

How Dogs Help People to Hunt Truffles

(Story words: mushrooms, soil, fetch)

Truffles are like mushrooms, but truffles grow under the ground. People love truffles and will pay a hundred dollars for even a small amount of truffles. A pound of truffles can be sold for more than a thousand dollars.

Truffles cannot be planted by farmers. Truffles grow in damp soil under oak trees and other trees. It is the job of the truffle hunter to find these truffles and bring them to market for sale.

For a long time, pigs were used to help truffle hunters find truffles. Pigs love the smell of truffles and can sniff a truffle that is even three feet under the ground. The smell of truffles is said to be very much like the smell of a female pig who is in heat and wants to mate. When pigs find truffles, they go wild with glee. They want to find and eat the truffles as fast as possible. A truffle hunter has to first

find a way to restrain his pig before he can dig up and harvest the truffles.

Dogs are different. They are more like partners for the truffle hunter. Truffle hunters train dogs to like the smell of truffles. They put truffles in an old sock and play fetch with pups. In this way, the dogs grow up with a nose for truffles.

When a dog sniffs truffles, the dog wants to find them but not eat them. The truffle hunter will give the dog a simple treat to say, "Good job." The dog will wait as the truffle hunter harvests the truffles. Truffle hunters leave a small bit of truffles under the ground so that more truffles may someday grow in that spot.