



Salt - Where does salt come from?

Fact

- In New Zealand the salt that we use on our food comes from the sea.
- Lake Grassmere, near Blenheim in the South Island, is a salt works.
- They pump seawater into huge shallow ponds and use the strong winds and hot summer days to evaporate the water so only the salt from the seawater is left.
- Then the salt is collected (or harvested) by huge machines.
- The salt is carefully cleaned and packed and then it's shipped off to supermarkets for you to buy.

Do you know

- When water evaporates the tiny bits of water separate and float away into the air.
- Overseas some salt is dug out of the ground (mined). They call this "rock salt" but the salt actually came from ancient oceans which dried up leaving the salt behind.
- Dominion Salt at Lake Grassmere can produce up to 65,000 tonnes of salt a year.
- People have been evaporating seawater to make salt for around 5,000 years.
- An adult's body has about 450grms of salt in it. The salt helps keep us healthy but if we get too much salt our bodies will flush some of it out.

Experiments you can do

If you have several different types of salt i.e. rock salt, Malden Sea Salt and iodised table salt at your house get a sample of them all otherwise make this a classroom experiment and get your classmates to bring in samples of the salt they use at home. Compare the colour, shape and size of the crystals of salt. You might need a magnifying glass to look at the crystals of iodised table salt.

Why do you think the iodised table salt crystals are so much smaller than the other salt crystals?

Other Investigations

What foods do you eat that have salt in them? Have a look at the ingredients on the back of the packet. Chips definitely have salt on them but what about the crackers and biscuits you like to eat?

Do you find you get thirsty when you eat something salty like fish and chips? Your body only needs so much salt in it. When it gets too much salt it needs to get rid of the excess so you drink to flush the salt out of your system.

Jokes

What kind of dog likes sea water?

A salty sea dog, ya lazy land lubber, oo ar!