts, but he made many other important discoveries that helped farmers and improved agriculture.

Early Life and Education

George Washington Carver was born around 1864 in Diamond, Missouri. He was born into slavery, but after the Civil War, slavery ended, and he was raised by his former owners, Moses and Susan Carver. Even as a child, George was curious and loved learning about plants and nature.

At that time, African American children had limited access to education, but George was determined. He walked miles to attend school and eventually went to Iowa State Agricultural College, where he became the first Black student and later the first Black teacher at the school.

Discoveries and Achievements

Carver loved science and farming. He wanted to help poor farmers, especially those in the South, who relied only on cotton. Cotton was tough on the soil, so he encouraged farmers to rotate their crops by planting peanuts, sweet potatoes, and pecans instead. This helped the soil stay healthy.

Although Carver is often mistaken for inventing peanut butter, he did not. However, he did discover over 300 uses for peanuts, including making paint, soap, and fuel. He also found more than 100 uses for sweet potatoes, such as making rubber, glue, and flour.

Challenges and Hard Work

Carver faced many challenges in his life. Because he was African American, he faced racism and discrimination. Many schools did not allow Black students, and he had to fight for his education. Even when he became a scientist, some people did not take his work seriously. Despite these difficulties, he never gave up. He continued teaching and researching at Tuskegee Institute, where he helped farmers and students. He even met President Theodore Roosevelt and gave advice to farmers all over the country.

A Lasting Legacy

George Washington Carver's work changed agriculture forever. His ideas about crop rotation helped farmers grow better crops and protect the land. His discoveries with peanuts and sweet potatoes inspired many new inventions.

Carver believed in helping others, not making money. Even though he was offered a high salary for his peanut discoveries, he chose to continue teaching and helping farmers instead. He died on January 5, 1943, but his work continues to inspire scientists and farmers today.

© ReadingDuck.com