

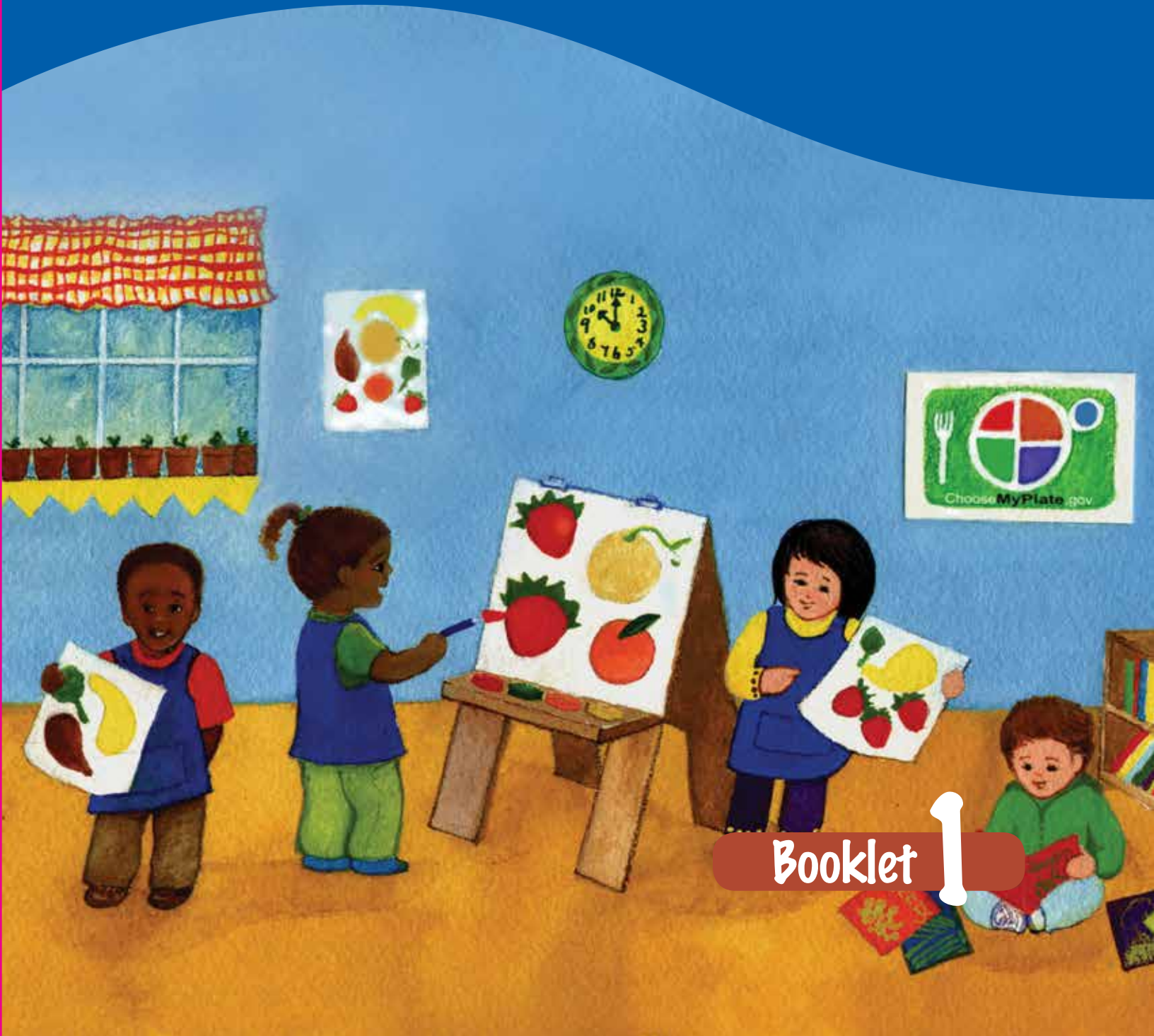


Grow It, Try It, Like It!

Preschool Fun With Fruits and Vegetables

The Basics:

Introduction and Resource Materials



Booklet

1

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CD Content

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CD 2. Grow It, Try It, Like It! Supplemental Materials

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- c. Food and Nutrition Fun for Children 2008
 1. Kids in the Kitchen
 2. Food Fun
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 5. Food From Around the World
 6. Physical Activity
 7. Online Booklists and Web sites
- d. Child Care and Nutrition Websites

Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate Poster

Introduction

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Welcome to...*Grow It, Try It, Like It!* Preschool Fun with Fruits and Vegetables

Grow It, Try It, Like It! is a garden-themed nutrition education kit that introduces new fruits and vegetables to preschool age children. *Grow It, Try It, Like It!* was funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Team Nutrition. Team Nutrition is an initiative of the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service to support the Child Nutrition Programs through training and technical assistance for foodservice, nutrition education for children and their caregivers, and school and community support for healthy eating and physical activity. The goal of Team Nutrition is to improve children's lifelong eating and physical activity habits through nutrition education based on the principles of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* and *MyPlate*. To learn more about Team Nutrition and nutrition in child care go to the Team Nutrition Web site at **teamnutrition.usda.gov** and the Healthy Meals Resource System Web site at **<http://fnic.nal.usda.gov>**

Because the routine food choices of young children are determined by their families and adult care givers, *Grow It, Try It, Like It!* links activities at child care centers with resources for use at home. Children are encouraged to try new fruits and vegetables again and again throughout this delightful resource. Children touch, smell, and taste new fruits and vegetables. Children also learn that fruits and vegetables are grown from plants or trees in the ground. Planting activities help children connect the delicious food choices at the table with the different growing conditions and plants that produce fruits and vegetables.

The *2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* list fruits and vegetables as foods to encourage for increased consumption as part of a healthy eating plan among the general population of the United States. Most Americans, including young children, need to eat a more colorful variety of fruits and vegetables (especially dried beans and peas, red and orange vegetables and dark green vegetables.) more often. Early childhood presents a unique opportunity to influence food acceptance and preferences that have the potential to influence health over the lifespan. Introducing a variety of fruits and vegetables in positive, engaging activities increases the likelihood that young children will taste and eat a wider variety of these health-promoting foods.

Consumption of vegetables and fruits is associated with reduced risk of many chronic diseases. This includes heart disease and some types of cancer. Eating fruits and vegetables is also linked to a healthy body weight and is one dietary strategy to help reduce rates of obesity. The increased incidence of overweight and obesity among Americans, including young children, is a growing national health concern.

Young children have a natural curiosity about the world around them and a genuine desire to learn. The activities in *Grow It, Try It, Like It!* tap into these characteristics of preschool children. The activities are designed with the needs of young children and child care providers and centers in mind. The pages are filled with engaging activities and easy-to-follow instructions. Central throughout the resource are three main concepts:

- Children can have fun while learning about nutrient and fiber-rich foods such as fruits and vegetables.
- Fruits and vegetables grow from plants or trees in the ground, are harvested, and are taken from the farm or orchard to grocery stores and farmers' markets.
- Fruits and vegetables can be prepared and eaten in many different and fun ways.

Grow It, Try It, Like It! is more than a resource for introducing fruits and vegetables to young children. *Grow It, Try It, Like It!* provides learning opportunities that contribute to each child's individual growth and development. Carefully crafted activities develop the entire child, body and mind, through:

- discussing ideas and developing vocabulary;
- enjoying physical movement;
- enhancing fine motor skills;
- reading children's literature;
- singing familiar music;
- viewing an entertaining and educational video;
- participating in hands-on science activities featuring plants; and
- creating individual art and crafts.

The learning activities engage children through all of their five senses—sight, touch, sound, smell, and taste. While learning about fruits and vegetables, children grow, develop, and learn about themselves. The activities help foster both an acceptance and enjoyment of new fruits and vegetables and an increase in self-confidence which can lead to higher self-esteem. The connections to home provide parents and guardians with ideas to further the growth and development of the entire family.

Grow It, Try It, Like It! is a natural addition to any child care program.

How to Use *Grow It, Try It, Like It!*

Grow It, Try It, Like It! is organized around a garden theme, based at the imaginary Tasty Acres Farm. The map on pages 6-7 shows the imaginary garden at Tasty Acres Farm. Make copies of this map for each child to color as the different units are covered. This is a great way to chart progress through the six booklets.

Grow It, Try It, Like It! consists of seven booklets. Booklet 1 contains the Introduction, Teaching Guide, Garden Art and Crafts and Tool Shed Resources, Cool Puppy Pup DVD and the Supplemental Materials CD. Booklets 2 through 7 contain the activities for the six fruit and vegetable lessons.

Booklet 1 acknowledges those who helped in the kit's development and provides a description of the kit and Team Nutrition. The introduction also describes how to use the kit and how the kit is organized.

Teaching Guide explains why preschool nutrition education is important and how activities in this kit can enhance young children's overall developmental learning. This section identifies children's physical, emotional, social, and intellectual activities during the preschool years, and how these might relate to food and nutrition. It explains what to expect of preschoolers and how to plan developmentally appropriate learning experiences. The Teaching Guide includes a section on strategies to encourage children to enjoy tasting new foods.

Garden Art and Crafts allow you to select an art and craft or two for each unit to help reinforce what the children have learned about fruits and vegetables. The overview page gives tips for creating successful projects and ideas for harvesting fun month after month. The Art and Crafts chart connects the art and crafts to the activities in the lessons.

Tool Shed Resources are materials designed to increase the variety of teaching opportunities within each lesson. Be sure to spend time reviewing the resources and select the ones that will work best for your child care program.

Introduction Letter to Parents. Sow the seeds of success! Send this letter home to families before starting the first unit.

Hand Washing/Polite Tasting Guides. Raise a crop of great hand washers and prune back the chances of choosy eaters with these guides. Send a copy home with the introduction letter to have families support the early growth of these two great habits.

Make a Mystery Box/Bag. Construct a simple mystery box or bag with these easy instructions.

Tips for Using a Mystery Box/Bag. This resource provides tips to make the most of the Mystery Box/Bag activity.

Ten Terrific Ways to Serve. This list of 10 ideas for serving each fruit and vegetable at meals and snacks makes menu planning a breeze.

A Harvest of Books. Reap the rewards of reading books about fruits and vegetables to children.

Green Thumb Guides. Easy-to-follow tips for growing plants practically anywhere. Look for these hints sprinkled throughout the unit lesson plan pages in addition to the Tool Shed resources.

Fruit and Vegetable Drawings and Blackline Masters. All the print resources necessary to produce fun-filled activities in each fruit and vegetable unit.

MyPlate Coloring Page. Give children a chance to color their very own MyPlate.

CD 1. Cool Puppy Pup DVD This entertaining and informative video features an opening segment that features all of the six fruits and vegetables and six additional segments, one for each fruit and vegetable at Tasty Acres Farm. Cool Puppy Pup, from the Tickle Your Appetite nutrition education resource, returns as host.

CD 2. The CD contains a PDF version of *Grow It, Try It, Like It!* Eat Smart. Play Hard.™ Education Materials including activity sheets and Power Panther Songs, and a list of Web sites containing information and valuable resources for the child care community.

Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate Poster This poster introduces healthful food and physical activity choices through MyPlate and the food groups.

Booklets 2 through 7 are named for each featured fruit and vegetable - Crookneck Squash Row, Spinach Lane, Sweet Potato Hill, Cantaloupe Corner, Peach Tree Orchard, and The Strawberry Patch.

What's Inside is the table of contents at the beginning of each booklet. It provides the pages where the lesson activities can be found.

Planning Chart gives ideas on how to fit all the activities, art, and crafts into a week's worth of fun. If time is limited, trim the activities to fit your schedule. One or two choices from Section A, an activity from Section B, the video from Section C, and the Section D activities combine nicely for a starter garden experience. The Words to Grow that appear throughout the lessons link the *Grow It, Try It, Like It!* lesson plans to other areas of the preschool curriculum.

Section A hands-on activities introduce the fruit or vegetable to the children through exploration and tasting.

Section B planting activities focus on how the fruit or vegetable grows.

When To Start the Planting Activities: Timing for Peak Season

Check with your local nurseries, orchards, and farms to plan field trips to see as many of the fruits and vegetables grown at Tasty Acres Farm as possible.

Generally speaking,

- Strawberries and spinach are spring and early summer crops;
- Cantaloupe, crookneck squash, and peaches are summer and late summer crops; and
- Sweet potatoes are early fall and fall crops.

Growing all or some of the fruits and vegetables in *Grow It, Try It, Like It!* provides children with fun-filled growing seasons. Check with local garden experts to determine the right month to start each plant indoors or for when small plant starts are available at nurseries.

Section C activities feature singing, dancing, reading, and an educational video.

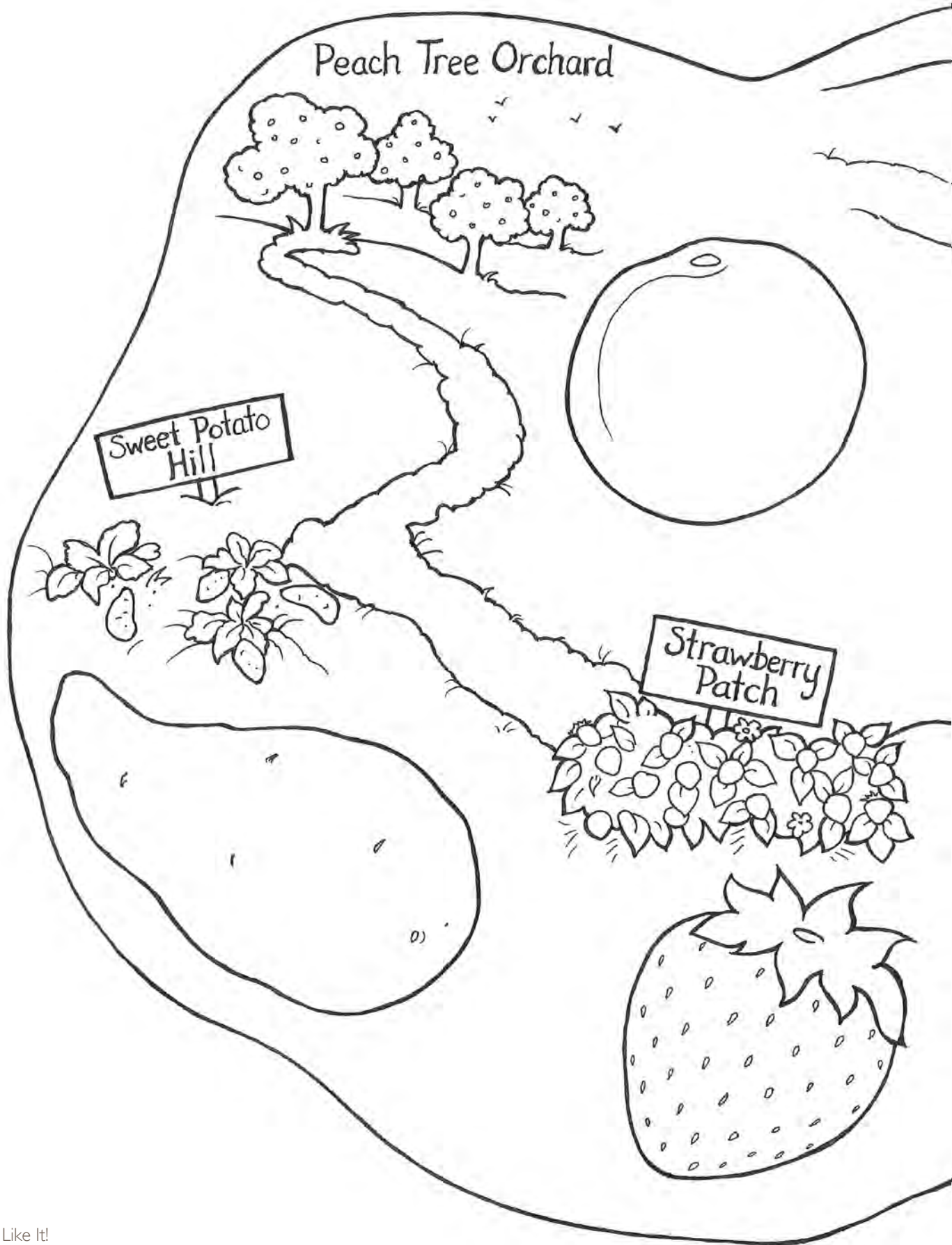
Section D nutrition education activities include an introduction to *MyPlate*, the food groups and a physical activity to try with the children. Tasting opportunities reinforce that each fruit or vegetable can be eaten in a variety of ways.

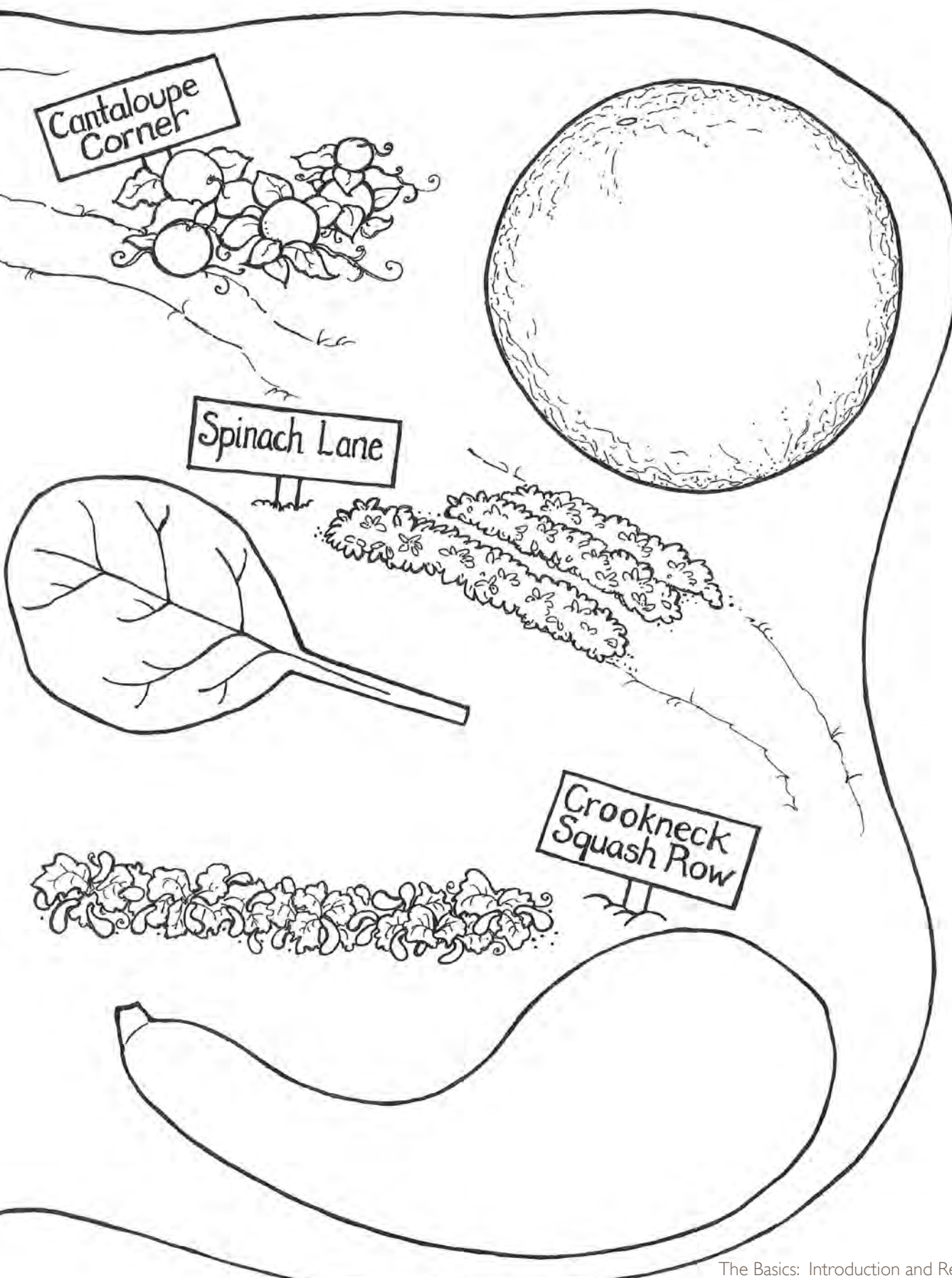
Section Components:

- **Activity Pages** are designed to provide easy-to-read sections and are sprinkled with helpful tips. Designed to match the developmental abilities of most 3- to 5-year-olds, the activities modify easily to meet children's skills and abilities.
- **Objectives** are listed at the beginning of each activity for easy reference.
- **Materials Needed** and **What to Do Ahead of Time** provide a checklist of items needed and helpful hints for organizing time and materials.
- **Activity Connections to Snack or Mealtime** helps grow great tasters by adding more tasting options throughout the day. When food tasting is not part of the activity, use these suggestions for snack or mealtime as follow-up.
- **The Ten Terrific Ways To Serve** resource in the Tool Shed bursts with flavorful, easy ways to offer the fruits and vegetables through meals and snacks.
- **Words To Grow** help plant the seeds of a varied vocabulary. Children grow many different skills and abilities through these units.

Growing at Home Materials keep parents informed about what their children are learning during the day. Each set promotes continued growth at home through child/parent centered activities and recipes.

Map of the Garden at Tasty Acres Farm





Teaching Guide

Nutrition Education Guide: Providing Positive Food and Nutrition Experiences for Preschool Children Ages 3 to 5

Why a Preschool Nutrition Education Program Is Important

Early Nutrition and Food Experiences Have Lasting Impact

Preschool children have a healthy curiosity about themselves, their growing bodies, and the world around them. This curiosity leads to the early development of food habits, preferences, and attitudes that will carry them through to adulthood. Therefore, it is important to provide a variety of positive food experiences at an early age.

Seize this opportunity for learning! Children are fascinated by activities that involve them and provide information about their world. Helping them discover where food comes from: how it grows; how it looks, tastes, feels, sounds, and smells; and even how it changes when prepared, opens their minds to the variety of food choices. For instance, letting children help or watch as sweet potatoes are mashed while asking “where do sweet potatoes come from?” stimulates their natural curiosity and involvement with food.

Helping young children grow and develop new skills is one of the most rewarding aspects of working with this age group. Preschool children (ages 3 to 5) are growing at an amazing rate—physically, emotionally, intellectually, and socially. Their bodies and learning comprehension are continually developing as they begin to formulate attitudes, beliefs, and tastes that will last their entire lives.

The process of discovering new foods, learning about where food comes from, and preparing food with others provides many valuable learning experiences. Incorporating food and food-related activities into nutrition education helps preschool children develop a positive relationship with food and nutrition. The early nutrition adventures described in this kit can influence children’s lifelong food habits and attitudes about food.

Food-Related Activities Enhance Overall Developmental Learning

Children between the ages of 3 and 5 are growing and developing almost every part of their person, including small and gross motor skills, ability to learn and understand, and self-esteem. Well-planned activities can enhance this process by providing age-appropriate experiences that give children an opportunity to exercise new skills and tackle new challenges.

Encourage the child to:

Develop small motor skills by helping children:

- Hold and manipulate utensils;
- Pour, stir, and shake;
- Put things in the “right” place; and
- Sort, glue and paste, and do other tasks.

Learn simple math skills through:

- Measuring;
- Counting; and
- Following steps and sequence activities such as those required in planting seeds and caring for plants, playing games with sequential steps, or preparing a snack together.

Learn science concepts by:

- Observing that seeds need soil, water, sunlight, and time to grow into plants.
- Have children observe how a seedling develops and predict how large the plant will grow.

Learn food safety habits and cleanliness by:

- Talking to the children about washing their hands for 20 seconds and stress the importance of hand washing before eating or working with food; and
- Letting children see foods being washed with water before eating or preparing.

Develop self-esteem and independence by:

- Talking with children about their preferences and the characteristics of a variety of foods such as color, shape, texture, taste, etc.

Nutrition Education Activities in Child Care

Nutrition education activities for preschool children should:

- Encourage children to eat a greater variety of foods for better nutrition.
- Encourage children to use all of their senses to explore different foods.
- Help introduce children to the basic sources of foods such as animals and plants.

The process of discovering new foods, learning about where food comes from, and preparing food with others provides many valuable learning experiences.

Ready To Learn: Planning Developmentally Appropriate Learning Experiences

The activities in this kit are designed to be fun and educational for children ages 3 to 5 years-old, taking into consideration the sometimes wide span in motor and language skills among these ages. The activities are not competitive and are achievable so that all children learn and none can fail. In addition, the activities take into account a variety of skill levels within the range of abilities of children in this age group.

What to expect of preschool children...and how adults can provide appropriate and positive food and nutrition experiences.

Activities with young children are both a delight and a challenge. These general principles will help ensure success:

- Keep ideas simple and use a single concept at a time.
- Provide activities that are concrete and relevant to children's daily lives and the world around them.
- Plan activities and use age-appropriate language for young children.

Children reach predictable milestones throughout their early development. Knowledge of these milestones helps in planning experiences that meet children's needs and stimulate learning in all developmental areas. The table on the following page summarizes children's physical, emotional, social, and intellectual abilities from 3 to 5 years-old. It explains how these activities might relate to food and nutrition.

Children reach predictable milestones throughout their early development. Knowledge of these milestones helps in planning experiences that meet children's needs and stimulate learning in all developmental areas.

Developmental Milestones	Three- to Four-Year Olds	Four- to Five-Year Olds
Physical Gross Motor Skills and Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore freely. • Move from toddling to running smoothly. • Jump, stand on one foot. • Catch ball or bean bag. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate freely. • Run with greater control. • Jump and hop with more coordination. • Throw ball with greater coordination and distance.
Fine Motor Skills and Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snip edges of paper with blunt scissors. • Fold paper and manipulate Play Dough. • Scribble with crayons, paint brushes, and markers with some control. • Manipulate puzzle pieces, put pegs in board, and string beads. • Eat with help. Prefer eating finger foods. Drink from cups. (Note: spills are normal.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can cut with blunt scissors. • Manipulate small objects; move cursor into desired place on computer screen. • Begin to print names, create drawings or collages. • Use smaller and greater number of puzzle pieces. • Eat with less mess and spills. Use fork and spoon. Manipulate packages and containers.
Self-Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select activities from limited choices. • Want to "do it" themselves. • Often able to separate from Mother. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate own activities. • Use self-help skills (take care of own needs). • Willing to move into new situations.
Relating to Other Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in solitary as well as parallel play. • Begin to share and take turns. • Help other children in need. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasingly sociable. Play cooperatively for sustained periods. • Play interactively with increased imagination. Share and cooperate well. • Use compromise to solve conflicts with others.
Play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore and experiment with new ways to do things. • Play is dramatic and solitary; also model grown-up activities (play house, grocery shopping). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use objects more imaginatively. • Interact with peers in imaginative play in and outside the home. • Expand play to world around them. Play for longer periods with greater detail.
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoy frequent talking. Speak in 3- to 5-word sentences. • Understand language ("receptive") long before speaking ("expressive language"). • Describe color, shape, and texture of food, if present. • Enjoy listening to stories. • Enjoy hearing others sing. Clap; may sing along. • Imitate adults and other children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask "how" and "why" questions. • Play with language (rhyme, make up verse and song). • Describe color, shape, and texture of food in greater detail. • Speak clearly and express selves to others about experiences, interests, and needs. • Enjoy singing. • Learn new words easily by imitating.
Learning Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name, identify, and sort objects. • Learn by doing; need concrete experiences, understand only what they can see, smell, taste, and touch and other concrete acts. • Discriminate different sounds. • Match like objects. • Understand relationship between written and spoken words. • React to entire stimulus rather than individual parts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop sequencing and ordering of objects and events. • Also learn by doing. Apply new information to new experiences. • Begin to distinguish letter sounds. • Distinguish greater visual detail. • Have longer attention span. • Can follow more complex directions.
Eating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hesitate trying new foods. • Verbalize food preferences. • Eat independently with some help. • Easily distracted in groups. • Eat using mostly fingers. Use spoon; drink from cup. Ask adults for more helpings of food and drink when desired. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to experiment with new foods. Take more than they can eat. • Initiate new food selections. • Require less help at the table. • Eat more comfortably in groups. Able to concentrate. • Use fork and spoon. Pour own juice.

What To Expect of Preschool Children Emotionally

Children ages 3 to 5 are sometimes shy and withdrawn. This is because they are still very self-focused. Their ability to do things for themselves results in a desire to work independently. It is important to gauge your expectations of these children appropriately so that you do not expect more than is realistic. Young children often test the limits and will push to see how far they can go. Child care providers should set clear limits and firm boundaries.

Children are:

- increasingly self-aware and self-focused;
- easily discouraged;
- enjoy praise;
- developing self-esteem;
- gaining independence;
- beginning to accept responsibility;
- eager to actively participate in things that interest them;
- proud of individual and group achievements; and
- sometimes unable to express their needs and feelings with words.

Enchanted with their growing abilities, preschoolers test these skills and strive to see what they can do that they couldn't do before.

What Child Care Providers Can Do:

- **Encourage children to complete an activity individually.** When children are actively involved they are more likely to remain interested and take pride in the finished product, and self-esteem is enhanced. The activities described in this kit all provide an opportunity for a child to begin and complete a task, gaining a sense of accomplishment. When you develop new activities, be sure to build in this type of reward and plan so that there is enough time available for children to complete the activity.
- **Let children take responsibility; divide up small tasks.** For example, each child might choose a different vegetable to add to a salad or contribute a picture to the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster.
- **Provide “I made it myself” or “I tried it” stickers or buttons.** This gives children concrete and public recognition of their achievement.

What To Expect of Preschool Children Physically

Young children are in the process of developing both their gross and fine motor skills. Enchanted with their growing abilities, preschoolers test these skills and strive to see what they can do that they couldn't do before. Related to this is an excitement about learning about their bodies and becoming aware of different body parts and what they can do with them. For instance, as they learn about the different parts of their faces, they will be interested in how different features (eyes, nose, mouth) help them to eat and enjoy food.

Children are:

- testing their rapidly improving physical skills;
- refining and expanding their gross motor skills such as hopping, skipping, and jumping;
- continuing to develop their fine motor skills such as drawing, coloring, using scissors; and
- becoming more aware of their bodies.

What Child Care Providers Can Do:

- **Plan activities that require a range of motor skills.** Remember - each child has individual qualities! Regardless of age, his/her motor development might vary. This is a great opportunity for teamwork. One child might choose pictures of fruits and vegetables while another child might be in charge of pasting pictures onto a healthy food poster.
- **Try these small motor skill-related guidelines:**
 - **For beginners:** pouring water, juice, or milk; peeling a banana; mixing foods in a bowl; tearing lettuce; watering plants; sorting pictures; putting things in containers; coloring, folding, etc.
 - **As they develop:** spreading cream cheese; squeezing an orange for its juice; planting seeds; pasting or drawing pictures related to food on paper, etc.
- **Plan activities that foster large muscle and gross motor skill development.** Games that involve physical activity (such as skipping, hopping, jumping, or other body movements) done to music are favorites with children ages 3 to 5.

What to Expect of Preschool Children Socially

Young children are very accepting of other children, which is helpful in creating group activities. Their ability to interact with other children will depend upon the amount of experience they have had in groups, how naturally shy they are, and their mood on any given day. Younger children will tend to prefer to work independently. As they get a bit older they will work more collaboratively with other children.

Children are:

- becoming interested in the similarities and differences between objects;
- becoming interested in the similarities and differences between people;
- developing interactive skills; and
- beginning to work cooperatively in groups.

Young children are very accepting of other children, which is helpful in creating group activities.

What Child Care Providers Can Do

- **Plan activities that encourage children to work together.**

Examples include group tasting, creating a salad bar together, and having one child choose a picture and another paste it to a *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster. These all help develop social skills.

- **Provide an opportunity for children to care for something.** For example, when conducting a planting activity with seeds, children will learn about how important care and nurturing are for the development of the plant. Once the seeds are planted (using small motor skills), explain to children that they will need to take care of their growing plants. Explain that watering and caring for a plant makes it grow healthy and strong (just as when they themselves eat well and are cared for, they grow healthy and strong).

- **Allow time for groups of children to talk about foods.** Children can share experiences while an adult records their findings on a large pad of paper to share with their parents or other children. Talk about interesting foods such as a pineapple, or explore the inside/outside of a cantaloupe, pumpkin, or coconut.

- **If time permits, let children clean up together.** Cleaning is an important and necessary part of learning about food, and it helps children feel good about themselves. This concept is important for all projects, including crafts, planting, and food activities.

The most important thing about young children's capacity to learn is that they learn by doing; they must have concrete, hands-on experience to learn.

What To Expect of Preschool Children Intellectually

The most important thing about young children's capacity to learn is that they learn by doing; they *must* have concrete, hands-on experience to learn. They are simply unable to grasp abstract concepts and ideas. Further, it is difficult for them to draw inferences and leap from one idea to the next. However, their imaginations are active and can be engaged to help provide a learning experience. For example, dramatic play and imaginary games are popular and can be used to teach nutrition principles.

The chance to taste a food many times helps young children to grow into adventurous eaters.

Children are:

- Best able to learn by doing. They benefit from interactive, hands-on activities. Concrete activities help engage their imaginations and also help them to retain information.
- Interested in written and spoken language. They are becoming curious about letters and words.
- Interested in using “grown-up” things (i.e., real garden tools, utensils) or “pretend” grown-up things like child-size shopping carts, pretend money, gardening gloves, shopping carts, etc.
- Naturally interested in shapes, textures, smells, tastes, sounds, and colors. They like to sort and characterize.
- Increasingly better able to pay attention for longer spans of time as they get older. Four- and five-year-olds can stay focused longer than 3-year-olds.
- Becoming intensely involved in activities that capture their imagination, such as stories and dramatic play. Educational activities that engage their imagination will have more impact on learning and information retention.

What Child Care Providers Can Do:

- **Provide opportunities for dramatic play** such as play-acting, shopping in an imaginary or pretend grocery store, singing and dancing, and other imaginative activities.
- **Read stories** about where food comes from.
- **Encourage the emergent reader** by using pictures with words of foods from all of the food groups; use visual displays with associated words.
- **Provide opportunities (as much as possible) to experience real food** so children have concrete experiences of taste, touch, smell, etc.

Growing Great Tasters: Strategies for Food Tasting

Food tasting is deeply rooted into the activities of this resource. For some activities, the food tasting is suggested to occur at snack or mealtime rather than as part of the activity. The chance to taste a food many times helps young children to grow into adventurous eaters. Trying new foods may lead to better health and nutrition. Use the tips below to increase the number of great tasters your child care center creates.

Prepare To Grow. Involve the children and all their senses in exploring the fruit or vegetable first by using the Mystery Box/Bag, A Look Inside Tasting activities. Children are more likely to try a food they have explored.

Sow Seeds of Success. Teach the children the guidelines for polite food tasting (see Tool Shed Resources, page 44). Children will be more willing to try a food if they know it is okay to remove something they do not like rather than swallow. Never force a child to eat a food. Model how to politely decline to taste a food or use a napkin to remove the food from the mouth.

Seed and Re-seed. Plan to offer the food many different times. Studies show some children need to be offered a food up to five times before they will taste it. In addition, the food may need to be offered more than a dozen times before a child will choose to eat it at a meal. Do not give up - some seeds take longer to grow than others.

Start in Fertile Ground. Offer new foods first to children willing to try new things. Watching a peer eat a food can help the most reluctant eater bud into a food taster.

Be Still, Little Seed. For safety's sake, have the children eat while seated, not walking around. Moving while eating can increase the risk of choking.

Offer Bites, Not Bushels. Offer small tastes of a food at first. A child can be overwhelmed by a large portion and may even refuse to try a food, fearing it must be finished. Portions need to be small enough for small mouths and large enough so a child has to chew the food. It is safer to have a piece that cannot be swallowed whole. Be prepared to offer more if a child desires to taste again.

Know the Growing Season. Fresh fruits and vegetables in season usually taste best and are less expensive. Produce may be available year round; peak flavor and value frequently coincide with the growing season. Frozen or canned foods offer an option for fruits and vegetables out of season. These options are also great choices for comparing to fresh.

Growing at Home Materials. Encourage parents to make the recipes in the Growing at Home activities with their children. When families prepare and eat foods together, young children are encouraged to try more foods. Let the parents know how much the children enjoyed tasting the food during the day.

Produce may be available year round; peak flavor and value frequently coincide with the growing season.

Garden Art and Crafts

Garden Art and Crafts add wheelbarrows of fun to the fruit and vegetable units of *Grow It, Try It, Like It!* Young, budding artists enjoy making these produce-focused projects. The more time children spend engaged with fruits and vegetables, the more they will remember about produce.

Be sure to check each unit's Plan for Organizing the Activities section for ways to work the art and crafts into the activities you plan. Each art and craft is written with a specific fruit or vegetable example. Branch out and get creative! Any fruit or vegetable can be used as a theme for a great art or craft project. Connections to Garden Art and Crafts are listed on several activities in each unit; look for these ideas to expand the art and craft activities into daily lessons.

Little hands and fingers develop strength and fine art skills at different rates. Feel free to trim back the activities to match the skills of the children. A helpful adult hand may be all that is needed to stem the frustration budding artists can experience as they try new tasks. Use the resources in the Tool Shed Resources to create stencils, sponges, and other hand tools for children to use. For example, copy images of fruits and vegetables onto crack-and-peel paper. Attach the paper to foam sheets, sturdy cardboard, or thin plastic. Trim around the edges to create a set of models to trace.

Use the right tool for the job. The activities suggest different types of art supplies from crayons to pastel paints. Spend some time at a local art and craft store to identify the best tools, especially for young children. Use the varieties that you prefer.

Keep costs contained. Create a storage bin of supplies (e.g., cardboard, styrofoam trays, paper bags, newspapers and magazines, envelopes, outdated stationary) to keep costs low. Encourage families to contribute items.

Little hands and fingers develop strength and fine art skills at different rates. Feel free to trim back the activities to match the skills of the children.



Garden Art and Crafts are great rainy day activities. Keep a supply of items handy for days when the weather changes your outdoor plans. Reinforce what the children have learned about fruits and vegetables throughout the year. View segments from the Cool Puppy Pup video to refresh memories.

Gifts from the garden are a snap with Garden Art and Crafts. Garden Art and Craft Activities are shown in italics. Develop hybrid gifts by combining different projects. Below are some examples:

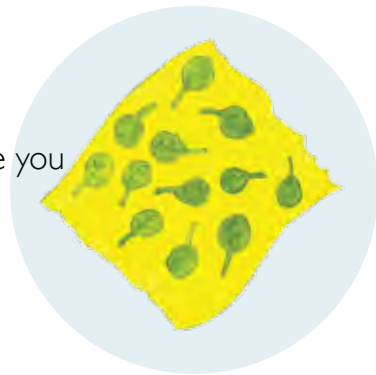
Keep a supply of items handy for days when the weather changes your outdoor plans.

- Put a bag of potting soil and a seed circle (see *Make a Seed Tape*, the Tool Shed Resources, page 54) in a Painted Pot. Add a personalized Row Marker and Garden Scene Note Card. Place in a Decorated Garden Bag or wrap in Stamped Wrapping Paper.
- Combine a set of Garden Gloves, a Garden Stone, and seed tape or a small plant with growing instructions on a Row Marker. Place in a Decorated Garden Bag or wrap in Stamped Wrapping Paper.
- Package Produce Placemats and a cookbook compiled from the Growing at Home recipes for a kitchen gift.



Grow Your Own Great Ideas!

Read this bountiful list of Garden Art and Crafts. Let the ideas germinate while you plan your lessons from *Grow It, Try It, Like It!*



Garden Art:

Decorated Garden Bags

Create paper bags with images of fruits and vegetables, perfect to send a seedling home or carry a special snack.

Garden Bookmarks

Mark favorite stories and recipes with produce-illustrated bookmarks.

Produce Placemats

Set a colorful table with placemats promoting fruits and vegetables.

Garden Scene Note Cards

Cultivate a desire to write with hand-made note cards from the garden.

Tasty Acres Mobile

Set into motion great foods—fruits and vegetables!

Stamped Wrapping Paper

Give presents a special look or make a bushel basket full for gift giving.



Garden Crafts:

Row Markers

Perk up any garden spot or container with markers to show what is yet to grow.

Seed Art

Create an original design with seeds and more.

Painted Pots

Decorate clay pots for use in a container garden or for gift giving.

Garden Stones

Step into the wonderful world of plants with personalized garden stones.

Garden Gloves



Create excitement for young green thumbs with garden gloves of their very own! These gloves make a great handmade gift to cherish.

Make a Scarecrow



Celebrate the harvest of learning by making a very special garden friend.



Art and Crafts Chart

Garden Art or Craft Activity Name	Fruit or Vegetable Activities	Fruit Activities	Vegetable Activities
<p>Art Decorated Garden Bag</p>	<p>Cantaloupe B2 or B3 See Garden Art and Craft Decorated Garden Bag, page 27, for a creative connection to this activity.</p>	<p>Strawberry A3 Make extra chocolate strawberries to send home in a Strawberry Decorated Garden Bag. See Strawberry Growing at Home #1.</p>	<p>Crookneck Squash B2 Send home the crookneck squash seeds each child planted in a cup in a Crookneck Squash-Decorated Garden Bag. See Garden Art and Crafts, page 27.</p>
<p>Art Garden Bookmark</p> 	<p>Crookneck Squash A1 or A2 See Garden Art and Craft Garden Bookmark, page 28, for a creative connection to this activity.</p>	<p>Cantaloupe A1 or A2 Make Cantaloupe-Decorated Garden Bookmarks. Glue cantaloupe seeds in a design on the bookmark. See Garden Art and Crafts, page 28.</p>	<p>Spinach A1 or A2 Make Spinach-Decorated Garden Bookmarks. Trace around a baby spinach leaf on a bookmark. Then, hold the leaf over the image with a piece of plastic wrap and rub the plastic over the leaf with the round end of wooden craft stick. See Garden Art and Crafts, page 28.</p>
<p>Art Produce Placemats</p> 	<p>Peach D2 See Garden Art and Craft Produce Placemats, page 29, for a creative connection to this activity.</p>	<p>Strawberry B3 Use the Pretend Strawberry Plant to decorate a Produce Placemat. Have the children add drawings of their favorite strawberry recipes. Laminate and use this placemat to review how strawberries grow and how we enjoy strawberries. See Garden Art and Crafts, page 29.</p>	<p>Sweet Potato B3 Use the Pretend Sweet Potato Plant to decorate a Produce Placemat. Use the individual plant option and attach the finished plant to one side of the placemat. Have the children add drawings of their favorite sweet potato recipes on the reverse side of the placemat. Laminate and use this reversible placemat to review how sweet potatoes grow and how we enjoy sweet potatoes. See Garden Art and Crafts, page 29.</p>

Garden Art or Craft Activity Name	Fruit or Vegetable Activities	Fruit Activities	Vegetable Activities
<p>Art Garden Scene Note Cards</p> 	<p>Spinach B1 See Garden Art and Craft Garden Scene Note Cards, page 30, for a creative connection to this activity.</p>	<p>Cantaloupe B1, B2 or B3 Send a 'Can I Tell You What I Learned Today?' card featuring drawings of cantaloupe to parents or grandparents. See Garden Art and Crafts, page 30.</p>	<p>Crookneck Squash B2 or B3 Create a Crookneck Squash notecard to mail to a family member living in another town. Mail with a few seeds and growing instructions. See Garden Art and Crafts, page 30.</p>
<p>Art Tasty Acres Mobile</p> 	<p>Strawberry C1 or C2 See Garden Art and Craft Tasty Acres Mobile, page 31, for a creative connection to this activity.</p>	<p>Peach B3, C1 or C2 Get double duty from the Make a Pretend Peach Tree activity—save the large peach to use in the mobile and add all the fruits and vegetables featured at Tasty Acres Farm. See Garden Art and Crafts, page 31.</p>	<p>Sweet Potato C1 or C2 Create a Sweet Potato Mobile; decorate the circles of the mobile with drawings of how sweet potatoes grow and favorite sweet potato recipes. See Garden Art and Crafts, page 31.</p>
<p>Art Stamped Wrapping Paper</p> 	<p>Sweet Potato A1 or A2 See Garden Art and Craft Stamped Wrapping Paper, page 33, for a creative connection to this activity.</p>	<p>Peach (pit) A1 or A2 Save the pits from the Peach activities and use the pits to make Stamped Wrapping Paper. For a sparkling change, dip the pit in school glue, stamp on a Garden Scene Note Card, and sprinkle with glitter for a uniquely designed greeting card. See Garden Art and Crafts, page 32.</p>	<p>Spinach A1 or A2 Coat spinach leaves with different colors of green paint and press the leaves to paper. Create interesting designs. If desired, press leaves on smaller sheets of art paper to create a spinach art masterpiece to frame and display. See Garden Art and Crafts, page 32.</p>
<p>Craft Row Markers</p> 	<p>Cantaloupe B2 or B3 See Garden Art and Craft Row Markers, page 33, for a creative connection to this activity.</p>	<p>Strawberry B2 or B3 Create a Row Marker for strawberry plants. See Garden Art and Crafts, page 33.</p>	<p>Crookneck Squash B2 or B3 Create a Row Marker for crookneck squash plants. See Garden Art and Crafts, page 33.</p>
<p>Craft Seed Art</p>	<p>Crookneck Squash B1 See Garden Art and Craft Seed Art, page 34, for a creative connection to this activity.</p>	<p>Peach A1, A2 or B1 Decorate a peach shape with yellow, orange, and red seeds. Try popcorn and millet for yellow dye, pumpkin seeds for orange, and use red lentils for red. See Garden Art and Crafts, page 34.</p>	<p>Sweet Potato B1 Decorate a sweet potato shape with seeds. Use small white beans to show the eyes or buds of the potato. See Garden Art and Crafts, page 34.</p>

Garden Art or Craft Activity Name	Fruit or Vegetable Activities	Fruit Activities	Vegetable Activities
<p>Craft Painted Pots</p> 	<p>Peach B1 or B2 See Garden Art and Crafts Painted Pots, page 35, for a creative connection to this activity. Fill the pot with peach-scented potpourri for a unique gift.</p>	<p>Strawberry B2 Decorate a strawberry jar or large pot and plant strawberry starts in your custom creation. See Garden Art and Crafts, page 35. Or use current wording on A2 to connect this craft to the Strawberry Unit.</p>	<p>Spinach B3 Make a seed disc (see Make a Seed Tape, Tool Shed Resources, page 60) with spinach seeds; paint a pot with spinach leaves and the word spinach; add a bag of potting soil, and give as a Mother's or Father's day gift. See Garden Art and Crafts, page 35.</p>
<p>Craft Garden Stones</p>	<p>Spinach B2 or B3 See Garden Art and Crafts Garden Stones, page 36, for a creative connection to this activity.</p>	<p>Peach B3 Make Peach Garden Stones; place the stones at the base of the Pretend Peach Tree. See Garden Art and Crafts, page 36.</p>	<p>Sweet Potato A1, A2, or B1 Make a Sweet Potato Garden Stone; find stones similar in shape to sweet potatoes and decorate. See Garden Art and Crafts, page 36.</p>
<p>Craft Gardening Gloves</p> 	<p>Strawberry A1 or A2 See Garden Art and Crafts Gardening Gloves, page 37, for a creative connection to this activity.</p>	<p>Cantaloupe B2 or B3 Make Gardening Gloves with cantaloupe shapes an easy shape for little hands to draw and color. See Garden Art and Crafts, page 37.</p>	<p>Crookneck Squash B2 or B3 Make Gardening Gloves for growing crookneck squash—the squash stems and leaves are prickly and gloves can protect hands. See Garden Art and Crafts, page 37.</p>
<p>Craft Make a Scarecrow</p>	<p>Sweet Potato C1 or C2 See Garden Art and Crafts Make a Scarecrow, page 38, for a creative connection to this activity.</p>	<p>Cantaloupe C1 or C2 Decorate the scarecrow's pants with cantaloupe shapes and color with fabric paint. See Garden Art and Crafts, page 38.</p>	<p>Crookneck Squash C1 or C2 Cut a small crookneck squash in half so that the flat, cut surface can be dipped in paint while holding on to the outer portion of the squash. Stamp the curvy shape of crookneck squash on the clothing of the scarecrow in water proof paints. See Garden Art and Crafts, page 38.</p>

Decorated Garden Bags

Have the children draw the shape and color of fruits and/or vegetables on paper bags.

Activity Length: 15 minutes

The Activity

This example uses cantaloupe as the featured fruit.

- Seat the children at the table(s) with supplies.
- Show a picture of a cantaloupe to the children.
- Talk about how a cantaloupe looks different on the outside from the inside.
 - ▶ Review the shape (round) and colors (outside/tan with green lines and inside/orange with tan seeds) of a cantaloupe.
- Give each child a paper lunch bag and explain that they are going to decorate the bag with drawings of cantaloupe.
- Have the children draw at least one large circle on their lunch bag.
 - ▶ Instruct them to color the circle like a cantaloupe. Some children may choose to color the outside of the cantaloupe; some may depict the inside.
 - ▶ Children can also choose to draw and color pieces or wedges of cantaloupe.
- Have the children wash their hands for snack or mealtime.
- While tasting the featured fruit or vegetable at snack or mealtime, have the children think of uses for the Decorated Garden Bags just created.
- Some ideas include:
 - ▶ Take it to a farmers' market, purchase a cantaloupe, and carry it home in the bag;
 - ▶ Give to a family member to take a cantaloupe snack to work or to a picnic;
 - ▶ Use as a gift bag for a present; and
 - ▶ Other ideas the children suggest.

Note: Use the sack for the child to take home the cantaloupe seed planted in a cup (Activity B2) or part of a cantaloupe seed tape (Activity B3).

Materials Needed

- Paper lunch bags—preferably white or with a panel of plain white paper, the size of the flat bag, securely attached to the front of the bag
- Markers, crayons, and/or colored pencils
- Drawings of fruits and/or vegetables (see Tool Shed Resources, pages 61-72)
- Fruit or vegetable to taste

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Organize materials.
- Plan to serve the fruit or vegetable in some form at snack or mealtime (see Ten Terrific Ways..., Tool Shed Resources, pages 48-49).

Materials Needed

- White posterboard or sturdy paper cut into 3" x 9" strips
- Markers, crayons, pencils, and/or colored pencils
- Drawings of a fruit or vegetable (see Tool Shed Resources, pages 61-72)
- Laminating material for each bookmark

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Organize materials.
- Plan to serve the fruit or vegetable in some form at snack or mealtime (see Ten Terrific Ways..., Tool Shed Resources, pages 48-49).

Garden Bookmarks

Have the children draw and color fruits or vegetables on bookmarks.

Activity Length: 15 minutes

The Activity

This example uses crookneck squash as the featured vegetable.

- Have each child seated at a table(s).
- Show a picture of a crookneck squash to the children.
 - ▶ Talk about how a crookneck squash looks different on the outside from the inside.
 - ▶ Review the shape (curved) and colors (light yellow outside and white inside with white seeds) of a crookneck squash.
- Give each child a paper strip. Ask them to pick up a pencil. Show them how to make a curve with their index finger. Show them how to turn their wrist to put the curved finger flat on their strip of paper (see drawing below to help explain). Explain that each child is going to trace around the curve of their finger to make the curve of a crookneck squash and then lift their hand and draw the letter U or a loop to make the rest of the squash.



- Tell the children to:
 - ▶ Color the shape like a crookneck squash.
 - ▶ Decide to color the outside or inside of the crookneck squash.
 - ▶ Draw more crookneck squash of different sizes on the bookmark, if desired.
- Have each child write their name on the back of the bookmarks. Collect and laminate the finished bookmarks.
- Have the children wash hands for snack or mealtime.

Activity Connection to Snack or Mealtime

While tasting the fruit or vegetable at snack or mealtime, have the children think of uses for the bookmarks they just created. Use the opportunity to emphasize the importance of reading.

- Some ideas include:
 - ▶ Use to mark favorite recipes in a cookbook;
 - ▶ Give to a family member with a book;
 - ▶ Use as a bookmark themselves;
 - ▶ Other ideas the children suggest.

Produce Placemats

Have the children draw and color fruits or vegetables on a placemat.

Activity Length: 15-20 minutes

The Activity

This example uses a peach as the featured fruit.

- Have each child seated at a table(s).
- Show a picture of a peach to the children.
 - ▶ Talk with the children about how a peach looks different on the outside from the inside.
 - ▶ Review the shape (round) and colors of a peach (outside/ yellow to orange to red, inside/creamy yellow with a little bit of red).
- Give each child paper. Explain that they are going to decorate a placemat with drawings of a peach or peaches.
- Ask the children to draw at least one large circle on their placemat. Instruct the children to color the circle like a peach.
- Some children may choose to color the outside of the peach; some may depict the inside. Children may also choose to draw peach slices or a peach tree.
- Have each child write his/her name on the placemat.
- Collect the finished placemats and laminate.
- Have the children wash their hands for snack or mealtime.

Activity Connection to Snack or Mealtime

While tasting the fruit or vegetable at snack or mealtime, have the children think of uses for the placemats they just created.

- Some ideas include:
 - ▶ Use it at the center or preschool;
 - ▶ Give it to a family member;
 - ▶ Use it at home;
 - ▶ Other ideas the children suggest.

Materials Needed

- 11" x 14" white posterboard or construction-weight paper, one per child
- Markers, crayons, and/or colored pencils
- Drawings of fruit or vegetables (see Tool Shed Resources, pages 61-72)

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Organize materials.
- Arrange to laminate the finished placemats.
- Plan to serve the fruit or vegetable in some form at snack or mealtime (see Ten Terrific Ways..., Tool Shed Resources, pages 48-49).

Materials Needed

- Plain white note cards/ envelopes
- Slips of paper printed with “This Card Hand Made by”
- Paper clips, one per child
- Markers, crayons, and/or colored pencils
- Drawings of fruit or vegetables (see Tool Shed Resources, pages 61-72)

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Organize materials.
- Plan to serve the fruit or vegetable in some form at snack or mealtime (see Ten Terrific Ways..., Tool Shed Resources, pages 48-49).

Garden Scene Note Cards

Have the children draw and color fruit or vegetable images on note cards.

Activity Length: 15 minutes

The Activity

This example uses spinach as the featured vegetable.

- Have each child seated at the table(s) with supplies.
- Show a picture of a spinach leaf to the children.
 - ▶ Talk with the children about what spinach looks like.
 - ▶ Review the shape (round at one end, coming to a point) and color of spinach (green).
- Have each child take a plain note card. Explain that they are going to decorate it with drawings of spinach.
- Make sure the children know to leave the inside of the card blank.
- Ask them to draw one large leaf or more on their card. Instruct them to color the leaf like a spinach leaf.
- After cards are made, help each child write his/her name on the line on the slip of paper. Attach the slip to the child's card(s) and envelope(s) with a paperclip.
- When finished, have children wash their hands for snack or mealtime.

Activity Connection to Snack or Mealtime

While tasting the fruit or vegetable at snack or mealtime, have the children think of uses for the Note Cards just created.

- Some ideas include:
 - ▶ Give to a parent to write a favorite recipe on the card;
 - ▶ Give to a family member as a gift;
 - ▶ Use to write a thank-you note or letter; and
 - ▶ Other ideas the children suggest.

Tasty Acres Mobile

Have the children make a mobile of fruit and vegetable images.

Variation: Expand this activity to six circles with a drawing of each fruit and vegetable featured in this kit drawn on a circle. Draw a favorite food made with that fruit or vegetable on the reverse side of the circle. Add another length of string cut 16" long to each string set.

Activity Length: 15 minutes

The Activity

This example uses strawberry as the featured fruit.

- Have each child seated at table(s).
- Show them a picture of a strawberry.
 - ▶ Talk with the children about what a strawberry looks like.
 - ▶ Review with the children the shape (heart-like) and color of strawberries (red with green leaf cap).
- Give five paper circles with holes prepunched to each child. Show them how to position the circle with the hole at the top before beginning to draw.
- Have the children draw pictures of strawberries on their circles of paper.

Option: Have the children draw favorite foods made with strawberries on some circles or on the back of the strawberry drawings.

- Pass out five pieces of string in varying lengths to each child. Help them thread the string through the hole at the top of their pictures. Tie the string to the picture securely. Then tie the strings with the pictures onto the plastic hangers. Help the children balance their mobiles.
- As the mobiles are assembled, talk with the children about how strawberries look, feel, and taste.
- Have the children wash their hands for snack or mealtime.

Activity Connection to Snack or Mealtime

While eating the fruit or vegetable at snack or mealtime, talk about how the fruit or vegetable grows.

Materials Needed

- Drawings of fruit or vegetable (see the Tool Shed Resources, pages 61-72)
- 4" circles cut from white construction or poster board-weight paper, five per child
- Plastic hangers, one per child
- Pieces of string cut 6", 8", 10", 12", and 14" long, one set of each length per child
- Markers, crayons, and/or colored pencils
- Scissors
- Hole Punch

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Organize the materials.
- Cut and organize sets of string lengths.
- Cut circles of paper and punch hole in each circle $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in from an edge.
- Plan to serve the fruit or vegetable in some form at snack or mealtime (see Ten Terrific Ways..., Tool Shed Resources, pages 48-49).

Materials Needed

- Sweet potatoes or squash cut crosswise into halves or thirds (not the long way) with smooth flat surfaces
OR
- Large spinach leaves to coat with paint

Option: cut a design with a sharp knife in one surface or cut the pieces into shapes

- Acrylic craft paint (various colors)
- Paper plates for paints
- Large sheets of light-colored paper, at least one per child
- Smocks or bibs, if desired
- Table coverings, if desired

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Organize materials.
- Plan to serve the fruit or vegetable in some form at snack or mealtime (see Ten Terrific Ways..., Tool Shed Resources, pages 48-49).

Stamped Wrapping Paper

The children make stamped wrapping paper with vegetable designs.

Activity Length: 20 minutes

The Activity

This example uses sweet potato as the featured vegetable.

- Have each child seated at the table(s) with supplies.
- Give each child a piece of paper.
- Show the children how to dip a potato piece in the paint.
- Stamp the painted portion of the potato onto the paper.
If using spinach leaves, coat leaf in paint and press to paper; repeat until desired pattern is created.
- Repeat stamping with different colors and shapes if desired.
- Set the papers on a flat surface to dry.
- Have the children wash their hands for snack or mealtime.

Activity Connection to Snack or Mealtime

At snack or mealtime, talk about how vegetables grow.

Row Markers

The children draw and color fruits or vegetables on row markers.

Activity Length: 15 minutes

The Activity

This example uses cantaloupe as the featured fruit.

- Seat the children at the table(s).
- Ask the children “What is a garden?” Explain that a garden is an area of soil where vegetables and fruits grow. Explain that sometimes people grow fruits and vegetables in gardens in their yards. Fruits and vegetables also grow on farms in large areas of land called fields.
- Tell the children that row markers are helpful when plants are young and little. Row markers help mark what is growing in a spot until the plant is big enough to be recognized by its leaves, vines, flowers, and other plant parts. Explain that today they will make a row marker for a cantaloupe plant.
- Show the children a picture of a cantaloupe.
 - ▶ Talk with the children about what a cantaloupe looks like.
 - ▶ Review the shape (round) and color of a cantaloupe (outside/tan, inside/orange).
- Give each child a piece of paper. Have them draw at least one large circle on their piece of paper. They may choose to draw more than one circle and wedges. Ask them to color their circle like a cantaloupe. They may choose to color whole or cut cantaloupe.
- Help the children glue a piece of corrugated cardboard to the back center of their cantaloupe picture. When dry, push a wooden stick into the center of the piece of corrugated cardboard.
- Use strips of the clear packing tape to cover the white paper to waterproof the sign. Wrap the tape around the back of the sign to waterproof both sides of the paper. The tape will also help hold the cardboard and stick in place.
- Have the children wash their hands for snack or mealtime.

Activity Connection to Snack or Mealtime

While eating cantaloupe at snack or mealtime, talk about what cantaloupe plants need to grow.

Materials Needed

- Drawings of fruit or vegetable (see the Tool Shed Resources, pages 61-72)
- 2- by 4-inch rectangles of corrugated cardboard, one per child
- 4- by 6-inch pieces of white construction-weight paper or posterboard, one per child
- Glue sticks or bottles, one for every 2-3 children
- Crayons, colored pencils, and markers
- Wooden craft sticks, one per child
- Clear packing tape on a dispenser or scissors to cut tape

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Organize the materials.
- Plan to serve the fruit or vegetable in some form at snack or mealtime (see Ten Terrific Ways..., Tool Shed Resources, pages 48-49).

Materials Needed

- Drawings of fruit or vegetable (see Tool Shed Resources, pages 61-72)
- Dyed or natural squash seeds
- Other seeds (melon, bird, fruit, etc.)
- Box lid, piece of cardboard, or Styrofoam tray for each child
- Pencil for each child
- White glue and wooden craft sticks or paint brushes
- Rice, unpopped corn, dried peas and beans (optional)

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Organize the materials
- Option:** Draw large fruit/vegetable images on trays for children.
- Plan to serve the fruit or vegetable in some form at snack or mealtime (see Ten Terrific Ways..., Tool Shed Resources, pages 48-49).

Seed Art

The children decorate a fruit or vegetable shape with seeds.

Activity Length: 15-20 minutes

The Activity

This example uses crookneck squash as the featured vegetable.

- Have each child seated at a table(s).
- Show a picture of a crookneck squash to the children and keep it on display.
 - ▶ Talk with them about how a crookneck squash looks.
 - ▶ Review with them the shape (curved neck and oblong body) and color of crookneck squash (outside/yellow, inside/white with white seeds).
- Have the children draw a crookneck squash on their box lid or tray. Use the method described in Garden Bookmarks if they have trouble drawing crookneck squash freehand.
- Help the children spread white glue with a wooden craft stick or paint brush in one section at a time of their picture.
- Have them press seeds into the glue.
- Continue to spread glue on a section and press seeds into the glue until the entire image is covered with seeds.
- Lay the pictures on a flat surface until the glue has dried.
- Have the children wash their hands for snack or mealtime

Activity Connection to Snack or Mealtime

Talk about how the fruit or vegetable grows while eating it at snack or mealtime.

Painted Pots

The children paint and/or color images of fruits or vegetables on clay pots.

Activity Length: 20-30 minutes

The Activity

This example uses peaches as the featured fruit.

- Have each child seated at a table(s).
- Show a picture of a peach to the children and keep it on display.
- Review with the children the shape (round) and color of peach (light yellow to orange).
- Give a pot to each child.
- Using a pencil, help each child draw a peach or peach tree design on the pot with a pencil.

Note: Oil pastels are permanent so it is best to draw the image with a pencil first.

- Help the children to use the oil pastels to color their peach or peach tree on their pot.
- Have the children wash their hands for snack or mealtime.

Activity Connection to Snack or Mealtime

While tasting the fruit or vegetable at snack or mealtime, have the children think of uses for the pots they just created.

- Some ideas include:
 - ▶ Use it at the center or preschool for a container garden;
 - ▶ Give it to a family member filled with peach-scented potpourri;
 - ▶ Use it at home; or
 - ▶ Other ideas the children suggest.

Materials Needed

- Clean, dry, 6-inch-high terra-cotta pots, one for each child, or do a large pot as a group project for a container garden
- Pencils
- Oil pastels (available at art supply stores)
- Drawings of fruit or vegetable (see the Tool Shed Resources, pages 61-72)
- Acrylic paint and brushes, optional for painting pots ahead of time
- Smocks or large bibs to protect the children's clothing, if desired

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Organize the materials.
- Paint the pots with acrylic paint for a bright base, if desired.
- Arrange for adult volunteers to help the children paint.
- Plan to serve the fruit or vegetable in some form at snack or mealtime (see Tool Shed Resources, Ten Terrific Ways..., pages 48-49).

Materials Needed

- Drawings of fruit or vegetable (see Tool Shed Resources, pages 61-72)
- Smooth, round stones at least 4 inches in diameter
- Acrylic paints, light base colors and green for leaves
- Paint brushes, one per child
- Paper plates for paint
- Can of spray clear shellac to seal and waterproof painted stones
- Puffy paint (optional)—puffy paints have an interesting texture
- Smocks or large bibs for each child, if desired

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Organize the materials
- Arrange for a well-ventilated spray area away from the children.
- Plan to serve the fruit or vegetable in some form for snack or at mealtime (see Tool Shed Resources, Ten Terrific Ways..., pages 48-49).

Garden Stones

The children draw and color fruits and vegetables on garden stones.

Activity Length: 20-30 minutes

The Activity

This example uses spinach as the featured vegetable.

- Have each child seated at a table(s) or on the ground.
- Ask the children “What is a garden?” If they do not know, explain that a garden is an area of soil where vegetables and fruits, like spinach grow. Explain that sometimes people grow fruits and vegetables in gardens in their yards. Fruits and vegetables also grow on farms in large areas of land called fields.
- Tell the children that garden stones are used to mark the place where different kinds of fruits and vegetables are planted in a garden. Explain that today they will make a garden stone decorated with a spinach leaf.
- Show a picture of spinach to the children and keep it on display.
 - ▶ Talk with the children about how spinach looks.
 - ▶ Review with the children the shape and color of spinach.
- Give a stone to each child. Ask the children to paint the top and sides of their stone with a light colored paint.
- While the stones dry, help the children wash the brushes. Sing Old MacDonald Had a Farm, Spinach Version (Activity C2), while brushes are drying.
- Help the children draw a large spinach leaf on the stone.
- Have them paint their leaf green. If stone is large enough, also help them paint their initials on the stone.
- After the stones dry, spray them with clear shellac to waterproof and seal. Paint in a well-ventilated area.
- Allow stones to dry thoroughly.
- Have the children wash their hands for snack or mealtime.

Activity Connection to Snack or Mealtime

While eating, talk about making the spinach garden stones. Have the children think of uses for the garden stones they made.

- Some ideas include:
 - ▶ Give to parents for home garden;
 - ▶ Use in a potted plant for decoration;
 - ▶ Use for a paper weight on a desk; or
 - ▶ Other ideas the children suggest.

Garden Gloves

The children decorate gardening gloves with images of fruits or vegetables.

Activity Length: 15 minutes

The Activity

This example uses strawberries as the featured fruit.

- Have each child seated at a table(s) or on the ground
- Ask the children, “What is a garden?” If they do not know, explain that a garden is an area of soil where vegetables and fruits are grown. Explain that sometimes people grow fruits and vegetables in gardens in their yards. Fruits and vegetables also grow on farms in large areas of land called fields.
- Explain that people sometimes wear gloves when gardening to keep their hands clean and safe from cuts.
- Explain that today they will decorate gardening gloves with pictures of strawberries.
- Show a picture of strawberries and a strawberry plant to the children.
 - ▶ Talk with the children about how a strawberry looks.
 - ▶ Review with the children the shape (heart-shaped) and color (red) of strawberries.
- Give each child a set of solid-colored gardening gloves. Ask the children to draw and color a strawberry plant or as many strawberries as they wish on their gloves.

Option: Use sponge shapes to stamp paint on gloves. Talk with the children about how strawberries grow while decorating the gloves. Let gloves dry.

- Have the children wash their hands for snack or mealtime.

Activity Connection to Snack or Mealtime

At snack or mealtime while eating the fruit or vegetable, talk with the children about the gloves they have made. Have the children suggest ways to use the gloves.

- Some ideas include:
 - ▶ Decorations for events like a garden theme party;
 - ▶ Decorations for a garden related bulletin board;
 - ▶ Gift to someone who likes to garden.

Materials Needed

- Drawings of fruit or vegetables (see Tool Shed Resources, pages 61-72)
- A pair of solid-colored gardening gloves for each child
- Fabric paints and brushes or fabric paint pens
- Smocks or large bibs

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Organize the materials.
- Plan to serve the fruit or vegetable in some form at snack or mealtime (see Tool Shed Resources, Ten Terrific Ways..., pages 48-49).

Option: Cut fruit or vegetable shapes out of sponges. Use the sponges to apply fabric paint to gloves.

Materials Needed

- Two pieces of light-weight wood, approximately 5 feet and 3 feet in length
- Hammer and nails, or heavy duty staple gun and staples
- Old clothing such as plain t-shirt, long-sleeved shirt, pants, socks, shoes, hats, gloves
- Straw, old rags, or plastic grocery bags
- Rope, at least 30 inches long
- Large, sturdy rubber bands

Option: Ask each child to bring an item of clothing such as a t-shirt or long-sleeve shirt, pants, socks, shoes, hats, gloves. Consider making two scarecrows so each child can contribute an item.

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Nail or staple the two narrow boards together in the shape of a cross. Choose the longer piece for the body and the shorter piece for the arms.
- Plan to serve the fruit or vegetable in some form at snack or mealtime (see Tool Shed Resources, Ten Terrific Ways..., pages 48-49).

Make a Scarecrow

The children make a scarecrow and talk about how fruits and vegetables grow.

Activity Length: 30 minutes—this activity can be split into two or more sessions.

The Activity

Take the children and supplies outside or into a large space.

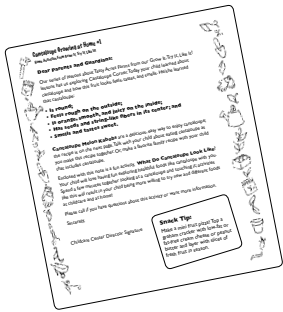
- Ask the children “What is a garden?” If they do not know, explain that a garden is an area of soil where vegetables and fruits grow. For example, sweet potatoes grow in gardens.
- Tell the children they are going to make a very special garden friend, a scarecrow.
- Explain that birds, rabbits, and squirrels will eat the fruits and vegetables in a garden. A scarecrow in a garden ‘scares the crows’ or other animals away. The animals think the scarecrow is a real person in the garden. They are afraid to come and eat the fruits and vegetables. Then the fruits and vegetables can be harvested for people to eat. Scarecrows also make a friendly decoration for the fall holidays.
- Make the head from an old t-shirt stuffed with straw, old rags, or plastic bags. Rubber-band the head onto the top of the cross. Help each child place the clothing item they brought on the scarecrow in the appropriate place.
- Place the shirt on the stick and stuff with straw, old rags or plastic bags. Use rubber bands to gather sleeves closed so the stuffing does not fall out.
- Place a pair of pants on the stick, tuck the shirt into the pants, tie around the waist with a piece of rope, and stuff.
- Do the same with socks and shoes, gloves, and hat.
- Post the scarecrow in a garden or use as a decoration.

Activity Connection to Snack or Mealtime

At snack or mealtime, talk about how the scarecrow helps fruits and vegetables grow by keeping the birds and animals away so people can harvest the fruits and vegetables.

Tool Shed Resources

Every farmer knows producing an abundant crop is easier when the right tools are at hand. Dig in and plow through the resources before you organize your teaching activities. Sprinkle a few of these tips, tricks, and techniques into the activities and watch the fun grow.



■ Growing at Home Introduction Letter to Parents

Sow the seeds of success! Send this letter home to families before starting the first unit.

■ Hand Washing/Polite Tasting Guides

Send a copy home with the introduction letter to have families tend the early growth of hand washing and polite tasting, two great habits.



■ Make a Mystery Box/Bag

Construct a simple mystery box or bag with these easy-to-follow instructions. The mystery box or bag may become a perennial favorite with the children, a resource you will want to use time and time again. If so, consider making a durable, washable version.

■ Tips for Using a Mystery Box/Bag

This resource is ripe with tips to make the most of the Mystery Box/Bag activity.

■ Ten Terrific Ways To Serve...

Children are more likely to try, taste, and eat new foods when given many different chances. Find 10 ways to serve each featured fruit and vegetable at meals and as snacks.





■ A Harvest of Books

Reap the rewards of reading to children. Stories can encourage food-tasting habits, prepare for planting activities, and entertain!

■ Green Thumb Guides

The Green Thumb Guides give easy-to-follow tips for growing a garden practically anywhere. Seasoned gardeners will find helpful hints, too.

- How to Grow a Seedling in a Bag
- Grow Seedlings Indoors
- Make a Seed Tape
- Container Gardens
- Gardening Outdoors



■ Fruit and Vegetable Drawings

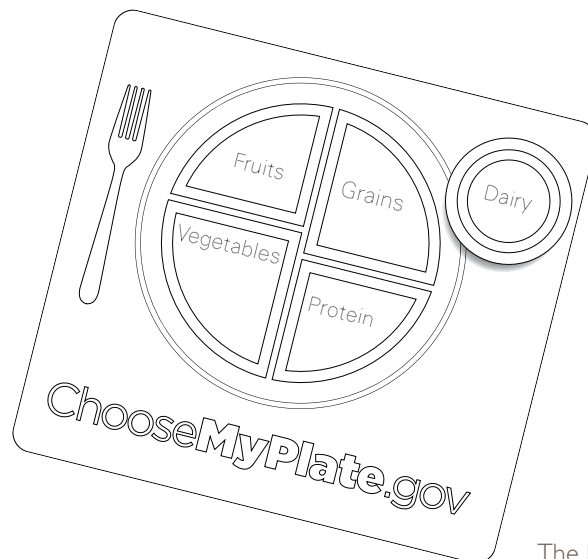
Drawings of the fruits and vegetables from each lesson shown grow, and ready for purchase in either grocery stores or farmers markets.

■ Blackline Masters

Blackline masters of the fruits and vegetables from each lesson to be used in various activities and Growing at Home materials.

■ MyPlate Coloring Page

Give children a chance to color their very own *MyPlate for Preschoolers*.



Growing at Home

Home Activities From *Grow It, Try It, Like It!*

Dear Parent(s) or Guardian:

Your child's class is beginning a grand food tasting and garden adventure and will be exploring new fruits and vegetables over the next several weeks or months. The seeds of positive food experiences will be planted as we encourage the children to taste and enjoy new fruits and vegetables.

The wonderful garden spots at the imaginary Tasty Acres Farm featured in *Grow It, Try It, Like It!* are places your child's class will visit. The garden path will wind past these growing places:

- **Cantaloupe Corner**
- **Crookneck Squash Row**
- **Peach Tree Orchard**
- **Spinach Lane**
- **The Strawberry Patch**
- **Sweet Potato Hill**

The class will experience hands-on activities that include many opportunities to touch the featured fruit or vegetable. Your child will learn how each plant grows and produces delicious fruits and vegetables. A variety of art, craft, song, video, and new food tasting experiences will be sprinkled throughout your child's day. We will even try our hand at planting seeds. This gardening activity is a great way for children to learn about plants and how fruits and vegetables are grown.

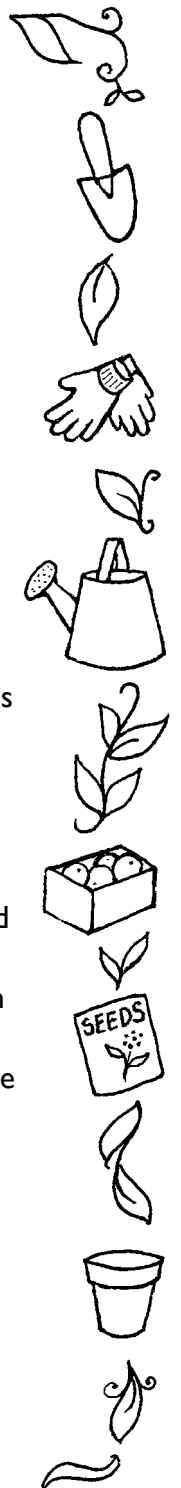
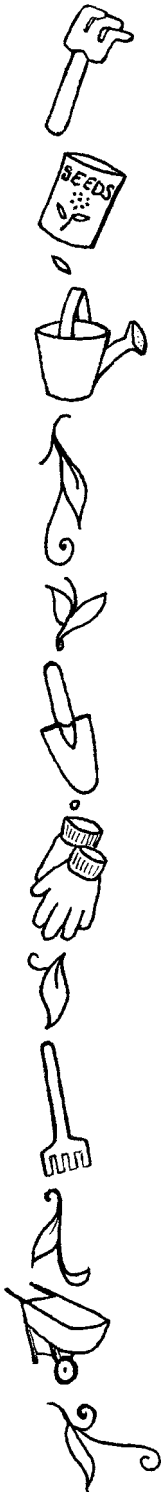
Attached is a resource on hand washing and polite food tasting that we use at the child care center. As we work to cultivate great food tasters, we want to grow good health habits for life. Your child will learn to thoroughly wash his/her hands and properly wash fruits and vegetables prior to preparing or eating food. Your child will learn polite food tasting; polite food tasting skills encourage children to try new foods more often. Please reinforce these practices at home. It is exciting to watch the children blossom into polite food tasters enjoying many different foods.

During your child's learning experiences, we will share information and activities with you and your family. Look for *Growing at Home* activity packets for updates on our adventures, recipes to try at home, and more!

Please call if you have questions or want more information.

Sincerely,

Child Care Center Director



Hand Washing and Polite Food Tasting Instructions

Hand Washing—Be Clean

Young children need to learn to be clean when handling food.

We wash our hands upon arrival at the child care center, immediately before and after eating a meal or snack, after using the restroom, after playing on the playground, after handling pets, pet cages, or other pet objects, after blowing our nose, whenever hands are visibly dirty, and before going home.

Remind children not to put clean hands in their mouths, noses, or other places. Clean hands help keep us from getting germs or soil in our mouths that might make us sick.

Practice good hand washing by following these directions. Many adults are surprised to learn good hand washing involves at least 20 seconds of sudsy lather time and includes under the nails, the back of the hands, and even up the arms.

Hand Washing Directions

- Wet...hands using warm running water.
- Lather...with soap up to the elbows.
- Rub...hands together for 20 seconds or about the length of time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice.
- Scrub...backs of hands, wrists, between fingers, and under fingernails.
- Rinse...under warm running water.
- Dry...with paper towels.
- Turn off...running water with a paper towel, not bare hands.



Polite Food Tasting–Be Kind

Children are more likely to try a taste of a new food if they don't have to swallow something they dislike. When children taste foods they do not want to swallow:

- Teach them to remove the food politely from their mouth with a napkin;
- Show them how to discard the napkin quietly in a wastebasket.

Remind your child or children that it is important to be kind to other people when tasting food. Do not make faces and say unpleasant things about the food. Acting that way can hurt the feelings of the person who prepared the food or of someone else who likes the food.

Polite food tasters try new foods. Polite food tasters say, “Yes, thank you” or “No, thank you” when offered seconds. They are happy when other people enjoy the food. And they are willing to try the food again in the future. Sometimes a food that does not taste good today will taste good on another day.



Make a Mystery Box or Bag

Make a simple mystery box by placing a large cardboard box 18 inches by 12 inches or larger on its side. Cut a hole in the side of the box, 4 inches in diameter, large enough for a child to slip a hand and arm through without getting stuck, but as small as possible. To use the box, place it with the small hole up and turn the open side of the box to a wall. Drape a cloth over the large box opening to prevent children from looking into the box. If desired, decorate the box.

To make a simple mystery bag, use a large strong paper bag or non-see-through plastic bag. After putting the mystery item in the bag, use a rubber band to gather the opening of the bag just large enough for a child to slip a hand and arm through without getting stuck. A simple drawstring bag may also work.

The Mystery Box or Bag may become so popular with children that a more durable, reusable style is desired. Follow the directions below to make a box or bag that can be cleaned and used repeatedly.

Durable Mystery Box

Materials needed:

- Box with a fitted lid or large, non-see-through plastic container (e.g., large ice cream tub) with lid
- Tube sock
- Duct tape, glue gun, or other means of attaching sock to opening
- Scissors



Cut a hole in the lid large enough to easily slip your fist through. This opening should be large enough for your hand and a child's hand to slip together into the opening should a child want you to feel inside the box with him/her.

Cut a length of tube sock 8 inches or longer. Pull the cut end of the sock through the opening and securely tape or glue the cut edge of the sock around the opening of the hole. You should be able to slip your hand through the open end of the tube sock, through the lid, and into the box.

Note—make sure the box or container is large enough to hold a crookneck squash or cantaloupe or the largest item you will place in it.

Durable Mystery Bag

Materials needed:

- A laundry bag with drawstring or a pillow case
- One 18-inch shoe string
- Fabric markers or appliqués for decoration

If using a pillow case, make two small cuts, ½ inch in length, on both sides of the seam near the stitching of the hemmed opening. Insert the shoe string into the pillow case and thread through the hemmed edge until it reaches the other slit. Gather the string. Decorate pillow case or bag, if desired.

Tips for Using the Mystery Box or Bag

Before you use the Mystery Box/Bag, introduce it to the children. If it has been a long time since the Mystery Box/Bag was used, reintroduce it to the children. Offer to feel inside the Mystery Box/Bag with children who are hesitant and want your assistance. Remind children to keep their ideas and guesses secret until everyone has had a turn at the Mystery Box/Bag.

Seat the children in a semicircle on the floor and ask them to remain seated. Take the Mystery Box/Bag to a place in the room where the children can see it and you, and the child feeling inside the Mystery Box/Bag can speak softly to you without the others hearing the comments easily.

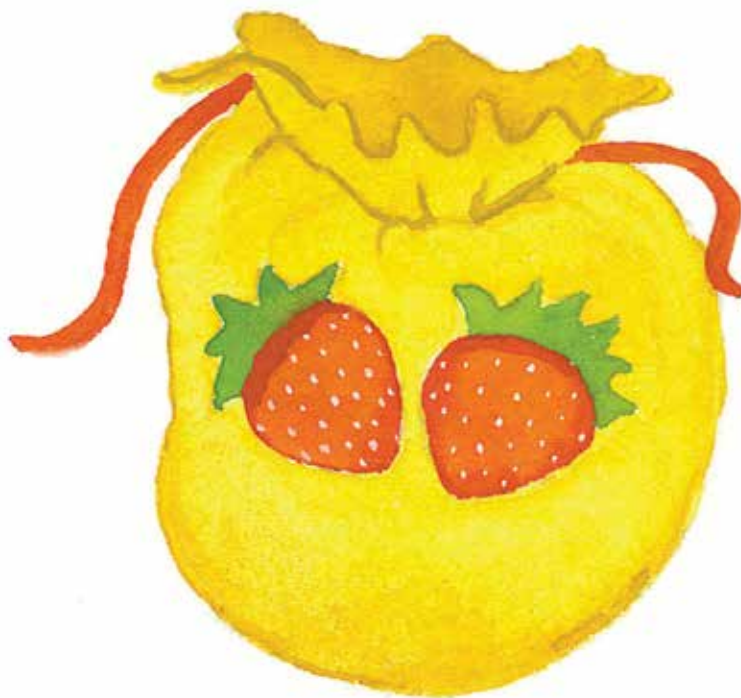
Tell the children each one will have a chance to describe to you what they feel in the Mystery Box/Bag. Give examples of description words such as sharp, soft, bumpy, heavy, light, etc., to help them understand the kind of observations to share with you.



One at a time, ask each child to come to the Mystery Box/Bag. Have each child feel inside the Mystery Box/Bag without looking inside it. If a child seems afraid, feel inside the Mystery Box/Bag with the child.

While at the Mystery Box/Bag, ask each child to describe quietly what he/she feels. Encourage words similar to the description words (suggested above and in the Words To Grow in each lesson) if the child has a hard time giving a description on his or her own. Have each child guess what is inside and whisper his/her guess to you. Write their answers on a piece of paper if you wish.

After everyone takes a turn, take the Mystery Box/Bag to the center of the semicircle of children. Remove the fruit or vegetable. Show it to the children. Talk about the fruit or vegetable, using the questions in "The Activity" box of the AI activity of each fruit or vegetable lesson.



Ten Terrific Ways To Serve...

Cantaloupe

1. Fresh slices or wedges
2. Cantaloupe Wraps—wrap thin slices of low sodium deli sliced ham around cantaloupe wedges
3. Cantaloupe Ice—freeze chilled Cantaloupe Soup in shallow trays for 15-20 minutes
4. A different shape—make cantaloupe balls using a melon ball kitchen tool
5. Thin slices on a sandwich—tuna, low sodium sliced turkey, or even peanut butter!
6. Bite-size chunks added to green salad for color and a sweet surprise
7. Mixed with other melons or fruits for fruit salad
8. Cantaloupe Kabobs—see Cantaloupe Growing at Home Recipe, Booklet 5, page 31
9. Cantaloupe Soup—see Cantaloupe Growing at Home Recipe, Booklet 5, page 34
10. Cantaloupe Fruit Salad—see Cantaloupe Growing at Home Recipe, Booklet 5, page 37



Crookneck Squash

1. Fresh slices or sticks
2. Cooked and mashed
3. Diced and tossed into green salad
4. Cubed and added to vegetable soup
5. Sliced, battered, and lightly oven-or pan-fried
6. In a stir fry with other vegetables
7. Grilled on a kabob with tomatoes and mushrooms
8. Crookneck Squash Bread Recipe—see Crookneck Squash Growing at Home Recipe, Booklet 2, page 31
9. Crookneck Squash Vegetable Soup Recipe—see Crookneck Squash Growing at Home Recipe, Booklet 2, page 34
10. Crookneck Squash Pasta Salad Recipe—see Crookneck Squash Growing at Home Recipe, Booklet 2, page 37



Peaches

1. Fresh slices with vanilla low-fat or fat-free yogurt for dipping
2. Frozen slices, semi-thawed—a cool nibble on a hot day
3. Chunks of drained canned peaches packed in water or 100% juice added to hot or cold cereals and low-fat or fat-free milk
4. Diced peaches tossed in a vegetable salad for a sweet treat
5. Chilled soup—puree 3 cups canned peaches packed in water or 100% juice and 1 cup 100% orange juice, served chilled
6. Dried peaches or peach nectar
7. Pieces of peaches mixed with other fruits in a salad
8. Peaches Ala Mode Recipe—see Peach Growing at Home Recipe, Booklet 6, page 29
9. Peach Cobbler Recipe—see Peach Growing at Home Recipe, Booklet 6, page 32
10. Peach Muffins with Oatmeal Topping Recipe—see Peach Growing at Home Recipe, Booklet 6, page 35



Spinach

1. Fresh leaves with ranch dressing for dip
2. Spinach leaves mixed with other types of lettuce leaves for a greener green salad
3. Fresh spinach leaves in a sandwich, in place of lettuce
4. Chopped and added to vegetable soup
5. Spinach Leaf Rolls—spread a leaf with a dab of low-fat cream cheese or peanut butter and roll
6. Added to lasagna—thaw and squeeze dry a box of chopped frozen spinach and add with cheese layers
7. Mini pizzas made with English muffin halves, sauce, fresh spinach leaves, and low-fat cheese
8. Dilly Spinach Dip Recipe—see Spinach Growing at Home Recipe, Booklet 3, page 31
9. Easy Cheesy Spinach Pie Recipe—see Spinach Growing at Home Recipe, Booklet 3, page 34
10. Spinach-Cantaloupe-Strawberry Salad Recipe—see Spinach Growing at Home Recipe, Booklet 3, page 37



Strawberries

1. Fresh strawberries
2. Fresh strawberries sliced with low-fat cottage cheese
3. Chilled soup—puree 3 cups strawberries, 1 cup 100% orange juice, and 2 tablespoons sugar
4. Freeze-dried strawberries—see cold cereal section of store for cereal with berries added
5. Sliced and tossed in salads for a sweet treat
6. Slices layered with vanilla or lemon low-fat or fat-free yogurt
7. Mixed with other berries and served over angel food cake cubes
8. Chocolate Strawberries Recipe—see Strawberry Growing at Home Recipe, Booklet 7, page 31
9. Strawberry Sauce Recipe on waffles, pancakes, pudding, low-fat or fat-free yogurt—see Strawberry Growing at Home Recipe, Booklet 7, page 34
10. Strawberry Smoothie Recipe—see Strawberry Growing at Home Recipe, Booklet 7, page 37



Sweet Potatoes

1. Raw slices with ranch dip
2. Cubed and added to vegetable soups
3. Cooked, pureed, and used in quick bread recipes, for example, substituted for bananas in banana bread
4. Roasted slices with apples
5. Cooked, cooled, and cubed in potato salad
6. Shredded raw and added to green salads like carrot shreds
7. Cooked, pureed, and added to a milk-based, creamy soup
8. Mashed Sweet Potatoes Recipe—see Sweet Potato Growing at Home Recipe, Booklet 4, page 31
9. Oven Baked Sweet Potato Planks—see Sweet Potato Growing at Home Recipe, Booklet 4, page, 34
10. Sweet Potato-Oatmeal-Chocolate Chip Bar Cookies Recipe—see Sweet Potato Growing at Home Recipe, Booklet 4, page 38

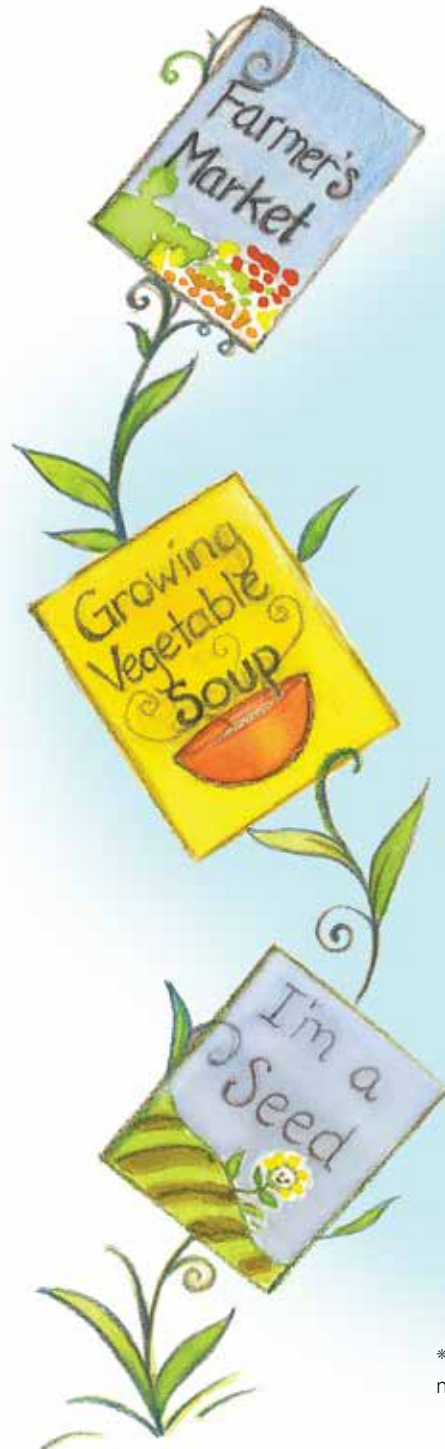




A Harvest of Books

Children love stories about food, how food grows, and wonderful ways to eat food. Below is a partial list of the many children's books available featuring food.

New books are published daily. Check the children's book department in public libraries and bookstores frequently for new books featuring fruits and vegetables.



Titles*

A Harvest of Color: Growing a Vegetable Garden
Bitter Bananas (Picture Puffins)
Corn (What's for Lunch)
Eating the Alphabet Fruits and Vegetables from A to Z
Farmer's Market
Growing Vegetable Soup
I'm a Seed (Hello Reader! Science, level 1)
Muncha! Muncha! Muncha!
Oliver's Vegetables (Ventur-Health & the Human Body)
Potatoes (*What's for Lunch*)
Pumpkin Circle
Pumpkin Day, Pumpkin Night
Pumpkin Fiesta
Round the Garden
Squash Pie
The Cantaloupe Cat
The First Strawberries: A Cherokee Story (Picture Puffins)
The Grey Lady and the Strawberry Snatcher
The Perilous Pit
The Seasons of Arnold's Apple Tree
The Surprise Garden
The Ugly Vegetables

* Mention of these materials is not an endorsement by the Department of Agriculture over other materials that may be available on this subject.

Ready to grow tip: Read a book about how seeds grow or how plants produce food as an introduction to the Section B activities for each fruit and vegetable in *Grow It, Try It, Like It!*

Suggested Books

Books in bold feature fruits and vegetables from the fertile grounds of Tasty Acres Farm as featured in *Grow It, Try It, Like It!*

Author

Melaine Eclare
 Isaac Olaleye
 Pam Robson
 Lois Ehlert
 Paul Brett Johnson
 Lois Ehlert
 Jean Marzollo
 Candace Fleming
 Vivian French
 Claire Llewellyn
 George Levenson
 Anne F. Rockwell
 Caryn Yacowitz
 Omri Glaser
 Wilson Gage
 Jan Yager
 Joseph Bruchac
 Molly Bang
 Orel Protopopescu
 Gail Gibbons
 Zoe Hall
 Grace Lin

Topic

Vegetables
 Bananas
 Corn
 Fruits/Vegetables
 Fruits/Vegetables
 Vegetables
 How Seeds Grow
 Vegetables
 Vegetables
 Potatoes
 Pumpkins
 Pumpkins
 Pumpkins
 Vegetables
 Squash
 Cantaloupe
 Strawberries
 Strawberries
 Peaches
 Apples
 Vegetables
 Vegetables



Green Thumb Guides

■ How To Grow a Seedling in a Bag

A Seedling in a Bag is a great visual to help children see what is happening to the seed they have planted in the soil.

Materials needed:

- Plastic bag with a zipper-style closure
- Absorbent paper towel, 1-2 sheets
- Stapler
- Dry lima bean seeds, soaked in water overnight
- Masking or strapping tape
- Sunny southern or western exposure window

Wet the paper towel well and place in plastic bag. Place a row of staples across the center of the paper towel. Place soaked beans on top of row of staples and seal bag.

Tape the bag with the seed side facing the room to a sunny southern or western exposure window.

The staples hold the seeds in place, allowing the roots to grow down and sprouts to grow up.

Note: Soaking the lima beans overnight in water helps hydrate the beans and speeds the sprouting process. Lima beans will sprout fast, give quick results, and help keep the children's interest. Spinach, squash, and cantaloupe seeds will also produce seedlings; sprouting times will vary.



■ Grow Seedlings Indoors

Plants need soil, water, sun, and time to grow. Plants can be grown almost anywhere, using containers, soil next to sidewalks, or a traditional garden spot. Below are general tips for starting plants indoors from seeds. Check with your local USDA Cooperative Extension Service office for more information. To find the office nearest you, check this Web site: <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/Extension/>



Local gardening experts, nurseries, and gardening books are other sources to determine planting times specific to the area where you live.

If you have never gardened before, think of it as an adventure you and the children will take together. If your plants thrive, you can celebrate your harvest. If they do not, be thankful for all the farmers' who produce foods to eat. It is sometimes harder than it looks!

Starting Plants From Seeds

While seeds planted will sprout any time of year, timing is important if the seedlings are for transplanting outdoors. Check the back of the seed packet for directions on how deep the seeds should be buried in the soil and the time required from indoor planting to transplanting outdoors for your planting zone. Allow time for plants to 'harden' before planting outdoors. (See Hardening Seedlings for Transplanting Outdoors, below.)

Growing Seedlings Indoors

Set the containers on a sunny window sill facing the south or southwest. Seedlings grow toward the sun. Rotate the containers every few days so the plants grow straight, not lop-sided.

If there is no sunny window, use fluorescent lights or special grow lights kept within a few inches of the top of the containers. The lights help the seeds grow into plants the same way the warmth and light of the sun helps plants grow outdoors. Seedlings grow best with 14 to 16 hours of light per day.

Check the containers every day to see the seeds' progress. Expect seedlings to appear in about 5 to 10 days.

Once the seeds have sprouted, check every 2 to 3 days to see if the seedlings need water. Test the soil moisture by touching it gently with a finger. Water only when the top ½ inch of soil is dry. It is best to water seedlings when the soil feels dry rather than on a regular schedule. Use the spray bottle to mist water gently similar to rainfall, using a few sprays, depending on how much water dispenses.



Hardening Seedlings for Transplanting Outdoors

Before the seedlings are planted outside (when climate conditions permit), the plants need to be 'hardened.' Hardening helps plants adjust to the harsher conditions outdoors. Plants are ready to harden once the seedlings have developed a few green leaves. Set the containers outside for increasingly longer periods each day. Start with a few hours and increase to a full day over the course of a week or so. Be careful not to leave the tender seedlings in hot, direct sunlight for too long. Plants hardened for about a week are ready to plant outside. After planting, watch local weather forecasts and cover the plants if frost is predicted overnight.

■ Make a Seed Tape

Materials Needed:

- Cornstarch
- Stovetop or hot plate
- Appropriate fruit or vegetable seed packet
- Sealable plastic sandwich bag or tooth picks
- Paper towels, inexpensive type that will breakdown in soil easily
- Ruler
- Pen
- Scissors

Prepare the gel ahead of time by dissolving 1 tablespoon of cornstarch in 1 cup of cold water. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly. Once the mixture starts to boil and turns into a gel, remove from heat and allow it to cool to room temperature.

Take three or four paper towels, fold them at the perforations, and cut them into 1-inch strips, cutting across the perforations to create long strips. Unfold and lay the paper towel strips on a flat surface.

Refer to the seed packet to note how far apart the seeds should be spaced. Use a ruler and pen to make marks on the towel strips at the appropriate spacing.

Place a few spoonfuls of the gel into a plastic sandwich bag and seal the top. Snip off a corner of the gel-filled bag and squeeze a small droplet of gel on each of the marked spots. Place a seed on top of each drop of gel. The seeds will be firmly attached when the gel dries.

Young children can help mark where to place the seeds on the paper strip and place large seeds such as cantaloupe or crookneck squash on gel dots.

Note: The gel drop is used to 'glue' the seed to the strip of paper. Seeds should not be completely coated by gel, but rather sit on top of the gel. For very small seeds, it may be easier to touch the tip of a toothpick in the gel, pick up a seed with the gel, and transfer the gel with seed to the paper strip.

Seed tapes can be made for gifts. Store dried seed tapes in sealed envelopes; label with seed name and directions for planting. Children can decorate the envelopes with drawings of the plants before putting the seed tapes inside the envelopes.



Variation: Make a Seed Circle

Cut a circle of paper towel the diameter of a Painted Pot (see Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 35). Glue spinach seeds or herb seeds to the paper towel circle.

Gift-giving idea: Portion a bag of potting soil and put it in the pot. Lay the seed circle on top of the bag of soil and wrap in Stamped Wrapping Paper or place in a Decorated Garden Bag (see Garden Art and Crafts Section, pages 32 and 27). Attach a Garden Scenes Note Card (see Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 30). Copy the back of the seed package for growing instructions, if desired.

■ Container Gardens

Plants need soil, water, sun, and time to grow. Plants can be grown almost anywhere using containers. Container gardens are common in cities where space is limited and in the country where weeds are plentiful.

Container gardens do have special needs. Follow these tips to produce the best results. Check out the resources listed for more information on container gardening.

Soil and Fertilizer

Use commercial potting soil; it is lightweight. Containers get heavy. Container gardens may need more fertilizer. The water draining from the pot washes nutrients out of the soil. Check with a local garden or nursery center for more information on using fertilizers with container gardens.

Water and Drainage

Container gardens need to drain water. Containers must have a few drain holes for water to flow out. Standing water in the bottom of a pot can rot the plant's roots. Use flat stones or 'pot feet' (check garden supply stores) to lift a pot off the ground for drainage. Or, nestle a pot with drainage inside a solid pot.

Weather conditions and container size will influence water needs. The soil inside the pot can get very hot and 'cook' plant roots. This can also happen if the pot is too small for the plant. Check with local garden experts for guidelines on watering plants in pots.



Seeds or Plants

Some fruit and vegetable plant varieties thrive in pots. Look for seed packets and plant starts, new plants started from seeds, specifically for containers at nurseries. Be sure to find out if more than one plant is needed for pollination.

Match the size of the full-grown plant to the size of the planting container. Every fruit and vegetable, in some variety, featured in *Grow It, Try It, Like It!* can be grown in a container, even a dwarf peach tree! Spinach and strawberries will thrive in smaller containers or in a bag. Squash, cantaloupe, and sweet potatoes will need more space. Check with local experts or resources below for recommended container sizes.

Containers and Container Size

REMEMBER: All containers need drainage holes. Suitable containers include clay pots, empty plastic buckets, cans, and milk cartons. Give an old plastic wading pond new life as a miniature garden spot. Fill it with soil or fill it with pots of plants.

Garden in a Bag

Look for commercial growbags or make your own. Find a thick plastic bag of potting soil (it is important that the bag is sturdy and will not break apart easily). Poke drainage holes in the bottom. Plant spinach seeds or strawberry starts in holes in the top. Watering a growbag can be the hardest part. During summer heat, water every day. A plastic pipe with holes drilled in the sides can be inserted the length of the bag to help deliver water evenly.

Sunlight

Container gardens need several hours of sunlight each day. The soil in containers can become hot. Long hours of direct sunlight may be too much for plants in containers. Check with local garden experts for guidance on sunlight for container plants in your area.

More Resources for Container Gardening

Team Nutrition offers help with gardening. These references are available on the Team Nutrition Internet Web site: teamnutrition.usda.gov.

- *Grow a Family Garden!* from Nibbles for Health, Nutrition Newsletters for Parents of Young Children: teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/Nibbles/grow_garden.pdf
- *Starting a Team Nutrition Garden* from Team Nutrition Days...and Beyond teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/howtokit.html (pages 11-16)
- For more information, check with gardening books or contact local gardening experts at nurseries or your local USDA Cooperative Extension Service office. On the web, check: www.csrees.usda.gov/extension/index/html

For more information on successful container gardens, check out these resources recommended* in *The Gardener's Reading Guide: The Best Books for Gardeners* (Jan Dean, ©1993 Facts on File, Inc. New York, NY).

- Beckett, Kenneth; Carr, David; and Stevens, David *The Contained Garden: A complete illustrated guide to growing plants, flowers, fruits and vegetables outdoors in pots* (Viking, 1999) Find details on container size, plant selection and more in this comprehensive resource.
- Colburn, Nigel *The Container Garden* (Little, Brown, 2000) This resource gives tips for using containers and combining containers with traditional beds to produce fruits, vegetables, and more in containers.
- Cotner, Dr. Sam *Container Vegetables: The Easy Way To Garden* (Texas Gardener Press, 1987) This resource is helpful to use to produce vegetables when space is limited.
- Ortho, *Gardening in Containers* (Ortho, 1998) A detailed resource on a container and plant selection, soil, watering, and more.
- Rees, Yvonne, and Palliser, David *Container Gardening All Year Round* (Trafalgar Square, 1991) How to plant fruits, vegetables, flowers, and control pests and more in every type of container.
- Skelsey, Alice F. *Cucumbers in a Flowerpot* (Workman Publishing, 1984) revised edition of *Farming in a Flowerpot* (1975).
- Stewart, Diana *The Window Box: Pot, Tub and Basket Book* (Hearst books, 1987) How to use window boxes for vegetables, fruits, and herbs. Special section includes tips for children.
- *Sunset Container Gardening* (Sunset Books, 1998) A complete guide from a gardening authority.

*Mention of these materials is not an endorsement by the Department of Agriculture over other materials that may be available on this subject.



■ Gardening Outdoors

Plants need soil, water, sun, and time to grow. Plants can grow in nearly any plot of soil with enough sun and water. Plots of soil next to sidewalks, flowerbeds, and even shrubs can do double duty as garden spots. If you do not have space, check for community garden spots or other nearby locations suitable for garden activities. Combine container and traditional gardens, if necessary.

Follow these tips to produce the best results. Check out the resources listed for more information on gardens.

Soil and Fertilizer

Prepare the soil for planting by tilling or breaking it up. A large garden spot can be prepared with a rotor-tiller. Add fertilizer of some sort - compost, manure, or chemical types. Young children need the soil prepared for them. If necessary, dig the soil from a spot and replace with potting soil. It's a quick way to have prepared and fertilized soil in for a small plot. Check with local garden experts for guidelines on improving soil for gardens.

Water and Drainage

Gardens need a ready supply of water. The soil needs to drain extra water deeper into the ground. The soil type will determine how well water drains.

Weather conditions and garden locations will influence water needs. The soil beside asphalt and concrete can be very hot. Check with local garden experts for guidelines on watering plants in pots.

Seeds or Plants for Different-Size Spaces and Zones

Some fruit and vegetable plant varieties thrive in small spaces. Look for seed packets, plant starts, and new plants started from seeds that produce compact plants at nurseries if space is limited. Be sure to find out if more than one plant is needed for pollination. To grow sweet potatoes, locate seed stock from stores or mail order nurseries. Sweet potatoes from the grocery store will sprout in a jar, but will not produce more sweet potatoes.

Match the type of plant to the planting zone where you live. Every fruit and vegetable (in some variety) featured in *Grow It! Try It! Like It!* can be grown throughout the United States with the exception of sweet potatoes. These plants require warm nights and may not grow in northern climates. Check with local experts for plant varieties that thrive in your area.

Sunlight

Gardens need several hours of sunlight each day. Long hours of direct sunlight may be too much for some plants such as spinach and strawberries. Check with local garden experts for guidance on sunlight for plants in your area.

Weeds

Learn to recognize weeds and remove them from garden spots. It is easier if plant starts are used. Use grass clippings or mulch to cover the spaces between rows for a walk-on weed barrier.

More Resources for Gardening Outdoors

Team Nutrition offers help with gardening. These references are available on the Team Nutrition Internet website: teamnutrition.usda.gov

- *Grow a Family Garden!* from Nibbles for Health, Nutrition Newsletters for Parents of Young Children teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/Nibbles/grow_garden.pdf
- *Starting a Team Nutrition Garden* from Team Nutrition Days...and Beyond teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/howtokit.html (pages 11-16)
- For more information, check with gardening books or contact local gardening experts at nurseries or your local USDA Cooperative Extension Service office. On the web, check: csrees.usda.gov/extension/index/html

For more information on gardening with children, check out these resources recommended* in *The Gardener's Reading Guide: The Best Books for Gardeners* (Jan Dean, ©1993 Facts on File, Inc. New York, NY):

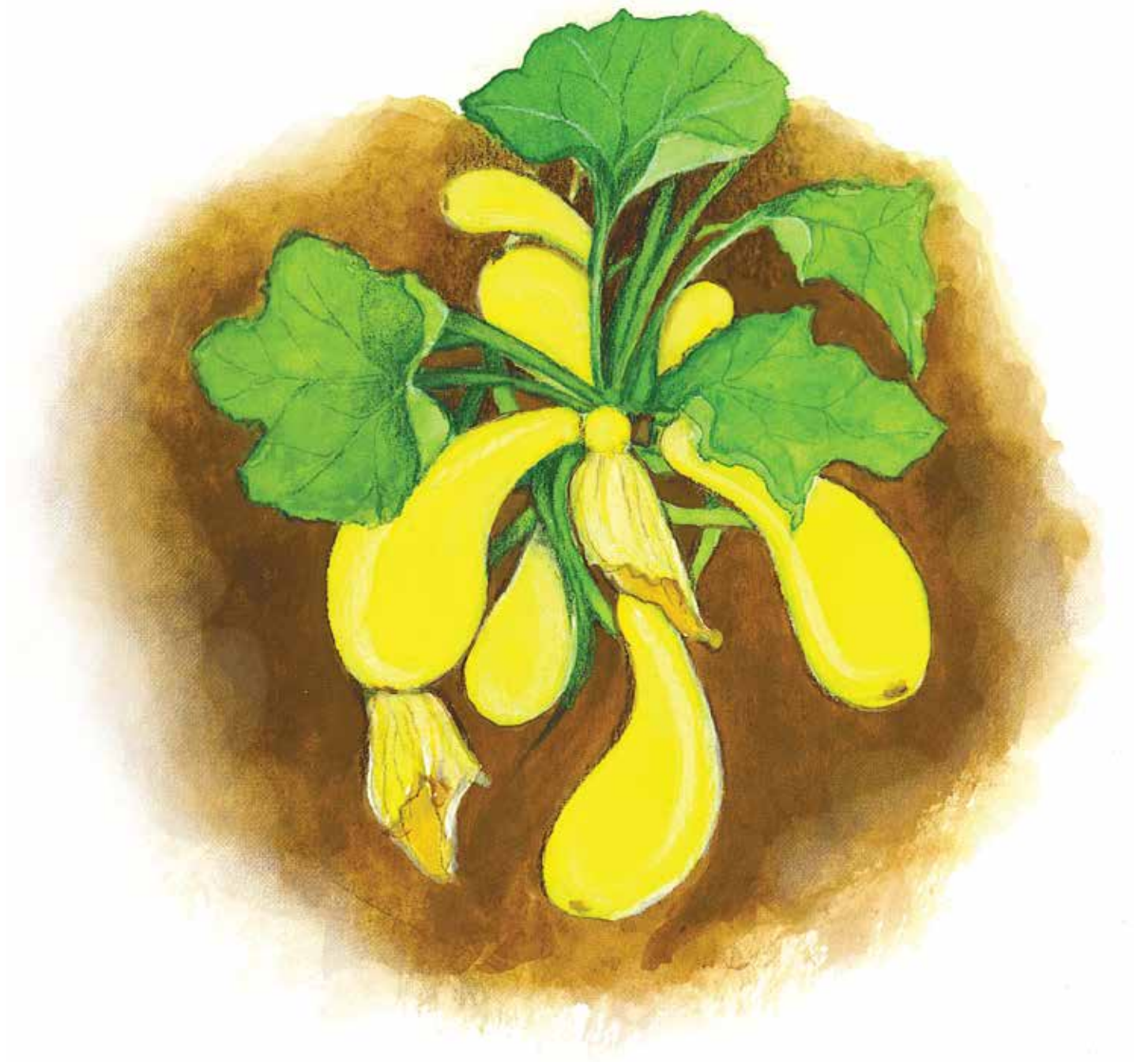
- Fell, Derek *A Kid's First Book of Gardening: Growing Plants Indoors and Out* (Running Press, 1989)
- Garland, Sarah *Peter Rabbit's Gardening Book* (Warne, 1983)
- Lopez, Ruth K. *Gardens for Growing People: A Guide to Garden with Children* (1990) Gardens for Growing People is a business devoted to gardening resources for children. Contact them at P.O. Box 630, Point Reyes Station, CA 94956.
- Markmann, Erika *Grow It! An Indoor/Outdoor Gardening Guide for Kids* (Random House, 1991;)
- Tilgner, Linda *Let's Grow: 72 Gardening Adventures with Children* (Garden Way, 1994)
- Waters, Marjorie *The Victory Garden Kids' Book: A Beginner's Guide to Growing Vegetables, Fruits and Flowers* (Houghton Mifflin, 1994)
- *Sunset Best Kids Garden Book* (Sunset Publishing Corporation, 1992) A great guide from a gardening authority.

*Mention of these materials is not an endorsement by the Department of Agriculture over other materials that may be available on this subject.

Fruit and Vegetable Drawings

Crookneck Squash

Crookneck squash growing in garden



Crookneck Squash

Crookneck squash at farmers' market



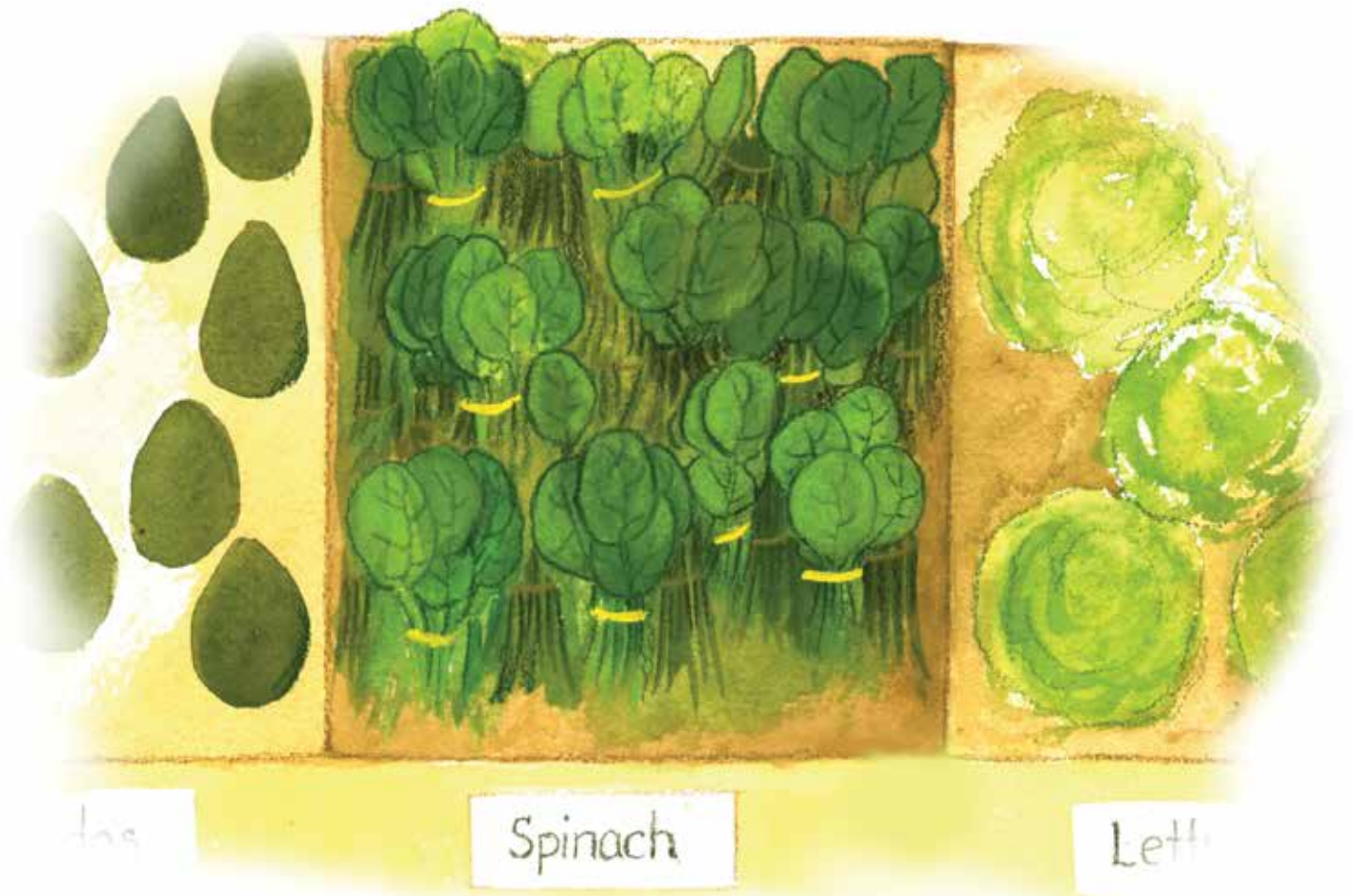
Spinach

Spinach growing in garden



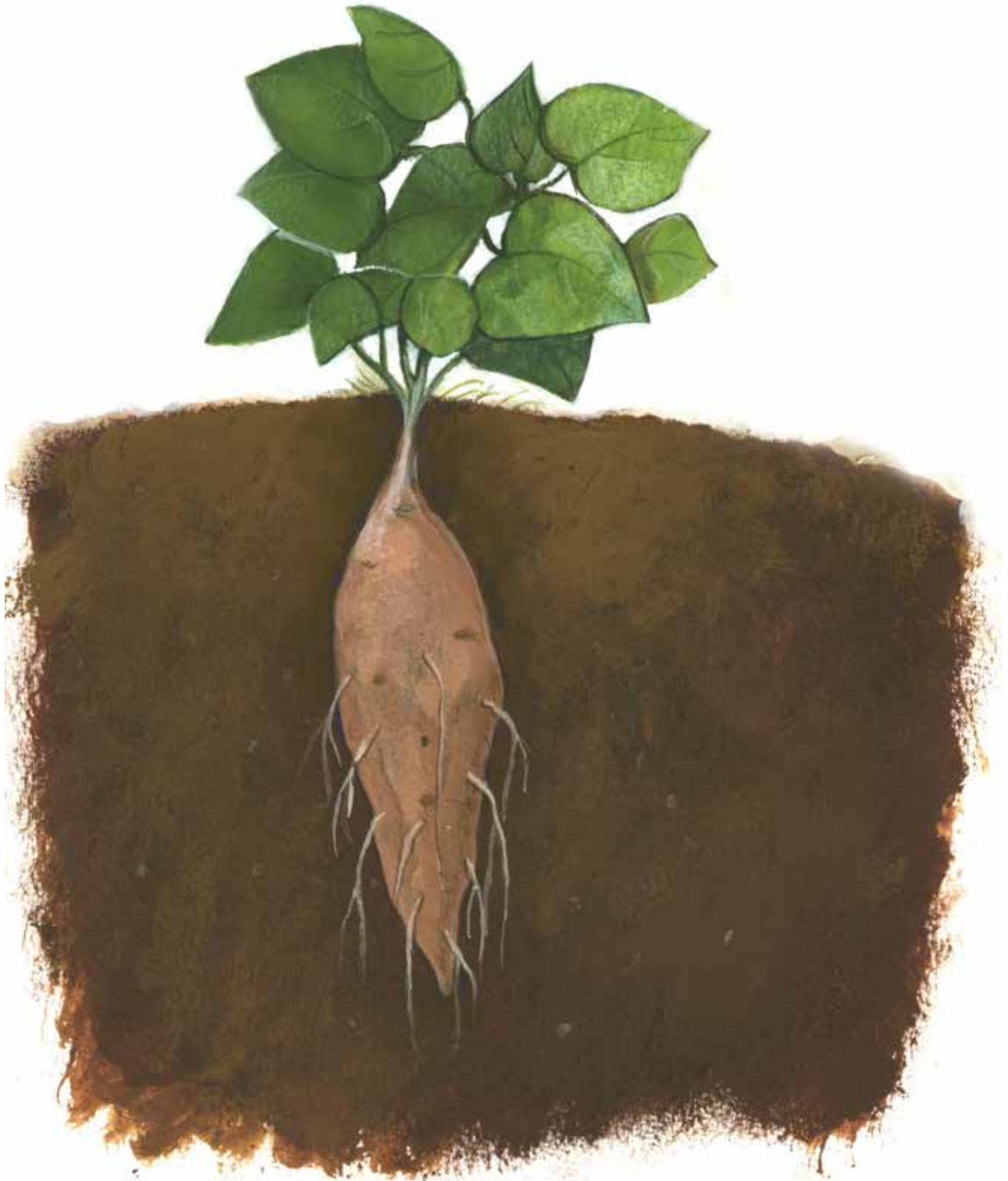
Spinach

Spinach in grocery store



Sweet Potato

Sweet potatoes in ground



Sweet Potato

Sweet potatoes at farmers' market



Cantaloupe

Cantaloupe growing in field



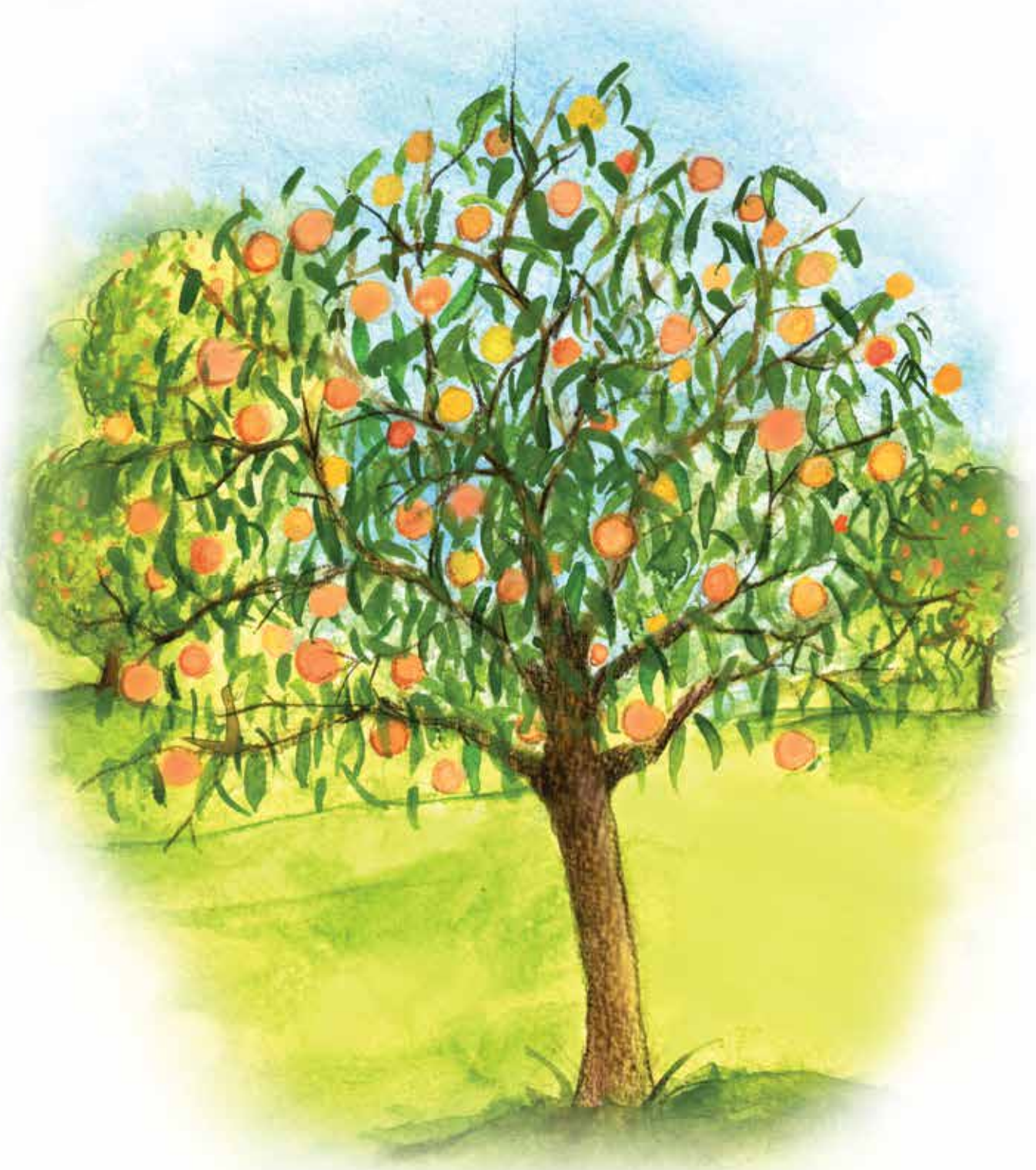
Cantaloupe

Cantaloupe in grocery store



Peach

Peaches growing on trees in orchard



Peach

Peaches in grocery store



Strawberry

Strawberries growing in garden



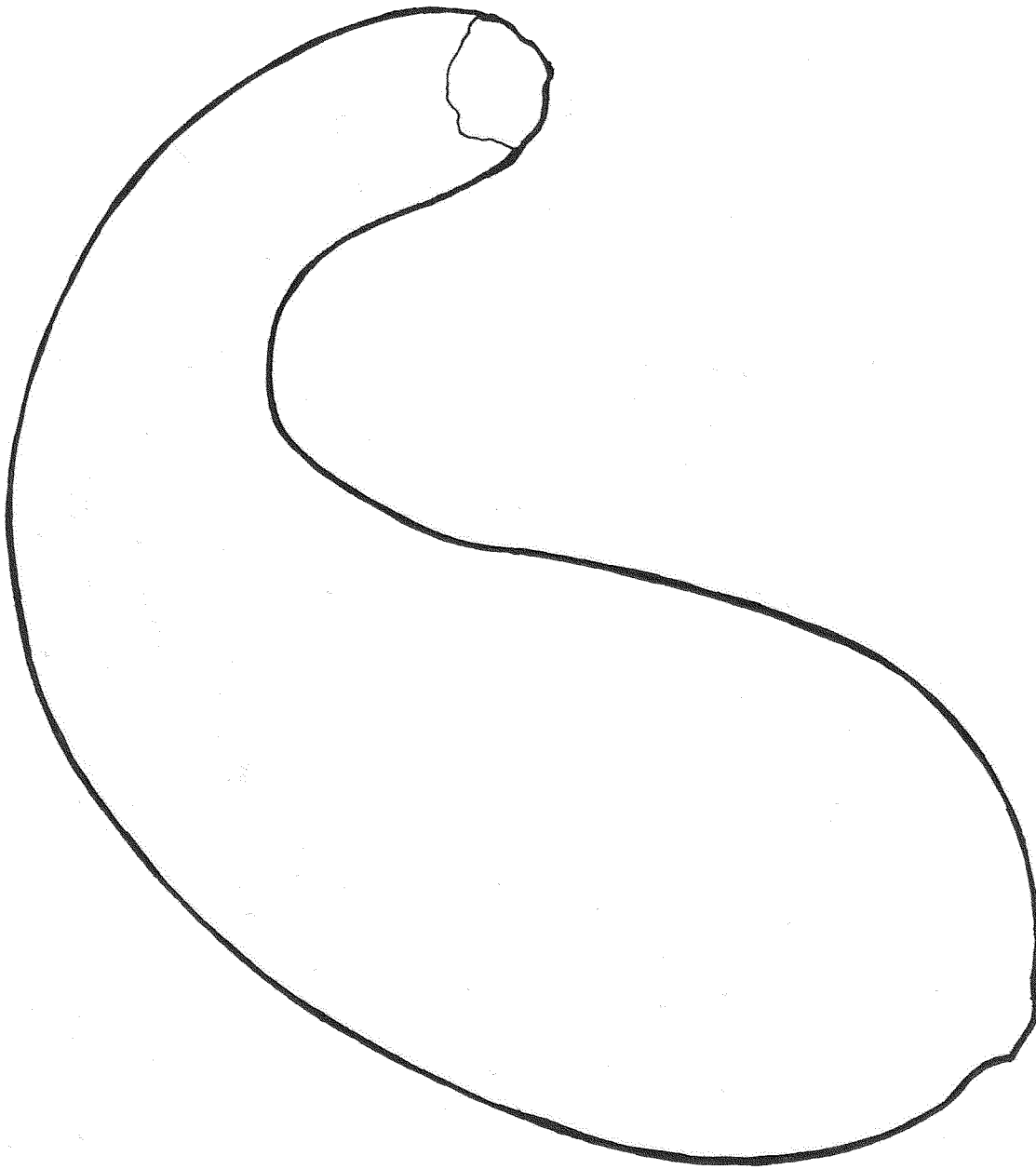
Strawberry

Strawberries at farmers' market



BLACKLINE MASTERS

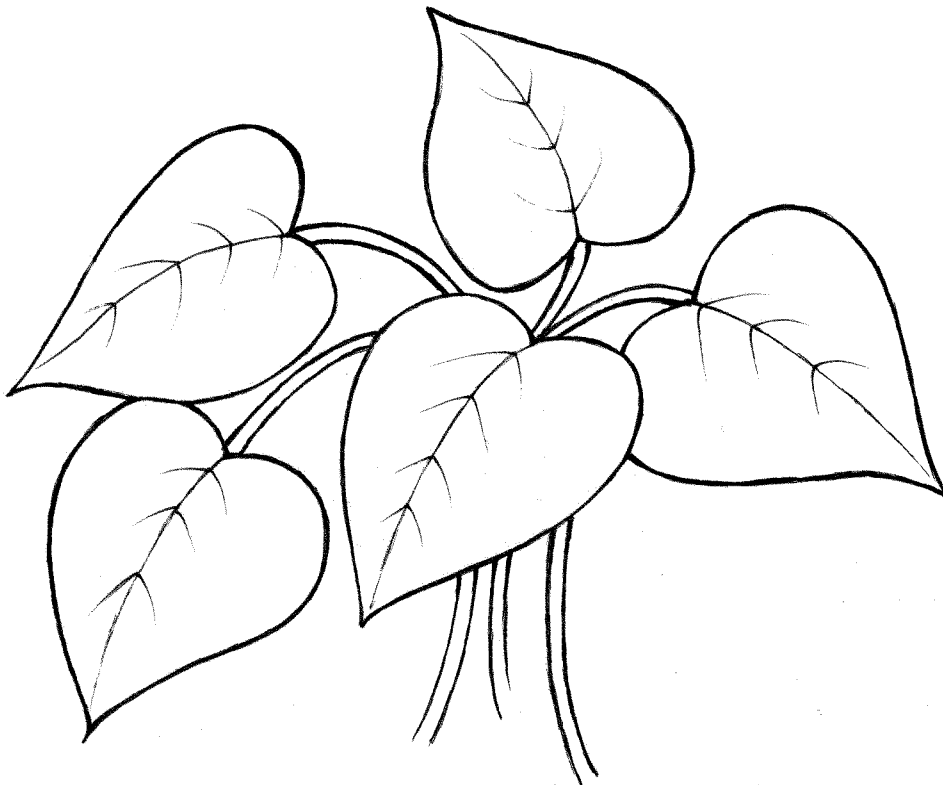
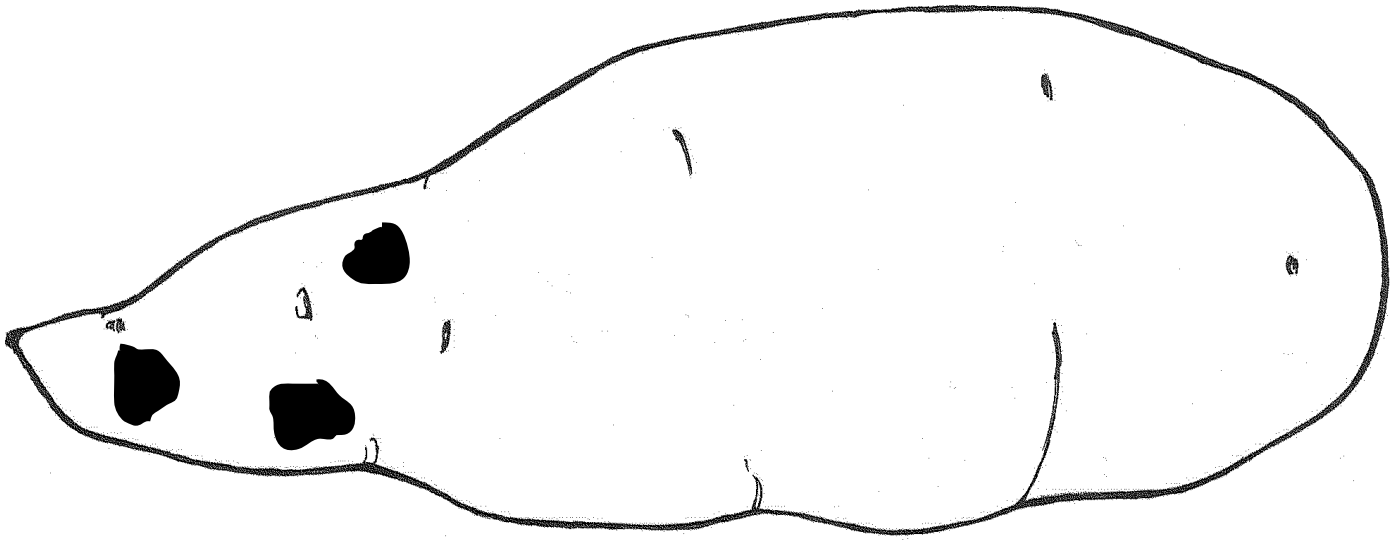
Crookneck Squash



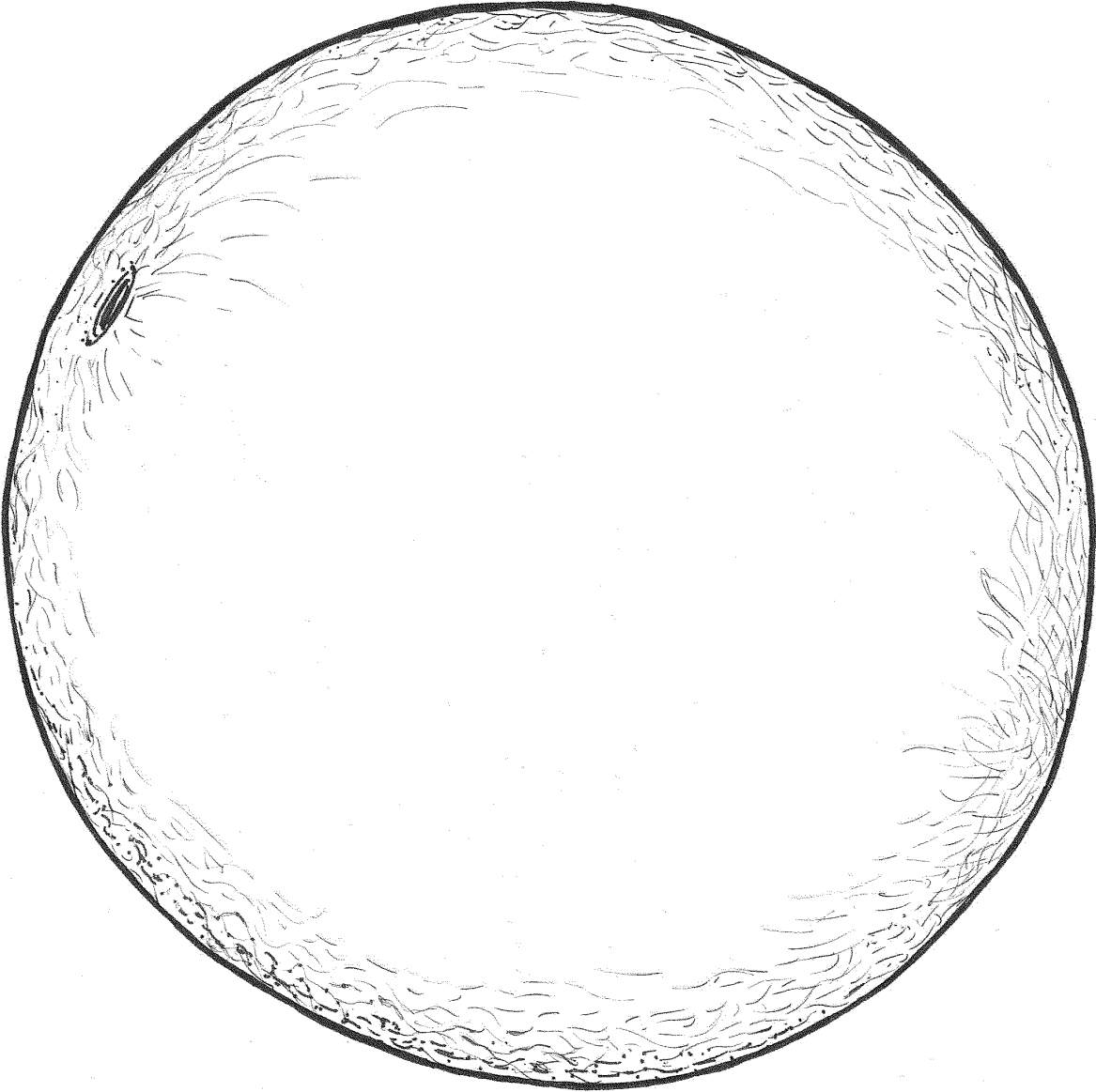
Spinach



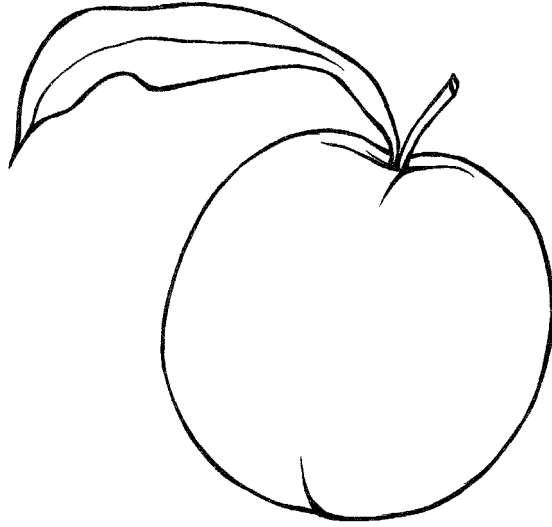
Sweet Potato



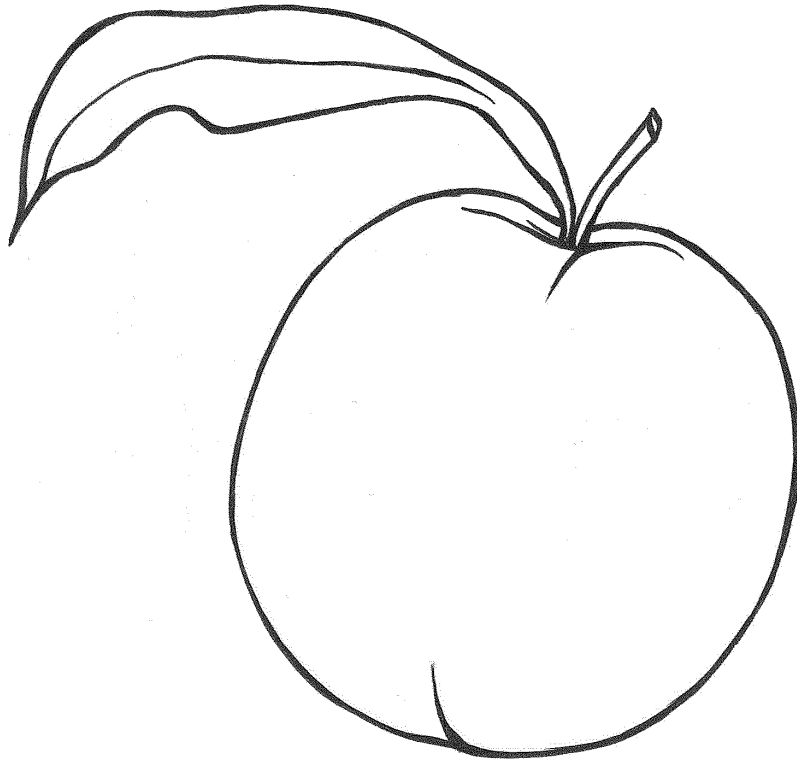
Cantaloupe



Peach

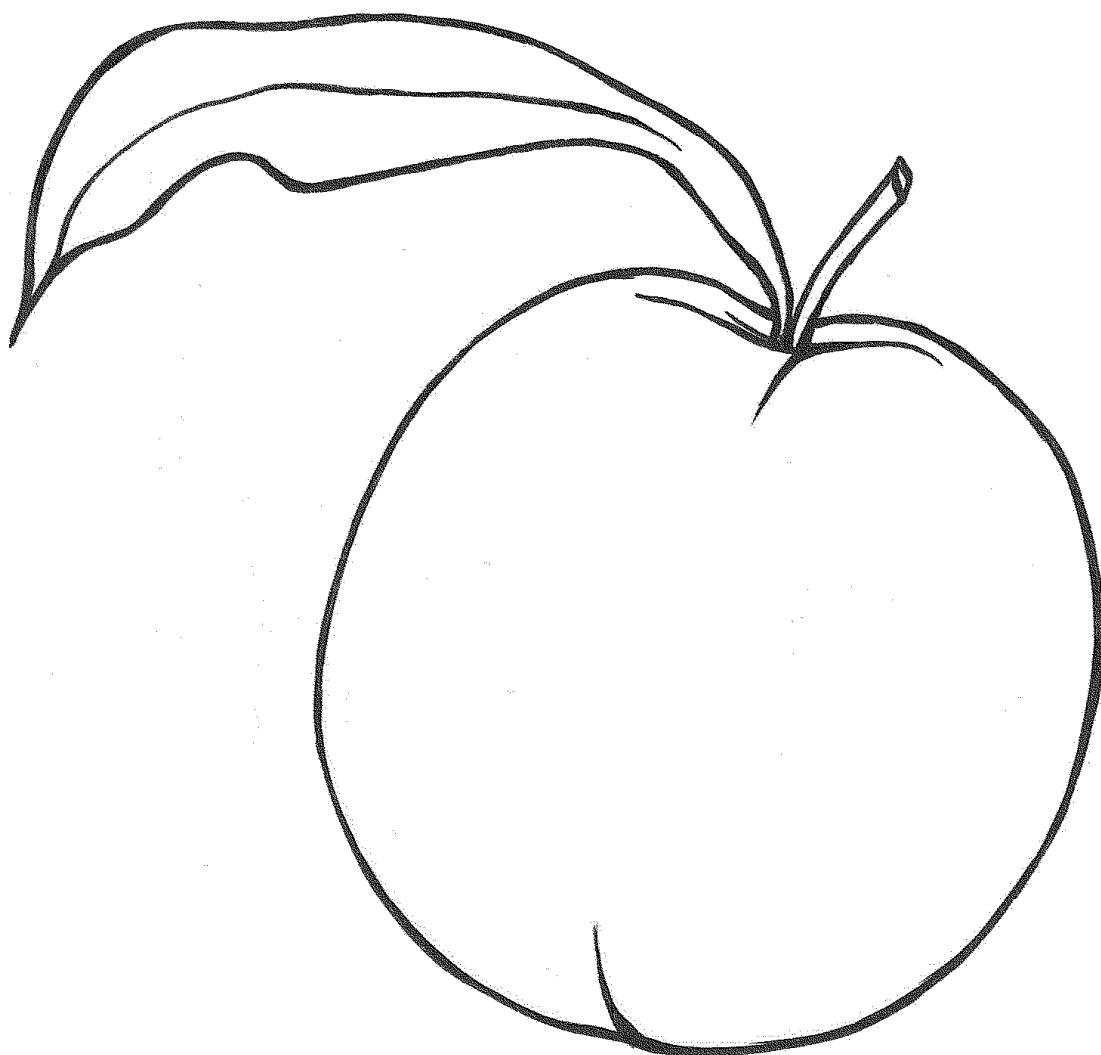


**2”
peach**



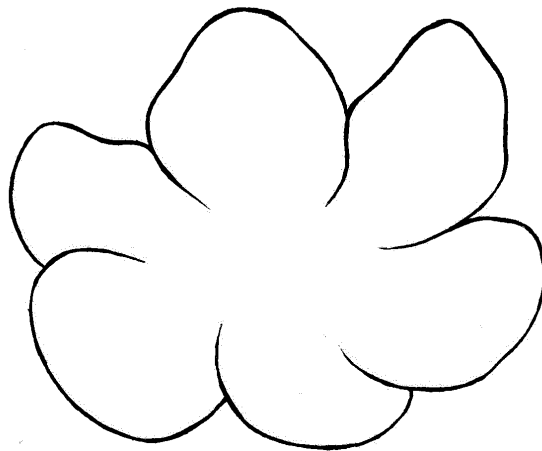
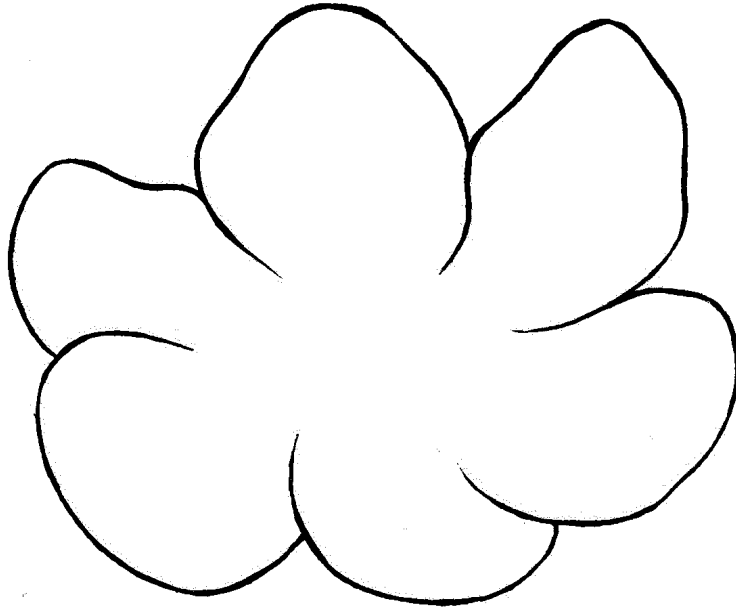
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peach**

Peach

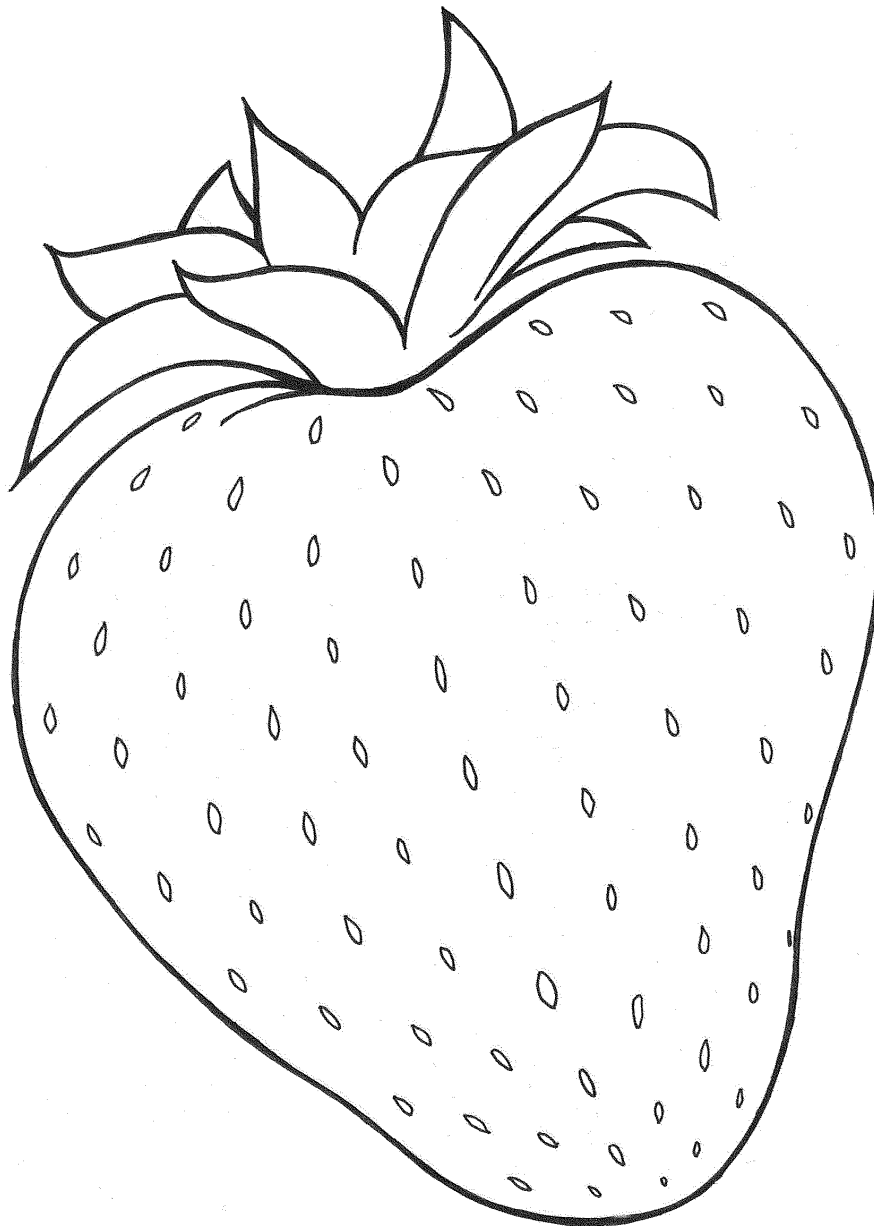


**4”
peach**

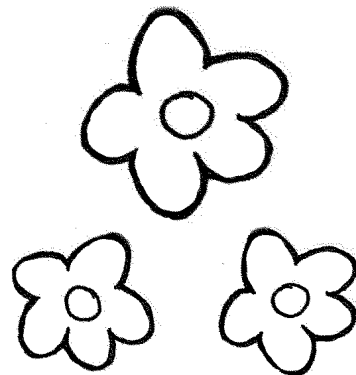
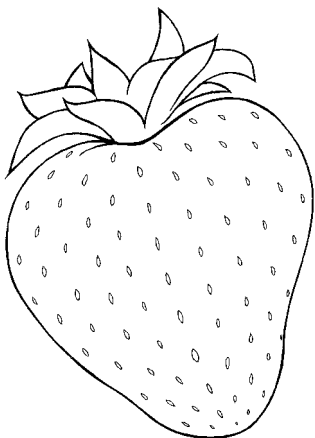
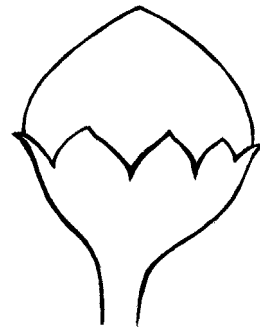
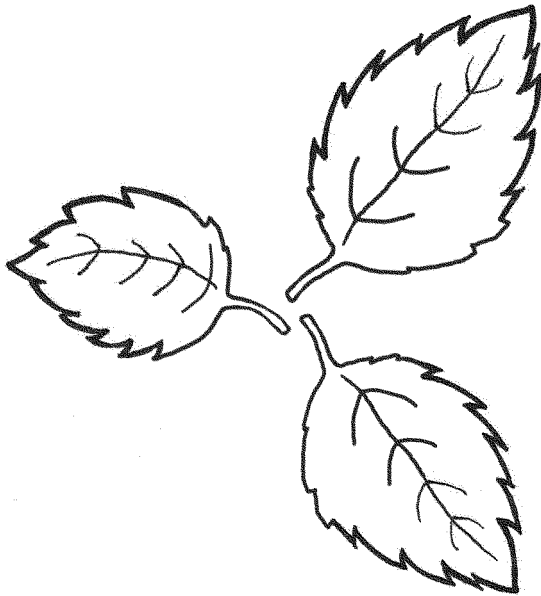
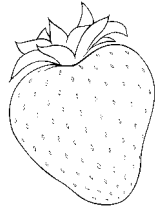
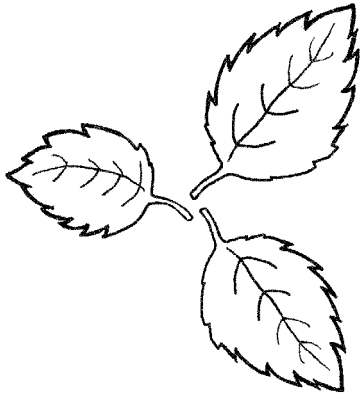
Peach Blossoms

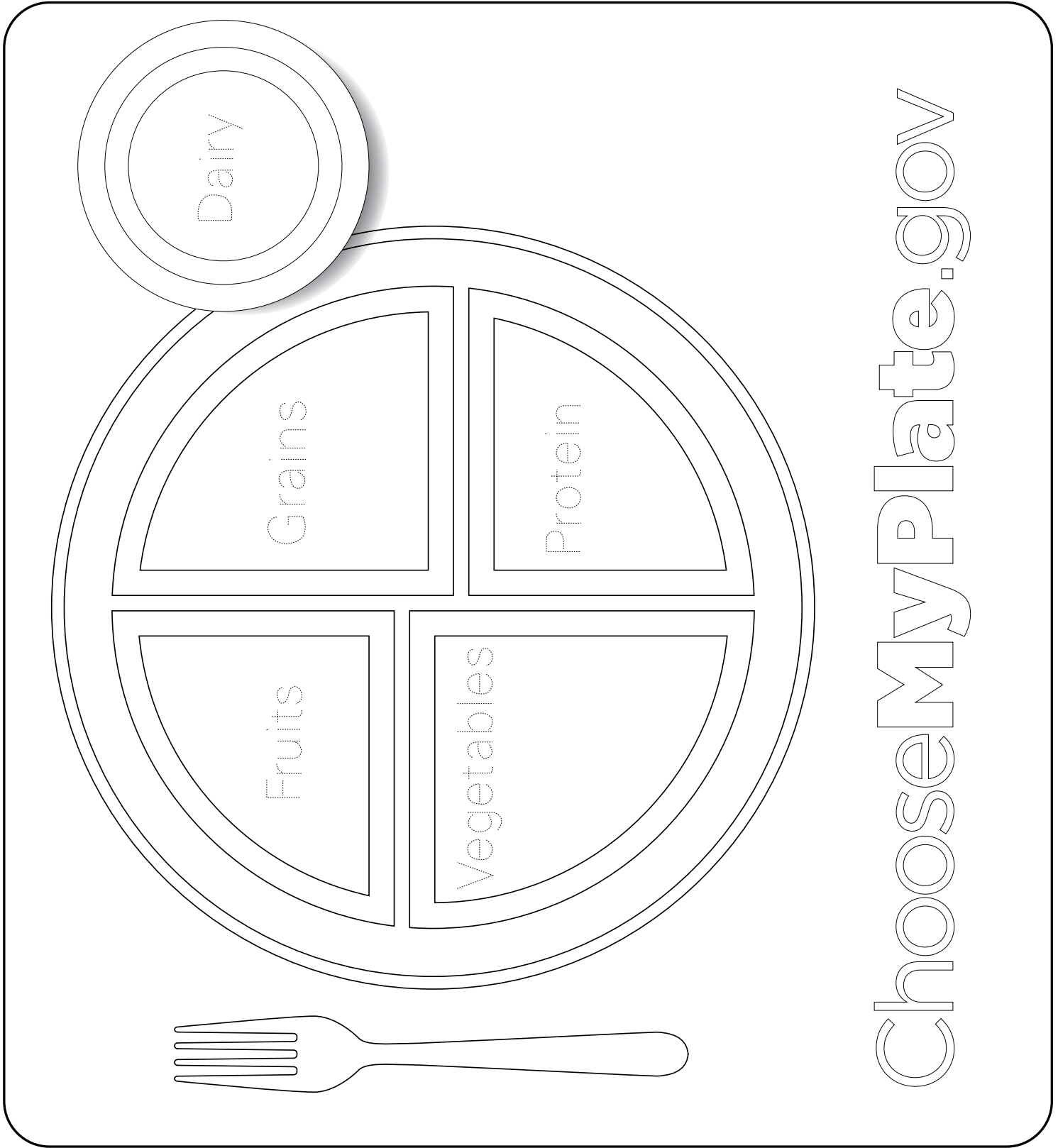


Strawberry

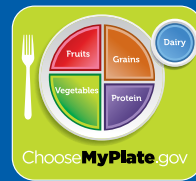


Strawberry Plant Parts





ChooseMyPlate.gov



United States Department of Agriculture • Food and Nutrition Service
Find more fun resources at these Web sites:

teammnutrition.usda.gov
choosemyplate.gov

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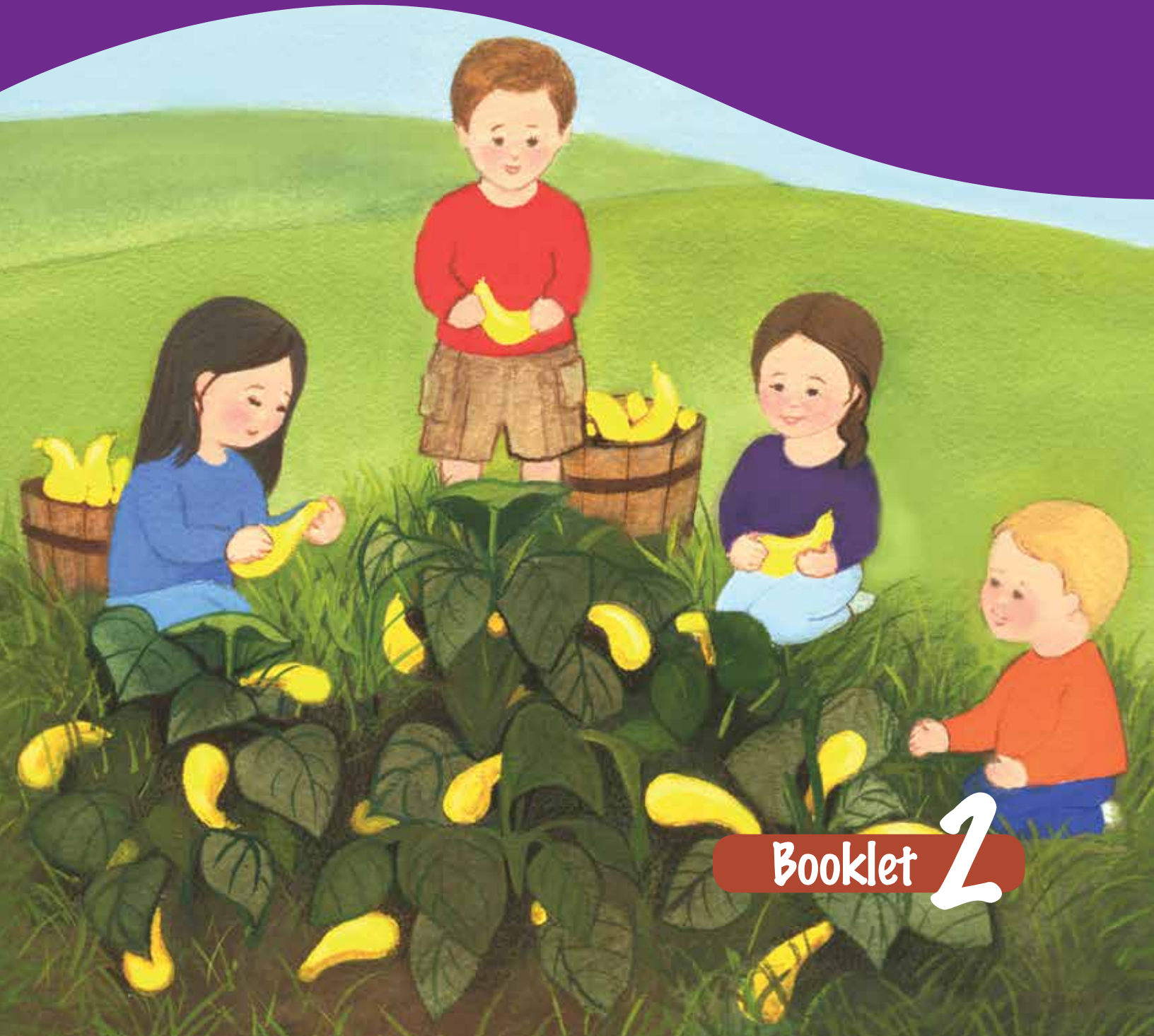
Revised June 2013
September 2009
FNS-406



Grow It, Try It, Like It!

Preschool Fun With Fruits and Vegetables

Crookneck Squash Row



Booklet

2

Welcome to... Crookneck Squash Row at Tasty Acres Farm!

There is a curve waiting on the end of the vines at Crookneck Squash Row. It is the yellow, crookneck squash, a vegetable that children find intriguing. The children explore this unique vegetable experiencing how a crookneck squash looks, feels, smells, and tastes. Children learn how crookneck squash are grown, harvested, and shipped from the farm to farmers' markets and stores. Enjoyable tasting activities are also in store. From crookneck squash quick bread to pasta salad, children are treated to a variety of crookneck squash tastes. Growing at Home materials help shape family fun with Crookneck Squash recipes and activities.

Variation: If crookneck squash is not available in your area substitute another summer squash, such as yellow, sunburst, or patty pan squash.

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A Plan for Organizing Crookneck Squash Row Activities

Check with local farms and farmers' markets to find out when crookneck squash are in peak season. Crookneck squash are interesting and seeing crookneck squash growing makes a great farm field trip for preschoolers. If a farm is not nearby, visit a produce stand or farmers' market to see fresh crookneck squash.



Most activities require only 10-15 minutes; pick a few for each day. In this example, all of the activities from the lesson plans are completed, but spaced out over a 5-day period.

The Crookneck Squash Row lesson plans are designed to be used in their entirety but if your center does not have the time, space or resources to do all the activities select the activities best suited to your center's environment and available resources from Section A: hands-on activities, Section B: planting activities, Section C: crookneck squash stories and songs, and Section D: nutrition education activities. Be sure that the activities you choose help the children meet the objectives listed at the beginning of each lesson plan section. If possible, do the planting activities and enjoy crookneck squash for several weeks. It is an easy vegetable to grow and can be planted in a shrub bed or large container.

Here is one way to arrange the activities in your Crookneck Squash Row. Most activities require only 10-15 minutes; pick a few for each day. In this example, all of the activities from the lesson plans are completed, but spaced out over a 5-day period. Additionally, two activities from the Garden Art and Crafts Section in Booklet 1, are added. These activities are fun and useful ways to help reinforce the objectives of each activity. On page 19, it gives tips for creating successful projects and ideas for harvesting fun month after month. The Garden Art and Crafts chart connects the art and crafts to the lesson activities.

Planning Chart for Crookneck Squash Row Activities

Day One	Day Two	Day Three	Day Four	Day Five
A1 Feel That Curvy Shape Hands-on Activity 	A3 Crookneck Squash Sandwiches Hands-on Activity	C1 Cool Puppy Pup Video	B3 Plant a Crookneck Squash Seed or Start Outdoors Planting Activity	D1 Savor the Flavor of Squash Nutrition Education Activity
A2 Crookneck Squash A Look Inside Hands-on Activity	C2 Reading Activity 	B2 Plant a Crookneck Squash Seed 	C3 Old MacDonald Had a Farm Song, Crookneck Squash Style	D2 Gosh, I Love Squash! Nutrition Education Activity 
Garden Art Bookmarks 	B1 Crookneck Squash Start as Seeds Planting Activity	C3 Old MacDonald Had a Farm Song, Crookneck Squash Style 	Garden Craft Seed Art 	C3 Old MacDonald Had a Farm Song, Crookneck Squash Style
Send home Growing at Home Materials #1		Send home Growing at Home Materials #2	C2 Reading Activity 	Send home Growing at Home Materials #3

Revisit the Farm: Rainy Day Fun All Year Long

When the weather changes your outdoor plans, the activities from Tasty Acres Farm provide a welcome opportunity to revisit and remember all the fun and flavor of *Grow It, Try It, Like It!* Sing the songs, watch the video segments, and use the Garden Art and Crafts Section in Booklet I for ideas. Make a rainy day one to reconnect with these fruits and vegetables.

More Ways To Grow – The Crookneck Squash Row unit can be included in other areas of the curriculum. **Complementary themes include:**

Foods – Vegetables **Shapes** – Curves, Circles **Colors** – Yellow, White **Seasons** – Summer

Opposites – Inside & Outside **Plants** – Vines, Squash **Alphabet** – C, S words **Body** – Senses



A. Lots to Know About Squash

Hands-On Activities

Materials Needed

- Two crookneck squash, well-scrubbed
- Container for crookneck squash pieces
- Serving spoon and napkins
- Mystery Box/Bag
- Paper and pencil

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Prepare bite-size pieces of crookneck squash and keep these pieces out of sight.
- Place one well-scrubbed whole crookneck squash in the Mystery Box/Bag.
- Make copies of Crookneck Squash Growing at Home #1—one set per child.
- Review Make a Mystery Box or Bag, as needed (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 45).

Growing at Home Introduction Letter and Hand Washing and Polite Tasting Guidelines: Send a copy of these resources home before starting the first unit in *Grow It, Try It, Like It!* If you have already sent these resources home, you may omit this step. (See Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 42-44.)

Crookneck Squash Growing at Home #1: Send a copy of this resource home with each child at the start of Section A activities.

Variation: Substitute another summer squash, such as yellow, zucchini, sunburst, or patty pan squash for crookneck squash.

A1: Feel That Curvy Shape

Use the Mystery Box/Bag to create interest by having the children feel the outside of a crookneck squash before revealing the “mystery” item to all.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Identify a crookneck squash as a light weight, yellow vegetable with a curved neck;
- Describe the outside appearance and smell of a crookneck squash.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing and Polite Tasting

- Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).
- If this is the first activity involving food tasting, talk with the children about polite food tasting habits (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 44, for details).



Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Introduce the Mystery Box/Bag, or reintroduce it if you have used it before.
- One at a time, ask each child to come and feel inside the box or bag without looking. If a child seems afraid, feel inside the box/bag with the child.
- Ask each child to describe quietly to you what he/she feels.
- After everyone has guessed, reveal the crookneck squash. Let each child hold the crookneck squash if desired.
- Note the children's guesses that were close (curved, crooked, a plant, food) or correct (crookneck squash).
- Talk about the crookneck squash. Ask the questions below and any other questions you like.
 - ▶ Is a crookneck squash a fruit or a vegetable? (Vegetable)
 - ▶ What shape is it? (Curved like a cane)
 - ▶ What color is it? (Light yellow)
 - ▶ How does the outside of it feel? (Smooth)
 - ▶ Is it light or heavy? (Light)
 - ▶ Is it soft or hard? (Hard)
 - ▶ Does it have a smell? (May have no smell or smell earthy)
 - ▶ Has anyone ever tasted a crookneck squash? (Yes or No)

Words To Grow

Vegetable	Curve
Smooth	Light (weight)
Yellow	Crookneck
Squash	

Activity Conclusion—Tasting

- Conclude the lesson by offering the children a piece of crookneck squash to taste.
- As necessary, remind the children how the group follows polite tasting manners.



Materials Needed

- Crookneck squash (can be the one used in Activity A1)
- Sharp knife
- Cutting board or surface
- Damp cloth and dry towel for wiping and drying hands
- Paper plates and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Prepare the crookneck squash—wash the outside of the crookneck squash well.
- Assemble supplies; keep the knife in a safe place until ready to use.

A2: Crookneck Squash...A Look Inside

Engage all the senses! The children will see and feel the inside of a crookneck squash, then smell and taste it.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Describe the appearance, smell, and taste of a crookneck squash;
- Tell that all of the crookneck squash can be eaten including the seeds, flesh, and peel.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing

- Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).



Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Have the children gather around the area with the crookneck squash and cutting board. Review with children how to be safe around sharp knives: only adults use them, children keep their hands away, and do not touch sharp knives.
- Review what was learned about crookneck squash in Activity A1. If you didn't do Activity A1, tell the children you have a crookneck squash to share today.
- Tell the children crookneck squash grow on the ground. We have to wash the outside very well to remove soil and germs before we cut it open. Tell the children you have already washed the crookneck squash.
- Cut the crookneck squash in half to reveal the inside. Let the children know they will get to touch the inside if they want a little later.
- Cut a section of crookneck squash into small wedges with the peel and seeds intact. On a plate, give each child a small wedge of crookneck squash to look at, touch, and smell.

Activity continued...

- Talk with the children about the inside of the crookneck squash. Ask the following questions and ask additional questions if you like.
 - ▶ What color is the inside of the crookneck squash? (White)
 - ▶ What does the inside of the crookneck squash look like? (Seeds and white flesh of the crookneck squash)
 - ▶ How does the inside feel? (The flesh feels smooth and firm, the seeds feel like small, flat bumps)
 - ▶ How does the crookneck squash smell? (Mild, earthy, or no smell)

Words To Grow

Seeds	Flesh
Peel	Smooth
Cool	Yellow
White	Mild
Crunchy	

Tasting Activity

- Once the children have explored their own piece of crookneck squash, invite them to taste the crookneck squash. Tell the children that all of the parts of the squash may be eaten: flesh, seeds, and peel.
- How does the crookneck squash feel in their mouth? (Smooth, firm, crunchy)
- How does the crookneck squash taste? (Mild)
- After everyone has sampled their own crookneck squash wedge, invite the children to come to the board and feel the squash half with the seeds.
- After the children have felt the half with seeds, have the children wipe their hands on the damp cloth and dry with the towel.
- Cover and refrigerate any remaining untouched crookneck squash for use in the next day or two in future activities or snacks.



Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Garden Bookmark Art

Activity: Have the children make Garden Bookmarks, with drawings of crookneck squash on them for a creative connection to this activity (see Booklet 1, Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 28).



A3: Crookneck Squash Sandwiches

The children make sandwiches with crookneck squash slices. They explore the feel, smell, and taste of crookneck squash.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Make a simple snack with crookneck squash;
- Taste a new food featuring crookneck squash.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing

- Explain that we always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).

Materials Needed

- Crookneck squash, about 1-2 inches in diameter
- Mozzarella or cheddar cheese slices
- Plates and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Prepare crookneck squash—wash the outside of the crookneck squash well and cut into ¼-inch slices, two per child.
- Cut cheese slices into triangles or squares, one slice per child.
- Prepare a plate for each child with two slices of squash and one piece of cheese on the plate.





Activity Length:
10 minutes

The Activity

- Have each child seated at the table(s).
- Explain that we always wash crookneck squash under running water before they are eaten. Tell the children you have already washed the crookneck squash.
- Give each child a paper plate with at least two thin slices of crookneck squash and one slice of cheese.
- Tell the children they are going to make a sandwich with crookneck squash.
- Show the children how to place the cheese between the crookneck squash slices to make a sandwich. Have the children note the difference in shapes between the round squash slice and the triangle or square cheese slice in the sandwich.
- Remind the children of the interesting curved shape of a crookneck squash.
- After making the crookneck squash sandwiches, invite the children to eat their snack.
- As the children eat, ask them to describe how the crookneck squash:
 - ▶ smells (mild);
 - ▶ feels in the mouth (cool, smooth, firm, and crunchy); and
 - ▶ tastes (fresh).

Words To Grow

Slice	Smooth
Cool	Firm
Crunchy	Round
Triangle	Cheese



B. Crookneck Squash... Where Do You Come From? Planting Activities

Crookneck Squash Growing at Home #2: Send a copy of this resource home with each child at the start of Section B activities.

Materials Needed

- Crookneck squash seed packet
- Yardstick or two 12" rulers
- Drawing of crookneck squash (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, pages 61-62)
- Crookneck squash
- Fork or tongs
- Napkins
- **Optional:** Ranch dressing, or if you have completed the spinach activities, Dilly Spinach Dip (see Spinach Lane Growing at Home #1 Materials, page 31)

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Prepare crookneck squash sticks for tasting.
- Assemble materials in central area.
- Make copies of Crookneck Squash Growing at Home #2—one set per child.

B1: Crookneck Squash Start as Seeds

The children see and touch crookneck squash seeds and learn how far apart to plant seeds.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Describe how a crookneck squash grows from a seed into a plant that produces crookneck squash;
- Describe the resources needed to grow crookneck squash.





Activity Length:
10 minutes

The Activity

- Tell the children they will learn about how crookneck squash grow. Show the children the crookneck squash seeds. Tell them the seeds are similar to the ones from the inside of the crookneck squash. People buy packets of seeds to grow crookneck squash in gardens.
- Pass the seeds around. Let the children touch and count the seeds.
- Explain that the crookneck squash seeds are planted at least 2 feet apart in the soil. The crookneck squash plants need enough room to spread out when they grow. Have two children hold the rulers between them to show the distance. Have the children return to the group.
- Explain that the crookneck squash seeds are planted in the soil in the spring. The sun and rain help them grow into long vines above the ground. Yellow flowers bloom on the vines. Where the flowers bloom on the vines, crookneck squash will grow during the summer. Show drawing of crookneck squash growing on the vine in a field.
- Explain that crookneck squash are picked when they are tender and still have a shiny or glossy appearance. Squash stems and leaf stalks are prickly so it is best to wear gardening gloves when picking squash. Show drawing of ripe crookneck squash in a field. The squash are taken to a store or a farmers' market where people buy them and take them home to eat. Show drawing of crookneck squash at a farmers' market.
- Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).
- Offer crookneck squash sticks for tasting, using a fork or tongs to serve. Note that sticks are straight, not curved like the whole crookneck squash. Serve squash sticks with dip, if desired.

Words To Grow

Seeds	Soil
Sun	Water
Space	Plants



Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Gardening Gloves Craft

Activity: Make Gardening Gloves for growing crookneck squash. Explain to the children that squash stems and leaves are prickly and gloves can protect the hands of those picking squash (see Booklet 1, Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 37).

Materials Needed

- Crookneck squash seed packets
- 5 to 6 ounce paper cups, one per child
- Potting mix or soil
- Water for soil in a small spray bottle
- Plastic spoons or scoops, one per child
- Unsharpened pencils, with a line marking $\frac{1}{2}$ inch
- Water proof pens or markers
- Wooden craft sticks
- Table covers, if desired
- Smocks for the children, optional
- Sunny location and/or fluorescent lights if planning to grow plants indoors

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Prepare potting mix or soil.
- Divide into containers, one for every three children.
- Write Crookneck Squash on the wooden plant marker.
- At the table(s), place a small paper cup, three seeds, and a plastic spoon per child.
- Put a small scoop in each container of potting soil if not using spoons.
- Plan to serve Squash Vegetable Soup at snack or mealtime (see Crookneck Squash Growing at Home #2 recipe, page 34).

B2: Plant a Crookneck Squash Seed

The children plant crookneck squash seeds in the soil and learn what the seeds need to grow. (See Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, Grow Seedlings Indoors, page 53.)

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Describe the resources needed to grow crookneck squash;
- Experience planting a crookneck squash seed.

Optional Activity: How to Grow a Seedling in a Bag (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 52). Display this visual in the classroom. Check daily for progress and compare to the growth of the children's plants



Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Help each child write his/her name on their cup.
- During the activity, help the children:
 - ▶ Fill their cups about three-quarters full with moist potting soil.
 - ▶ Gently tap the sides and bottom of their container with their index finger to settle but not pack the soil.
 - ▶ Poke three holes in the soil spaced around the cup. Use the marked unsharpened pencil to make holes $\frac{1}{2}$ inch deep.
 - ▶ Place a seed in each hole and gently cover the seeds with soil.
 - ▶ Lightly spray water over the top of the soil; help any children needing assistance.
 - ▶ If using wooden plant markers, stick one in the soil close to the inside curve of the cup.
- During the activity, tell the children:
 - ▶ The seeds will grow in the potting soil as plants grow in the soil outside.
 - ▶ The seeds need soil, water, light, and warmth to grow into plants.

Activity continued...

- ▶ Inside, we can use lights to give plants warmth and light, just as the sun helps outside plants grow.
- ▶ The seeds will grow first into very small plants (seedlings), then into larger plants. These larger plants, if planted outside in a garden, will continue to grow with sunlight and water. Crookneck squash will grow on the larger plants.
- Have the children set their cups in a sunny spot or under lights.
- Have the children check their cups weekly to see the progress of the seeds growing into plants.

Activity Connection to Snack or Mealtime

While eating Squash Vegetable Soup at snack or mealtime, talk about how the seeds planted in the soil will grow plants. The plants will grow and produce crookneck squash after a summer of water, sun, and warmth.



Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Decorated Garden Bag:

Have each child make a Decorated Garden Bag by drawing pictures of crookneck squash on them. Use the crookneck squash Decorated Garden Bags to send home each child's cup of planted crookneck seeds (see Booklet I, Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 27).





Materials Needed

- A crookneck squash seed tape
- Garden or flowerbed, 12 feet or longer by 18 inches wide
- Hoe or trowel
- Garden hose with sprinkler nozzle or watering can

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Prepare a seed tape (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, Make a Seed Tape, page 54).
- Prepare garden or flowerbed for planting by tilling (breaking up) and fertilizing the soil (Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, Green Thumb Guide, Gardening Outdoors, page 58).
- Plan to serve crookneck squash at snack or mealtime (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, Ten Terrific Ways..., page 48).

B3: Plant a Crookneck Squash Seed or Start Outdoors

The children plant crookneck squash seeds or plant start(s) and learn what crookneck squash seeds need to grow into plants.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Describe the resources needed to grow crookneck squash;
- Experience planting a crookneck squash seed or start.

Planting Options:

- If you have grown crookneck squash seedlings from seeds inside and hardened the plants for outdoor planting, you can substitute the plants for the seed tape.
- Follow the directions on the back of the crookneck squash seed packet to plant seeds directly into the ground.
- You can also purchase crookneck squash starts at a greenhouse and plant directly into the ground. Refer to starts or plants instead of seeds during the activity.





Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Take the children and the crookneck squash seeds or tape seed outside. Explain that today they will plant crookneck squash seeds and learn what seeds need to grow into plants.
- Point to the sun. Ask the children how the sunlight feels on their skin. (Warm)
- Explain that the light and warmth of the sun helps crookneck squash seeds grow into plants that will produce more crookneck squash.
- Show the children the soil in a garden or flowerbed. Let them touch the soil. Ask them how the soil feels. (Wet or dry, hard or soft) Explain that crookneck squash seeds need soil to grow into plants.
- Run some water from a hose or pour some from a container and let the children touch it. Ask how it feels. (Wet) Explain that water helps plants grow. Explain that water for plants usually comes as rain. Plants like crookneck squash need lots of water so farmers' and gardeners use sprinklers in addition to rain to make sure the plants have plenty of water.
- Have the children help lay the prepared seed tapes in the soil at the preferred planting depth of $\frac{1}{2}$ inch, cover with soil, and water. Remind the children of how far apart crookneck squash are planted (at least 2 feet apart).



Green Thumb Guide

Is space limited? Try planting crookneck squash in an existing shrub bed. Miniature varieties of crookneck squash also will grow in a large container; at least 2 feet deep and 2 feet in diameter (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, Container Gardens, page 55). To adapt this activity to plant in a container, see Plant a Strawberry Jar, Strawberry Patch B3.

Activity Connection to Snack or Mealtime

Talk about the crookneck squash seeds planted while eating crookneck squash at snack or mealtime.



Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Garden Scene Note Cards:

Have the children create a Crookneck Squash Garden Scene Note Card to send to a family member living in another town. The note cards can be mailed with a few seeds and growing instructions (see Booklet 1, Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 30).



C. Crookneck Squash Stories and Songs

C1: Cool Puppy Pup's Crookneck Squash Lunch Party Video

View Cool Puppy Pup's Crookneck Squash Lunch Party Segment with the children. Discuss the crookneck squash facts covered in this delightful video and have them try Cool Puppy Pup's favorite way to eat crookneck squash.

Objective

The children will be able to describe how crookneck squash are grown, harvested, and eaten.

Materials Needed

- Cool Puppy Pup DVD
- TV and DVD Player
- Crookneck squash
- Margarine
- Plates, spoons, and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Cue the DVD to start at the Crookneck Squash segment.
- Prepare cooked and mashed crookneck squash with a little margarine; keep warm in the oven or reheat in the microwave before serving.





Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Gather the children and watch the Crookneck Squash segment of the video.
- After viewing the segment, ask the children to name their favorite part of the video. Use their responses to lead into a discussion about the video. During the discussion, include the questions below to review Cool Puppy Pup's main points from the video segment.
- In the video, did Cool Puppy Pup say:
 - ▶ Crookneck squash was a fruit or a vegetable? (Vegetable)
 - ▶ What shape is crookneck squash? (Fat and round on one end, thin and crooked on the other)
 - ▶ What color is the outside rind? (Light yellow) How does it feel? (Smooth)
 - ▶ Cool Puppy Pup said the inside of crookneck squash is what color? (White)
 - ▶ Are crookneck squash's small white seeds on its inside or outside? (Inside)
 - ▶ Did Cool Puppy Pup say we can eat the skin, the insides, and the seeds? (Yes)
- At Tasty Acres Farm the farmer talked about how crookneck squash grow.
 - ▶ Where do crookneck squash grow? (On a farm)
 - ▶ Do crookneck squash grow on vines above or below the ground? (Above the ground)
 - ▶ Where are crookneck squash shipped after they are picked? (To stores and farmers' markets)
- Have the children name some of the ways that crookneck squash can be eaten: with pasta, in soup, in muffins and bread, or cooked and mashed with just a little margarine.
- Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).
- Conclude the activity by telling the children they are going to eat crookneck squash the way that Cool Puppy Pup likes crookneck squash best of all.
- Serve the cooked and mashed crookneck squash.



Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Make a Scarecrow: Cut a small crookneck squash in half lengthwise so that the flat, cut surface can be dipped in paint while holding onto the outer portion of the squash. Stamp the curvy shape of crookneck squash on the clothing of the scarecrow in waterproof paints (see Booklet 1, Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 38).



C2: Reading Activity

Read story books to the children that are about or include the activities of growing and/or eating fruits and vegetables. Listening to such stories can encourage children to adopt positive behaviors that can last a lifetime, like trying new fruits and vegetables.

Objective

Children will describe the fun and interesting stories about fruits and/or vegetables that were read to them.

Materials Needed

- Books from a library or purchased books
- Space for the children to sit

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Clear a space for the children to sit around you.
- Choose a book from the Harvest of Books list (see the Tool Shed Resources, Booklet 1, page 50).
- Select a book you would like to read and either borrow it from a library or purchase it.
- Use books relevant to fruits and vegetables that may already be available to you.





Activity Length:
10 to 20 minutes
depending on the
length of the book

The Activity

- Have the children sit around you as you read them the book.
- Ask the children to listen for the names of fruits and vegetables as the story is read.

Discussion Questions:

- After reading the story, ask the children which fruits and vegetables were named in the story and what happened to them. For example,
 - ▶ Where were the fruits and vegetables grown?
 - ▶ What happened to the fruits and vegetables after they were picked?
 - ▶ Who ate the fruits and vegetables?

Add other questions that relate to the story.





C3: Old MacDonald Had a Farm, Crookneck Squash Style

The children sing about growing and eating crookneck squash and act out motions to this familiar tune.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Sing and act out motions to familiar tune;
- Say that being physically active helps us feel good.



Activity Length:
10 minutes

Materials Needed

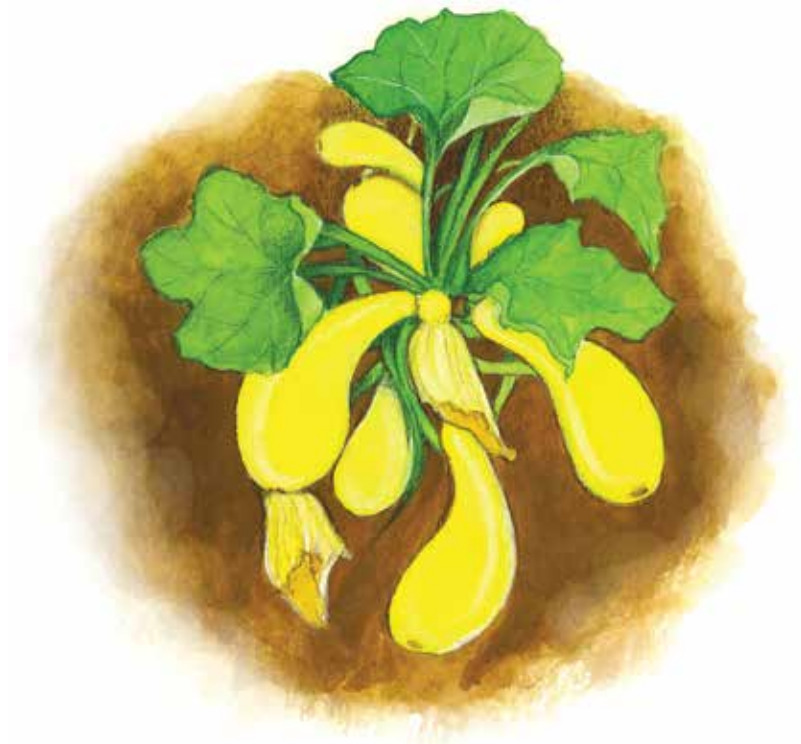
- Crookneck squash lyrics to tune “Old MacDonald Had a Farm”
- Large space for the children to move about

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Become familiar with the words and motions of the song.

The Activity

- Lead the children in singing these new words to the tune “Old MacDonald Had a Farm” and demonstrate the suggested motions or make up new ones.
- Encourage the children to move about as they are singing.
- Explain that skipping, wiggling, stretching, running, jumping, and playing actively every day helps us to feel good and stay healthy.



Old MacDonald Had a Farm, Crookneck Squash Style

The children sing about growing and eating crookneck squash and act out motions to this familiar tune.

1st Verse

Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!
On this farm he grew crookneck squash, EIEIO!
With vines growing here and vines growing there,
Here vines, there vines, everywhere squash vines!
Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!

(Skip in place)

(Pretend to carry crookneck squash)
(Wiggle arms to left and right repeatedly using large, vigorous motions)

(Skip in place)

2nd Verse

Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!
On this farm he grew crookneck squash, EIEIO!
With sunshine here and sunshine there,
Here sun, there sun, everywhere sun shines!
Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!

(Skip in place)

(Pretend to carry crookneck squash)
(Hold hands in circle above head and jump to face 4 corners & sides of room)

(Skip in place)

3rd Verse

Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!
On this farm he grew some squash, EIEIO!
With a harvest here, and a harvest there,
Here a harvest, there a harvest, everywhere a squash harvest.
Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!

(Skip in place)

(Pretend to carry crookneck squash)
(Pretend to wheel a heavy wheelbarrow)
(Pretend to wheel a heavy wheelbarrow)

(Skip in place)

4th Verse

Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!
On this farm he grew some squash, EIEIO!
With a bite, bite here, and a bite, bite there,
Here a bite, there a bite, everywhere a crunchy bite.
Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!

(Skip in place)

(Pretend to carry crookneck squash)
(Pretend to eat crookneck squash)
(Pretend to eat crookneck squash)

(Skip in place)





D. Introducing MyPlate

Nutrition Education Activities

Materials Needed

- *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster (see Booklet 1)
- Crookneck squash and zucchini squash, at least two of each type of squash
- Plates and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Review the foods and activities depicted on the poster.
- Display the poster.
- Add a photo or illustration of zucchini to the Vegetables group of the poster.
- Cut a crookneck squash and a zucchini squash in half.
- Prepare slices of crookneck squash and zucchini squash with the skin and seeds intact, at least one per child.
- Make copies of *MyPlate* coloring page (new or use copies from a previous D1 activity), one per child.
- Copy *Crookneck Squash Growing at Home #3*—one set per child.

Crookneck Squash Growing at Home #3: Send a copy of this resource home with each child at the start of Section D activities.

D1: Savor the Flavor of Squash

Introduce the children to the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster. The children find crookneck squash and other summer squash (zucchini) in the Vegetables group. They taste the difference between zucchini and crookneck squash.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Say that crookneck squash is found in the Vegetables group,
- Say that eating vegetables like crookneck squash help keep us healthy;
- Compare crookneck squash to zucchini squash;
- Say that being physically active every day helps us feel good and is fun;
- Say that eating foods from the different food groups each day helps us grow and be healthy;
- Identify a food from each of the five food groups.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing and Polite Tasting

- Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).
- If necessary, remind the children about polite food tasting habits (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 44, for details).



Activity Length:
25 minutes; 30 minutes
if optional coloring
activity conducted

The Activity

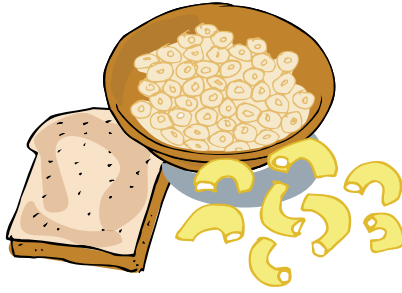
Learning the Food Groups

- Seat the children in a semicircle on the floor in view of the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster.
- Tell the children today they are going to learn about ways to be healthy and have fun every day. Tell the children that the best part is they like to do what helps them be healthy: they like to eat a variety of foods and they like to play.
- Point out the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster to the children. Ask the children to tell you what they see on the poster. Accept all correct answers, such as food, specific foods by name, children playing, and specific activities by name, etc.
- Explain that MyPlate shows the five food groups a person should eat from each day. Each food group has its own color: The Fruit Group is red, the Vegetable Group is green, the Grains Group is orange, the Dairy Group is blue, and the Protein Foods Group is purple. Eating foods from each food group helps us to be healthy and grow

This activity continues on the following pages.



Grains



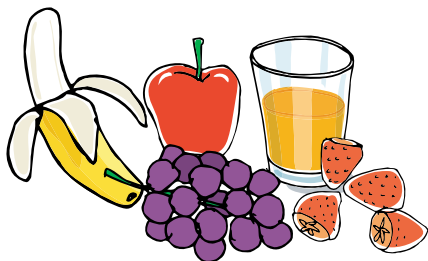
- Point to the orange band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (orange). Tell the children that foods made from grains are in the Grains group represented by the orange color band. Point to the bread and the cereal in the Grains group on the orange band of the poster and state that bread and cereal give us energy to play. Ask two children to come to the poster, point to a food in the orange section, and name the food. After each child names a food, repeat the name of the food, and state that _____ (the food named) and other foods from the Grains group also give us energy to play.
- Children this age may not know what a grain is. Tell them grains come from plants such as wheat, oats, and corn. Grains are used to make foods like cereal, bread, and pasta.

Vegetables



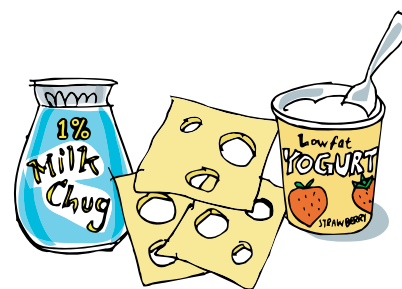
- Point to the green band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (green). Tell the children that foods from plants called vegetables are in the Vegetables group represented by the green color band. Point out the crookneck squash in the Vegetables group on the green band of the poster. Ask the children to name this vegetable (crookneck squash). Ask the children to name a crookneck squash's color (yellow). Explain that eating a yellow/orange-colored vegetable, like a crookneck squash, often is a way to be healthy. Ask two children to come to the poster, point to a vegetable in the green section, and name the vegetable. After each child names a vegetable, repeat the name of the vegetable and state that _____ (the vegetable named) and other foods from the Vegetables group also help keep us healthy.

Fruits



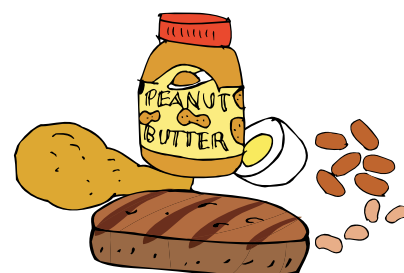
- Point to the red band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (red). Tell the children that foods from plants called fruits are in the Fruits group represented by the red color band. Point to the peach and strawberry shown in the Fruits group on the red band of the poster and state that peaches and strawberries help keep us healthy. Ask two children to come to the poster, point to a fruit in the red section, and name the fruit. After each child names a fruit, repeat the name of the fruit, and state that _____ (the fruit named) and other foods from the Fruits group help keep us healthy.

- Point to the blue band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (blue). Tell the children that milk and foods made from milk are in the Dairy group represented by the blue color band. Point to the milk and yogurt in the Dairy group below the blue band and state that milk and yogurt help us build strong bones. Tell the children that it is good to choose low-fat and fat-free milk, yogurt, and cheese when given a choice. Ask two children to come to the poster; point out a food in the blue section, and name the food. After each child names a food, repeat the name of the food, and state that _____ (the food named) and other foods from the Dairy group also help us build strong bones.



Protein Foods

- Point to the purple band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (purple). Tell the children that foods from animals and some plants are in the Protein Foods group represented by the purple color band. Point to the meat, fish, egg, beans and peanut butter in the Protein Foods group below the purple band and state that they help our muscles grow. Ask two children to come to the poster; point out a food in the purple section, and name the food. After each child names a food, repeat the name of the food, and state that _____ (the food named) and other foods from the Protein Foods group also help our muscles grow. (Note: if only foods that come from animals are selected, point out a food from plants and name it. If only foods from plants are selected, point out a food that comes from animals and name it.)





Review Activity

- While the children are still seated, point to each food group color band on the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster.
- Ask the children to name the food group each color represents and to name a food from that group.

■ **Orange** – Grains group

■ **Green** – Vegetables group

■ **Red** – Fruits group

■ **Blue** – Dairy group

■ **Purple** – Protein Foods group

Tasting Activity

- Show the children the crookneck squash and zucchini. Tell the children that zucchini is a squash similar to crookneck squash but different in color.
- Give the children squash samples to taste. Note both are firm, crunchy, and taste mild.
- After tasting the samples of squash, invite the children to feel and smell the different squash halves. Discard halves at end of lesson or reserve to use for Stamped Wrapping Paper.
- Ask the children to name different ways to eat vegetables like squash at different meals and snacks. Accept all answers such as fresh slices or sticks, in vegetable salads, baked in muffins, etc.

Be Active-Crookneck Squash Skip

Note to Caregiver: Active play and movement are important for every child's growth and development. Although they may seem to be active and energetic, most children do not get the amount of physical activity they need for good health. Child care programs should provide opportunities for young children (2 to 6 years of age) to engage in 90 to 120 minutes (1 ½ to 2 hours) of moderate to vigorous physical activity each day.

Several short periods of activity (10-20 minutes each) work well for young children and are easy to plan into the day. Examples of moderate to vigorous physical activity that kids this age enjoy include: playing on outdoor play equipment, dancing to music, taking a nature (or garden) walk, relay races, movement games, hopping, skipping, galloping, and riding a tricycle or bicycle. For additional information on physical activity for young children, refer to the Nutrition and Wellness Tips for Young Children: Provider Handbook for the Child and Adult Care Food Program at <http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/nutritionandwellness.html>.

- Point to the various activities depicted on the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster. Ask the children to tell you why it is important to be physically active and play every day, i.e., it helps you be strong and healthy, and is fun. Tell the children that today they will learn to be physically active in a way that reminds them of the crookneck squash they just tasted.
- Take the children to a large open space or outdoors. Ask the children to stand in a large circle, standing so that one arm can be extended into the circle and one arm can be extended outside of the circle. Show the children how to extend the arm on the outside of the circle over the head and curve in toward the inside of the circle, similar to the curve of a crookneck squash. Tell the children they are going to skip around the large circle with their arms curved like crookneck squash while you call out the word “squash.” When the children hear you say the word “squish,” they will stop skipping and lower their arms. The children turn to face the opposite direction and curve the opposite arm over their heads like the curve of a crookneck squash. The children skip around the large circle as you call out the word “squash.” When they hear the word “squish,” the children stop, change directions, and curve the opposite arm over their heads to repeat skipping until the activity is concluded.
- Have the children curve their arms like crookneck squash, and say, “1, 2, 3, Squash, Squash, Squash. (repeat saying squash several more times)...Squash!”
- Continue to have the children skip in a large circle for several minutes. If desired, increase the activity difficulty for older children by occasionally asking the children to skip backwards in the large circle for one round of skipping.
- Conclude the activity by telling the children it is fun to eat squash and be physically active by doing a Crookneck Squash Skip.

Optional Concluding Activity: Have the children sit at tables with coloring supplies. Distribute a copy of *MyPlate* coloring page (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 83) to each child. Ask the children to color the Vegetables section green and draw and color a crookneck squash near the Vegetables section of MyPlate or use the Blackline Master of a crookneck squash (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 74) and have the children color the crookneck squash. With older children have them copy the dot-to-dot outline of the word “Vegetables”. Ask the children to draw a favorite way they like to be physically active on the page. If desired, collect the sheet for use in future fruit and vegetable units in *Grow It, Try It, Like It!*



Materials Needed

- Pasta Salad Recipe ingredients—see the Child Care Center version of this recipe on page 28
- Plates, spoons, and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Prepare the recipe.
- Prepare table(s).

D2: Gosh, I Love Squash!

The children taste a new crookneck squash recipe and talk about different ways to eat crookneck squash.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Taste crookneck squash in a combination food, Crookneck Squash Pasta Salad;
- Describe many different ways to eat crookneck squash.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing and Polite Tasting

- Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43 for directions).
- If necessary, remind the children about polite food tasting habits (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 44, for details).





Activity Length:
10-15 minutes

The Activity

- Seat the children at the table(s).
- Ask the children to share what they remember learning about crookneck squash.
- Encourage responses such as how and where crookneck squash grows; how it looks, feels, smells, and tastes; and other material covered in the unit.
- Tell the children that the unit on crookneck squash ends with a celebration of a new way to eat crookneck squash. Crookneck squash can be part of a mixture of other foods.
- Show the children the Crookneck Squash Pasta Salad and talk about the other foods in the salad.
- Serve the children Crookneck Squash Pasta Salad.
- As the children are eating, ask:
 - ▶ What crookneck squash recipes have they made with their parents?
 - ▶ What different ways have they eaten crookneck squash?
 - ▶ What new ways do they think crookneck squash could be eaten?
- Give suggestions such as soups, salads, or as a side dish (e.g., squash and apples), in breads and muffins, and also cut into sticks and served with low-fat dip.

Words To Grow

Salad	Crookneck Squash
Carrot	Pasta
Mixture	



Crookneck Squash Pasta Salad

For the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Preparation Time: 20 minutes, including cooking time

Yield: 10 ½-cup child-size portions (may vary slightly depending on type of pasta used) ½ cup serving provides the equivalent of ¼ ounce of cooked lean meat alternate and ⅛ cup of vegetable towards CACFP meal pattern

- ½ cup pasta (macaroni, rotini, small shells), uncooked
- 1 small crookneck or yellow squash (approximately 1 cup)
- 1 medium carrot (approximately ½ cup)
- 1 ½ cups fresh spinach leaves, washed and dried, and stems removed
- 4 oz low-fat or fat-free cheddar cheese, cubed (1 cup)

Dressing:

- 5 Tbsp reduced-fat or fat-free mayonnaise
- 1 ½ Tbsp orange juice
- ½ tsp dried sweet basil
- ½ tsp prepared mustard
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- ¼ tsp black pepper

1. Cook pasta with water according to directions on the package.
2. Drain pasta. Chill in refrigerator if desired while preparing vegetables.
3. Wash the squash and carrots under cool tap water and scrub with a vegetable brush. Trim ends and remove any bad spots. Do NOT peel either the squash or the carrots.
4. Dice the squash and shred the carrots then place them in a medium-size bowl.
5. Wash the fresh spinach in cool tap water with a salad spinner or colander and thoroughly dry. Remove stems and any bad leaves. Stack several spinach leaves on top of each other and roll together. Slice crosswise through the roll, making very thin slivers of spinach.
6. Add the pasta, spinach, and cheese to the squash-carrot mixture; toss to combine.
7. Make the dressing in a small bowl. Thoroughly blend the mayonnaise, orange juice, dried basil, prepared mustard, garlic, and black pepper.
8. Pour dressing over the salad mixture and toss to evenly distribute the dressing.
9. Serve immediately or refrigerate and serve chilled.

Variation: Substitute another summer squash, such as zucchini, sunburst, or patty pan squash for crookneck squash. Substitute your favorite Italian salad dressing for a change of taste.

Cooking with Children

Young children can:

- Wash hands first
- Help wash and scrub carrots and squash
- Help use a salad spinner to wash spinach
- Dry spinach leaves washed in a colander between sheets of paper towel
- Wipe up spills

Adults should cook pasta and use a sharp knife to cut all vegetable pieces, make dressing, and toss salad



Nutrients per 1 child-size serving of ½ cup (using elbow macaroni):

Calories 65, Protein 3.9 g, Carbohydrate 7.4 g, Total Fat 2.3 g, Saturated Fat .7 g, Cholesterol 5 mg, Vitamin A 1935 IU, Vitamin C 4.1 mg, Iron 0.6 mg, Calcium 60 mg, Sodium 140 mg, Dietary Fiber 0.8 g

Growing at Home Materials...

for Crookneck Squash Lessons



Squash Quick Bread

Preparation Time: 20 minutes

Cooking Time: 20-25 minutes for muffins,
35-40 minutes for bread

Serves: 24 child-size servings of ½ of a ¾"-thick slice of bread or ½ muffin

Serves: 12 adult-size portions of one ¾"-thick slice of bread or 1 muffin

- **1 ½ cups shredded crookneck squash, 3 to 5 small squash, see Tip below**
- **1 cup all-purpose flour**
- **1 cup whole-wheat flour**
- **1 Tbsp baking powder**
- **½ tsp salt**
- **¼ cup sugar**
- **¾ tsp ground cinnamon**
- **½ tsp ground nutmeg**
- **1 large egg, beaten**
- **¼ cup canola oil**
- **1 cup low-fat or fat-free milk**
- **Nonstick cooking spray**

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Wash the squash and trim ends. Do NOT peel. Shred squash. Press the shredded squash between paper towels to remove excess moisture, if necessary.
3. Into large mixing bowl, mix flours, baking powder, salt, sugar, cinnamon, and nutmeg until blended. Add shredded squash and toss with dry ingredients to coat shreds.
4. Into small mixing bowl, beat the egg with fork.
5. Add canola oil and low-fat or fat-free milk to beaten egg and mix.
6. Add egg/oil mixture to dry ingredients. Mix only until ingredients are combined. The batter should be slightly lumpy.
7. Spray a 9"x5"x3" loaf pan with nonstick cooking spray. For muffins, spray a 12-cup muffin pan or line pan with paper baking cups.
8. Pour mixture into loaf pan or muffin pan, filling each cup about ¾ full.
9. Bake for 35-40 minutes for loaf or 20-25 minutes for muffins, or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean and bread is lightly brown.
10. Cool in pan for 10 minutes. Remove from pan and cool completely before slicing loaf into 12 ¾" slices and serve. Muffins can be served warm.

Variation: Substitute 2 cups 100% whole-wheat pastry flour for the all-purpose and whole-wheat flours. Use a mini-muffin pan and reduce the cooking time to 10-12 minutes. Substitute zucchini for yellow summer squash.

Tip: It is best to purchase small squash because they contain smaller seeds and have less water. If large squash are used, remove the seeds before grating. Purchase one pound of squash for each loaf or dozen muffins. Try this recipe with zucchini or summer squash for a change.

Cooking with Children

Young children can:

- Wash hands first
- Help wash squash
- Help dry shredded squash between paper towels
- Help mix dry ingredients
- Help beat egg

Adults should cut and shred squash, combine wet and dry ingredients, transfer batter to pan(s), and do all steps involved with hot oven.



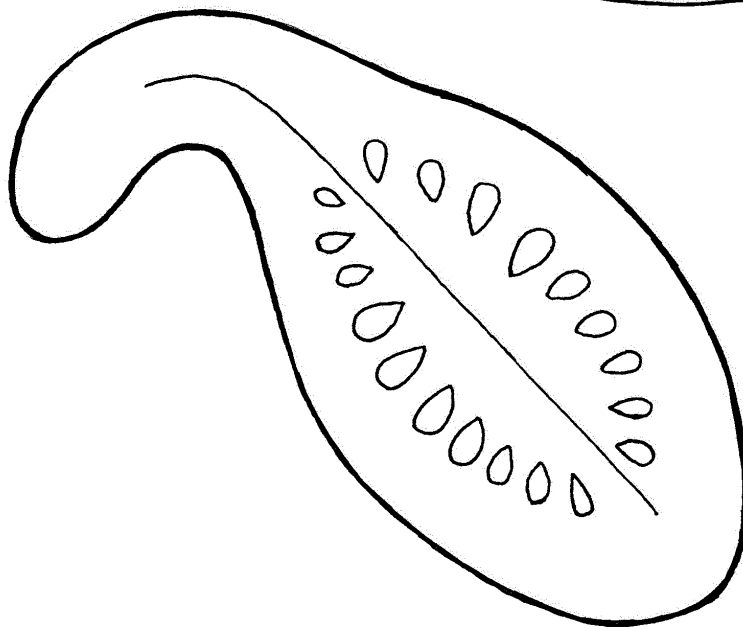
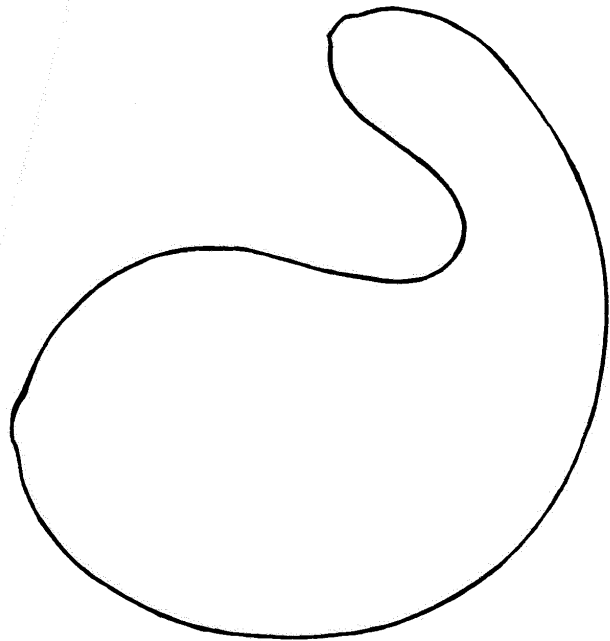
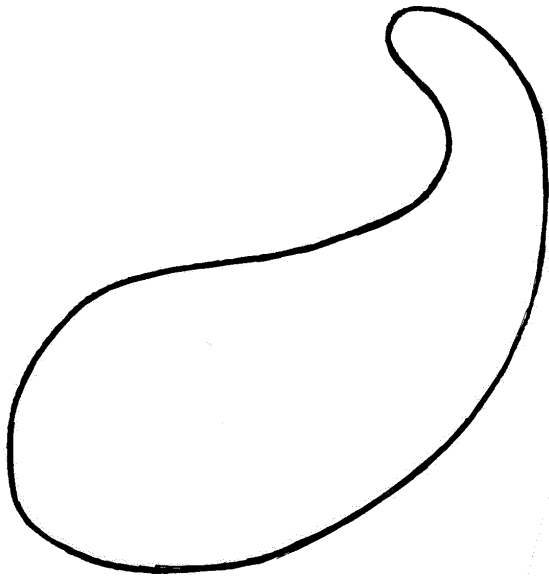
Nutrients (using low-fat milk) per 1 child-size serving of ½ of a ¾" thick slice of bread: Calories 74, Protein 2 g, Carbohydrate 10.7 g, Total Fat 2.8 g, Saturated Fat 0.3 g, Cholesterol 10 mg, Vitamin A 48 IU, Vitamin C 1.2 mg, Iron 0.6 mg, Calcium 52 mg, Sodium 118 mg, Dietary Fiber 0.9 g

Crookneck Squash Are Fun To Color!

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Crookneck squash is a light yellow color. Young squash has smooth skin. As the squash grows, the skin becomes slightly bumpy. The inside of the squash is white and firm. Crookneck squash has flat, white seeds on the inside. Help your child color

the drawings of crookneck squash below. After the activity, taste slices of raw crookneck squash with your child's favorite dip or even peanut butter. Raw vegetables like squash are a great snack choice.



Squash Vegetable Soup

Preparation Time: 25-35 minutes

Serves: 16 child-size ½-cup servings

Serves: 8 adult-size 1-cup servings

- **1 Tbsp canola oil**
- **½ cup chopped onion**
- **1 tsp minced garlic, fresh or from jar**
- **2 15-oz cans of low-sodium chicken or beef broth**
- **1 15-oz can diced tomatoes with Italian seasoning in juice**
- **2 cups cubed crookneck squash, ½ inch cubes or smaller**
- **1 12-oz bag frozen mixed vegetables (peas, carrots, and corn)**
- **1 15-oz can small white beans, drained**
- **Shredded low-fat or fat-free mozzarella cheese and croutons for garnish, if desired**

1. In large pot or Dutch oven, heat oil over medium heat. Add onions and cook until tender.
2. Add garlic and cook 2 more minutes.
3. Add broth, tomatoes with juice, cubed squash, and frozen vegetables; bring to a boil.
4. Reduce heat to medium low, cover, and simmer for 15-20 minutes until vegetables are tender.
5. Add white beans and heat for 5-10 minutes until heated through.

Ladle into soup bowls. Garnish with shreds of mozzarella cheese and croutons, if desired.

Variation: Substitute another summer squash, such as yellow, zucchini, sunburst, or patty pan squash.

Option: Substitute 2 tablespoons dried minced onion and 1/8 teaspoon dried minced garlic for fresh. Omit oil and start at step 3; add dried onion and garlic with other ingredients.

Cooking with Children

Young children can:

- Wash hands first
- Help wash squash
- Help ladle cubed squash and frozen vegetables into cool broth/tomato mixture in pan
- Wipe up spills
- Sprinkle cheese and croutons gently over soup bowls

Adults should do all steps involving the stove.



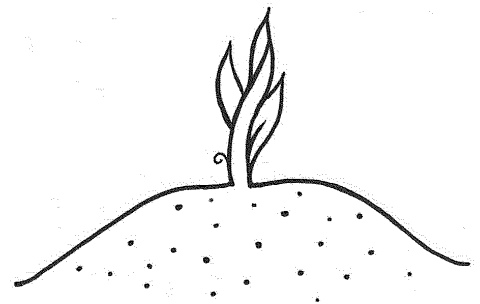
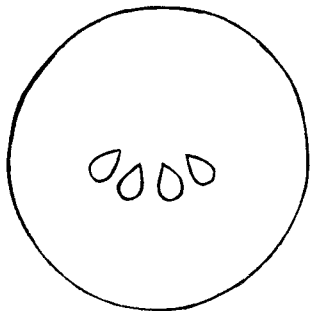
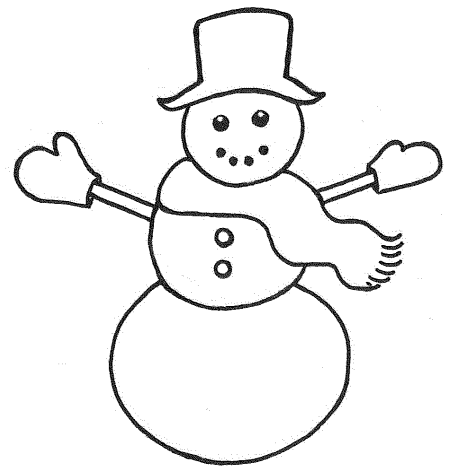
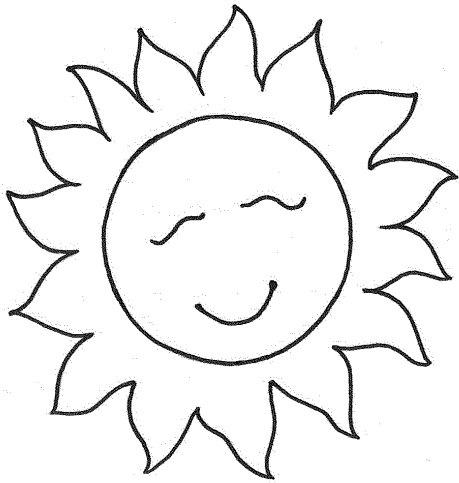
Nutrients per 1 child-size serving of ½ cup: Calories 64, Protein 3.8 g, Carbohydrate 9.8 g, Total Fat 1.4 g, Saturated Fat 0.2 g, Cholesterol 0 mg, Vitamin A 1132 IU, Vitamin C 6.1 mg, Iron 1.2 mg, Calcium 38 mg, Sodium 64 mg, Dietary Fiber 2.7 g

What Crookneck Squash Needs To Grow

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Crookneck squash plants start from the flat white seeds found inside the squash. Squash grow on vines above the ground. They can grow in home gardens or on large farms. Squash grows fast, particularly in hot weather. Squash stems and leaf

stalks are prickly so it is best to wear gloves when picking squash. Squash is picked in late summer or early fall. Ask your child to look at pictures below and draw a circle around the things a crookneck squash needs to grow.



1. sun, 2. rain, 3. soil

Crookneck Squash Pasta Salad

Preparation Time: 20 minutes, including cooking time

Serves: 10 child-size ½ cup servings,

Serves: 5 adult-size 1 cup servings

- ½ cup pasta (macaroni, rotini, small shells), uncooked
- 1 small crookneck or yellow squash (approximately 1 cup)
- 1 medium carrot (approximately ½ cup)
- 1 ½ cups fresh spinach leaves, washed and dried, and stems removed
- 4 oz low-fat or fat-free cheddar cheese, cubed (1 cup)

Dressing:

- 5 Tbsp reduced-fat or fat-free mayonnaise
- 1 ½ Tbsp orange juice
- ½ tsp dried sweet basil
- ½ tsp prepared mustard
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- ¼ tsp black pepper

1. Cook pasta with water according to directions on the package.
2. Drain pasta. Chill in refrigerator if desired while preparing vegetables.
3. Wash the squash and carrots under cool tap water and scrub with a vegetable brush, trim ends and remove any bad spots. Do NOT peel either the squash or the carrots.
4. Dice the squash and shred the carrots then place them in a medium-size bowl.
5. Wash the fresh spinach in cool tap water with a salad spinner or colander and thoroughly dry. Remove stems and any bad leaves. Stack several spinach leaves on top of each other and roll together. Slice crosswise through the roll, making very thin slivers of spinach.
6. Add the pasta, spinach, and cheese to the squash-carrot mixture; toss to combine.
7. Make the dressing in a small bowl. Thoroughly blend mayonnaise, orange juice, dried basil, prepared mustard, garlic, and black pepper.
8. Pour dressing over the salad mixture and toss to evenly distribute the dressing.
9. Serve immediately or refrigerate and serve chilled.

Variation: Substitute another summer squash, such as zucchini, sunburst, or patty pan squash for crookneck squash. Substitute your favorite Italian salad dressing for a change of taste.

Cooking with Children

Young children can:

- Wash hands first
- Help wash and scrub carrots and squash
- Help use a salad spinner to wash spinach
- Dry spinach leaves washed in a colander between sheets of paper towel and
- Wipe up spills

Adults should cook pasta and use a sharp knife to cut all vegetable pieces, make dressing, and toss salad



Nutrients per 1 child-size serving of ½ cup (using elbow macaroni):

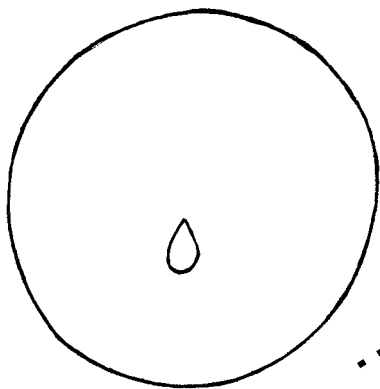
Calories 65, Protein 3.9 g, Carbohydrate 7.4 g, Total Fat 2.3 g, Saturated Fat .7 g, Cholesterol 5 mg, Vitamin A 1935 IU, Vitamin C 4.1 mg, Iron 0.6 mg, Calcium 60 mg, Sodium 140 mg, Dietary Fiber 0.8 g

Counting Crookneck Squash Seeds

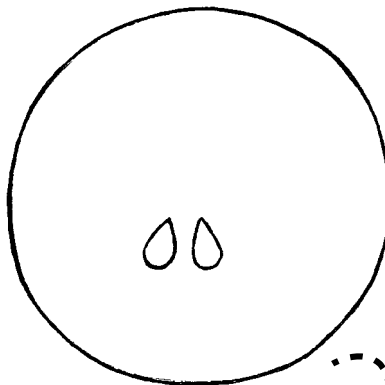
Dear Parents and Guardians:

When children are familiar with new foods, they are more willing to taste new foods. In child care, your child has learned what the inside of crookneck squash looks like. Crookneck squash have many white, flat seeds. Help your child count the number of seeds in each squash half and trace the numbers

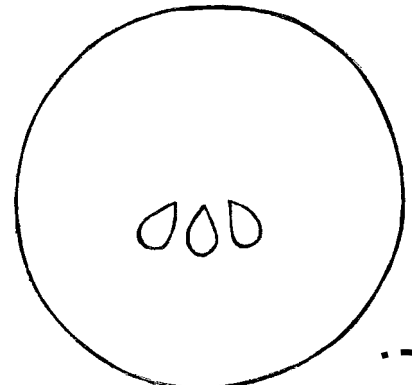
under each picture. Guide their hand as they trace the numbers, if necessary. Have your child count different ways to enjoy eating crookneck squash. Write those ideas on the lines below the traced numbers. Make a plan to enjoy a crookneck squash recipe this week!



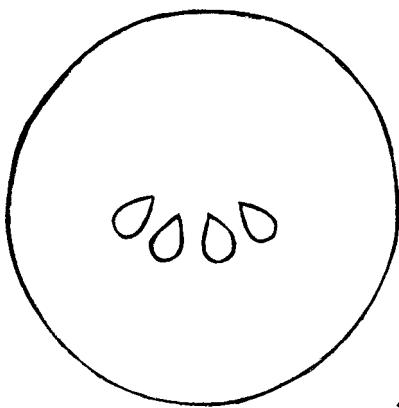
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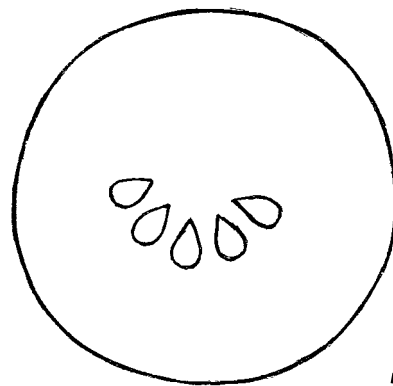
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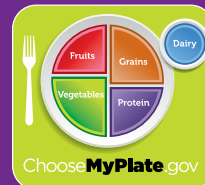
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4



5



United States Department of Agriculture • Food and Nutrition Service
Find more fun resources at these Web sites:

teammnutrition.usda.gov
choosemyplate.gov

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Grow It, Try It, Like It!

Preschool Fun With Fruits and Vegetables

Spinach Lane



Booklet **3**

Welcome to... Spinach Lane at Tasty Acres Farm!

Cool, crispy leaves of spinach flutter in the gentle breeze at Spinach Lane. It almost looks as if the leaves are waving a welcome hello an invitation to stop and learn more about spinach. In this unit, the children learn that spinach is a vegetable. They experience the look, feel, smell, and taste of spinach leaves. Spinach grows quickly and hands-on planting activities help children see how seeds produce these flavorful plants. Grow some spinach and have a harvest. See how bunches of spinach go from the farm to the store and farmers' market. Leave time to tempt the taste buds with spinach dips, salads, and more tasty options. Growing at Home materials encourage families to include spinach often in cooking, conversations, and fun and games.

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A Plan For Organizing Spinach Lane Activities

Check with local farms and farmers' markets to find out when spinach is in peak season. Seeing spinach growing in the field makes a great farm field trip for preschoolers. If a farm is not nearby, visit a produce stand or farmers' market to see fresh spinach.



Most activities require only 10-15 minutes; pick a few for each day. In this example, all of the activities from the lesson plans are completed, but spaced out over a 5-day period.

The Spinach Lane lesson plans are designed to be used in their entirety but if your center does not have the time, space, or resources to do all the activities, select the activities from Section A: hands-on activities, Section B: planting activities, Section C: spinach stories and songs, and Section D: nutrition education activities. Be sure that the activities you choose help the children meet the objectives listed at the beginning of each lesson plan section.

Here is one way to arrange the activities in Spinach Lane. Most activities require only 10-15 minutes; pick a few for each day. If possible, do the planting activities and harvest a crop of spinach. It is an easy vegetable to grow and is ready in about 40 days. In this example, all of the activities from the lesson plans are completed, but spaced out over a 5-day period. Additionally, two activities from the Garden Art and Crafts Section in Booklet 1, are added. These activities are fun and useful ways to help reinforce the objectives of each activity. On page 19, it gives tips for creating successful projects and ideas for harvesting fun month after month. The Garden Art and Crafts chart connects the art and crafts to the lesson activities.

Planning Chart for Spinach Lane Activities

Day One	Day Two	Day Three	Day Four	Day Five
A1 One Touch, One Guess Hands-on Activity 	B1 Spinach Starts as Seeds Planting Activity	C1 Cool Puppy Pup Video	B3 Plant Seeds or a Seed Tape Outdoors Planting Activity 	D1 Let Us Try More Leafy Greens Nutrition Education Activity
A2 Spinach Leaf Print Hands-on Activity	A3 Spinach Flowers Hands-on Activity	B2 Plant a Spinach Seed Planting Activity 	Finish Garden Craft project, if necessary	D2 Say Hip, Hip, Hooray for Spinach Nutrition Education Activity 
Garden Art Bookmarks 	Finish Garden Art project, if necessary	Garden Craft or Make a Seed Tape 	C3 Old MacDonald Had a Farm Song, Spinach Style 	C2 Reading Activity 
Send Home Growing at Home Materials #1	C3 Old MacDonald Had a Farm Song, Spinach Style	Send Home Growing at Home Materials #2	C2 Reading Activity	Send Home Growing at Home Materials #3

Revisit the Farm: Rainy Day Fun All Year Long

When the weather changes your outdoor plans, the activities from Tasty Acres Farm provide a welcome opportunity to revisit and remember all the fun and flavor of *Grow It, Try It, Like It!* Sing the songs, watch the video segments, and use the Garden Art and Crafts Section in Booklet I for ideas. Make a rainy day one to reconnect with these fruits and vegetables.

More Ways To Grow – The Spinach Lane unit can be included in other areas of the curriculum.

Complementary themes include:

Foods – Vegetables **Colors** – Green **Seasons** Spring **Body** – Senses

Dinosaurs – Plant Eaters **Plants** – Leaves, Stems **Alphabet** – S words



A. An Adventure Stems From Learning About Spinach Hands-on Activities

Materials Needed

- Fresh spinach leaves
- Mystery Box/Bag
- Paper and pencil
- Feather

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Wash spinach leaves, at least three leaves per student. Reserve at least one pre-washed leaf per child for tasting.
- Place a handful of spinach leaves in the Mystery Box/ Bag. Keep the remainder out of the sight of children, but have available in case 'enthusiastic feelers' damage the leaves in the box and more are needed.
- Make copies of Spinach Growing at Home #1—one set per child.
- Review Make a Mystery Box or Bag, as needed (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 45).

Growing at Home Introduction Letter and Hand Washing and Polite Tasting Guidelines: Send a copy of these resources home before starting the first unit from *Grow It, Try It, Like It!* (See Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, pages 42-44.)

Spinach Growing at Home #1: Send a copy of this resource home with each child at the start of the Section A activities. If you have already sent these resources home you may omit this step.

A1: One Touch, One Guess

Use the Mystery Box/Bag to create interest by having the children feel spinach leaves before revealing the "mystery" item to them.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Identify spinach as a lightweight, green leaf vegetable;
- Describe the appearance, smell, and taste of spinach.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing and Polite Tasting

- Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).
- If this is the first activity involving food tasting, talk with the children about polite food tasting habits (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 44 for details).



Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Introduce or reintroduce the Mystery Box/Bag, if you have used it before.
- One at a time, ask each child to come and feel inside the box or bag without looking. If a child seems afraid, feel inside the box/bag with the child.
- Ask each child to describe quietly to you what he/she feels.
- After everyone has guessed, reveal the spinach. Show the spinach to the children.
- Note the children's guesses that were close (leaves, a plant, food) or correct (spinach).
- Offer each child a clean leaf of spinach to look at, touch, and smell.
- Talk about spinach. Ask the questions below and any other questions you like.
 - ▶ Is spinach a fruit or a vegetable? (Vegetable)
 - ▶ What color is it? (Green)
 - ▶ Do the leaves feel thick or thin? (Thin)
 - ▶ How does the outside of it feel? (Smooth and bumpy)
 - ▶ Is the spinach leaf light or heavy? (Very light like a feather –let children feel the feather)
 - ▶ Is it soft or hard? (Soft like the leaf from a tree)
 - ▶ Is the stem on the spinach leaf thick or thin? (Thin)
 - ▶ Has anyone ever tasted a spinach leaf? (Yes or no)
 - ▶ When you bite or tear the spinach leaf, what color do you see inside? (Green)
- If the children are fond of dinosaurs, ask what kind of dinosaurs might eat spinach (Plant Eaters).

Activity Conclusion – Tasting

- Conclude the lesson by inviting the children to taste the spinach leaf.
- Ask the children
 - ▶ Is the leaf soft or chewy? (Chewy)
 - ▶ How does the spinach taste? (Mild)
- As necessary, remind the children how the group follows polite tasting manners.

Words To Grow

Leaf or leaves	Stem
Vegetable	Light (weight)
Green	Smooth
Bumpy	



Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Garden Bookmark: Have the children make spinach decorated Garden Bookmarks. Trace around a baby spinach leaf on a bookmark. Then, hold the leaf over the image with a piece of plastic wrap and rub the plastic over the leaf with the round end of wooden craft stick (see Booklet 1, Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 28).



A2: Spinach Leaf Print

The children make a print of a spinach leaf and learn the parts of the plant.

Objective

The children will be able to identify spinach as a lightweight, green leaf vegetable.

Materials Needed

- Plain white paper, one sheet per child
- Spinach leaves
- Crayons or colored pencils (shades of green)
- Drawing of spinach (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 63)

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Organize materials.
- Plan to serve Dilly Spinach Dip and vegetables at snack or mealtime (see Spinach Lane Growing at Home #1 Recipe, page 31).





Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Have each child seated at the table(s) with supplies.
- Show a drawing of a spinach leaf to the children. Talk with the children about what spinach looks like. Review the shape (round at one end, coming to a point) and color (green) of spinach.
- Have each child take a piece of paper. Have each child fold the paper in half; assist any children needing help.
- Ask the children to put one leaf of spinach inside the fold of the paper. Instruct the children to rub the crayon or pencil gently on the top of the paper covering the leaf. As the leaf is rubbed, the details of the leaf will appear. Assist those children who need help. After the leaf print is made, remove the spinach leaf from the paper. Have the children look at the leaf print and notice the stem, outline, and any veins of the spinach leaf that are visible.
- Ask the children to wash their hands for meal or snack time (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).



Tip: Depending on the variety of spinach used, rubbing to reveal a leaf image produces different results. Test the spinach available; if rubbing is not successful substitute one of the Garden Art and Crafts Activities.



Activity Connection to Snack or Mealtime

While eating the Dilly Spinach Dip and vegetables at snack or mealtime, talk with the children about how spinach leaves look and taste.

Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Stamped Wrapping Paper: (Variation of Stamped Wrapping Paper): Coat spinach leaves with different colors of green paint and press the leaves to the paper. Create interesting designs. If desired, press leaves on smaller sheets of art paper to create a spinach art piece to frame and display (see Booklet 1, Garden Art and Crafts, Stamped Wrapping Paper, page 32).



Materials Needed

- Spinach leaves, 6 to 8 leaves per child
- Ranch salad dressing in a squeeze bottle or bowl with spoon
- Paper plates and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Thoroughly wash spinach leaves with a salad spinner or colander; dry leaves between sheets of paper towel.
- Prepare a plate for each child with 6 to 8 spinach leaves on the plate.

A3: Spinach Flowers

The children create flower shaped snacks from spinach leaves. They explore the feel, smell, and taste of spinach.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Tell that the entire spinach stem and leaf can be eaten;
- Make a simple snack with spinach.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing

- Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).
- Explain that we should always wash fresh spinach leaves under running water before they are cooked or eaten. Let the children know you have already washed the spinach.





Activity Length:
10 minutes

The Activity

- Have each child seated at the table(s).
- Explain we always wash spinach before we eat it. Let the children know you have already washed the spinach.
- Tell the children that they are going to make a snack with spinach leaves. Give each child a paper plate with 6 to 8 spinach leaves.
- Let each child put a circle of dressing in the center of their paper plate, about the size of a quarter. Help those who need assistance.
- Show the children how to arrange the spinach leaves around the dressing to create the petals of a flower.

Words To Grow

Leaves	Spinach
Dip	Petals
Flower	

Activity Conclusion—Tasting

- After making the spinach flower, enjoy eating this snack. Tell the children to dip their spinach leaves in the dressing and eat them.
- As the children are eating, ask them to describe how the spinach:
 - ▶ smells (no smell or aroma similar to leaves or grass);
 - ▶ feels in the mouth (chewy); and
 - ▶ tastes (mild).



B. Spinach... Where Do You Come From? Planting Activities

Spinach Growing at Home #2: Send a copy of this resource home with each child at the start of the Section B activities.

Materials Needed

- Spinach seed packets
- Drawings of spinach (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, pages 63-64)
- Spinach leaves and light cream cheese for tasting

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Make copies of Spinach Growing at Home #2—one set per child.
- Assemble materials in central area.
- Spread ½ teaspoon of cream cheese on a clean, dry spinach leaf and roll, at least one per child.

B1: Spinach Starts as Seeds!

The children see and touch spinach seeds and learn how far apart to plant seeds.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Describe how spinach grows from a seed into a plant that produces spinach;
- Describe the resources needed to grow spinach.





Activity Length:
10 minutes

The Activity

- Tell the children that today they will learn about how spinach grows. Show the children the spinach seeds. Tell the children people can buy packages of seeds to grow spinach in gardens.
- Pass the seeds around in a clear cup (spinach seeds are small). Let the children touch and count the seeds. Explain that when spinach isn't picked for food, the plants grow flowers. The spinach seeds come from the tops of these flowers.
- Explain that the spinach seeds are planted 6 inches apart in the soil, depending on the instructions given on the seed envelope. The spinach plants need room to spread out when they grow so the rows are planted 12 to 18 inches apart.
- Explain that the spinach seeds are planted in the soil in the spring. The sun and rain help them grow into seedlings above the ground. The seedlings grow into bunches of spinach. Explain that while spinach plants need sun to grow they also need to be in the shade when it gets really hot.
- Show drawing of spinach growing in a field.
- Spinach grows fast. The leaves are ready to be picked about 40 days after the seeds are planted (e.g., the time from Thanksgiving to Christmas, Chanukah, or Kwanzaa). Explain that the entire spinach plant may be cut off just above the ground, or leaves can be picked individually.
- Explain that spinach is picked and taken to a grocery store or a farmers' market. That is where people buy it and take it home to eat. Show drawing of spinach at the grocery store.
- Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).
- Offer spinach leaves rolled around cream cheese for tasting.

Words To Grow

Seeds	Soil
Sun	Water
Space	Plants



Materials Needed

- Spinach seed packets (can be packets from activity B1)
- Paper cups, 5 to 6 ounces in size, one per child
- Potting mix or soil
- Water in a small spray bottle
- Plastic spoons, one per child
- Unsharpened pencils, with a line marking $\frac{1}{2}$ inch
- Waterproof pens or markers
- Wooden craft sticks for plant markers, one per child
- Table covers and smocks for the children
- Sunny location and/or fluorescent lights

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Prepare potting mix or soil with water, according to package directions; divide into containers, one for every three children; place on covered table(s).
- Write spinach on each of the small cups.
- At the table(s), place a small paper cup, three seeds, and a plastic spoon per child.
- Plan to serve Easy, Cheesy Spinach Pie (see Spinach Growing at Home #2 recipe, page 34) at snack or mealtime.

B2: Plant a Spinach Seed

The children start spinach seeds in a cup and learn what the seeds need to grow. (See Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, Grow Seedlings Indoors, page 53, for additional information.)

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Describe the resources needed to grow spinach;
- Experience planting a spinach seed.

Optional Activity: Grow a Seedling in a Bag (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 52). Display this visual in the classroom. Check daily for progress and compare to what is happening to the children's plants.





Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Help each child write his/her name on a cup.
- During the activity, help the children:
 - ▶ Fill their cups about $\frac{3}{4}$ full with moist potting soil.
 - ▶ Gently tap the sides and bottom of their container with their index finger to settle but not pack the soil.
 - ▶ Poke 3 holes in the soil spaced around the cup. Use the marked unsharpened pencil to make holes $\frac{1}{2}$ inch deep.
 - ▶ Place a seed in each hole and gently cover the seeds with soil.
 - ▶ Lightly spray water over the top of the soil; help any children needing assistance.
 - ▶ If using wooden plant markers, stick one in the soil close to the inside curve of the cup.
- During the activity, tell the children:
 - ▶ The seeds will grow in the potting soil as plants grow in the soil outside.
 - ▶ The seeds need soil, water, light, and warmth to grow into plants.
 - ▶ Inside, we can use lights to give plants warmth and light, just as the sun helps outside plants grow.
 - ▶ The seeds will grow first into very small plants (seedlings), then into larger plants. These larger plants, if planted outside in a garden, will continue to grow with sunlight and water. The plants will grow larger and become bunches of spinach.
 - ▶ Have the children set their cups in a sunny spot or under lights.
 - ▶ Have the children check their cups weekly to see the progress of the seeds growing into plants.



Green Thumb Guide

Spinach grows easily in containers. Consider making Painted Pots, Garden Stones, and Garden Art Row Markers to send home with the spinach plants.



Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Garden Stones: See Booklet I, Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 36, for directions on how to make Garden Stones for a creative connection to this activity.

Activity Connection to Snack or Mealtime

While eating Easy, Cheesy Spinach Pie at snack or mealtime, talk about how seeds planted in the soil will grow into plants. The plants will grow into bunches of spinach after a summer of water, sun, and warmth.



Materials Needed

- Spinach seeds or a seed tape, or see planting options
- Garden or flowerbed, 12 feet or longer
- Hoe or trowel to make space to plant seed tape
- Garden hose with sprinkler nozzle or watering can

What To Do Ahead of Time

- If using a seed tape, prepare the seed tape (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, Make a Seed Tape, page 54).
- Prepare garden or flowerbed for planting by tilling (breaking up) and fertilizing the soil (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, Green Thumb-Guide—Gardening Outdoors, page 58).
- Plan to serve spinach in some form at snack or mealtime (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, Ten Terrific Ways..., page 48).

B3: Plant Seeds or a Seed Tape Outdoors

The children plant spinach seeds or a seed tape outdoors. They learn what spinach seeds need to grow into plants.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Describe the resources needed to grow spinach;
- Experience planting a spinach seed or seed tape.

Planting Options:

- Follow the directions on the back of the spinach seed packet to plant seeds directly into the ground.
- If you have grown spinach seedlings from seeds inside and hardened the plants for outdoor planting, you can substitute the plants for the seed tape.





Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Take the children and the spinach seeds or tape seed outside. Explain that today they will be planting spinach seeds and learning what seeds need to grow into plants.
- Point to the sun. Ask the children how the sunlight feels on their skin. (Warm)
- Explain that the light and warmth of the sun helps spinach seeds grow into plants that will produce more spinach.
- Show the children the soil in a garden or flowerbed. Let them touch the soil. Ask them how the soil feels. (Wet or dry, hard or soft) Explain that spinach seeds need soil to grow into plants.
- Run some water from a hose or pour some from a container and let the children touch it. Ask how it feels. (Wet) Explain that water helps plants grow. Explain that water for plants usually comes as rain. Spinach needs lots of water; farmers and gardeners will use sprinklers in addition to rain to make sure plants have plenty of water.
- Have the children help you lay the seeds or the prepared seed tapes in the soil at the preferred planting depth of $\frac{1}{2}$ inch. Cover with soil and water. Remind the children how far apart spinach plants are planted (at least 6 inches apart).



Green Thumb Guide

Is space limited? Spinach grows well in a container (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, Green Thumb Guides Container Gardens, page 55). To adapt this activity to plant in a container, see Plant a Strawberry Jar, Strawberry Patch B3 for the 8-to 10-inch container option.

Activity Connection to Snack or Mealtime

Talk about planting the spinach seeds or seed tape while eating spinach at snack or mealtime.



Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Make a Seed Circle: (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, Make a Seed Tape, page 54) with spinach seeds; paint a pot with spinach leaves and the word spinach; add a bag of potting soil; and give as a Mother's or Father's Day gift (see Booklet 1, Garden Art and Crafts Section).



C. Spinach Stories and Songs

C1: Cool Puppy Pup's Spinach Lunch Party Video

View Cool Puppy Pup's Spinach Lunch Party segment with the children. Discuss the spinach facts covered in this delightful video with the children and have them try Cool Puppy Pup's favorite way to eat spinach.

Objective

The children will be able to describe how spinach is grown, harvested, and eaten.

Materials Needed

- Cool Puppy Pup DVD
- TV and DVD Player
- Spinach leaves and dressing
- Plates, forks, and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Cue the DVD to start at the Spinach segment.
- Prepare spinach salad, a small portion per child.





Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Gather the children and watch the Spinach segment of the video.
- After viewing the segment, ask the children to name their favorite parts of the video. Use their responses to lead into a discussion about the video. During the discussion, include the questions below to review Cool Puppy Pup's main points from the video segment.
- In the video, did Cool Puppy Pup say:
 - ▶ Spinach was a fruit or a vegetable? (Vegetable)
 - ▶ What color is spinach? (Green)
 - ▶ What do the leaves have? (Thin stems)
 - ▶ How do spinach leaves feel? (Smooth and bumpy)
- At Tasty Acres Farm, the farmer talked about how spinach grows.
 - ▶ Where does spinach grow? (On a farm)
 - ▶ Does spinach grow in bunches above or below the ground? (Above the ground)
 - ▶ Are the plants close or far from the ground? (Close)
 - ▶ Where can our families buy spinach after it is picked and shipped from the farm? (Grocery stores and farmers' markets)
- Have the children name some of the ways that spinach can be eaten. (Steamed with a little bit of olive oil, in spinach dip, in muffins, on a pizza, or as salad with a little bit of dressing)
- Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet I, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).
- Conclude the activity by telling the children they are going to eat spinach salad, the way that Cool Puppy Pup likes spinach best of all.
- Serve the spinach salad.



C2: Reading Activity

Read story books to the children that are about or include the activities of growing and/or eating fruits and vegetables. Listening to such stories can encourage children to adopt positive behaviors that can last a lifetime, like trying new fruits and vegetables.

Objective

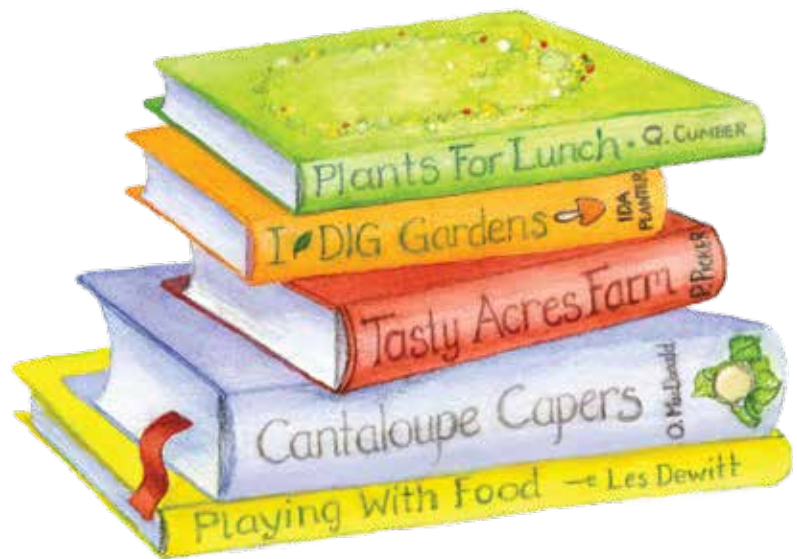
Children will describe the fun and interesting stories about fruits and/or vegetables that were read to them.

Materials Needed

- Books from a library or purchased books
- Space for the children to sit

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Clear a space for the children to sit around you.
- Choose a book from the Harvest of Books list (see Booklet I, Tool Shed Resources, page 50).
- Select a book you would like to read and either borrow it from a library or purchase it.
- Use books relevant to fruits and vegetables that may already be available to you.





Activity Length:
10 to 20 minutes
depending on the
length of the book

The Activity

- Have the children sit around you as you read them the book.
- Ask the children to listen for the names of fruits and vegetables as the story is read.

Discussion Questions:

- After reading the story, ask the children which fruits and vegetables were named in the story and what happened to them. For example,
 - ▶ Where were the fruits and vegetables grown?
 - ▶ What happened to the fruits and vegetables after they were picked?
 - ▶ Who ate the fruits and vegetables?

Add other questions that relate to the story.





C3: Old MacDonald Had a Farm, Spinach Style

The children sing about growing and eating spinach and act out motions to this familiar tune.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Sing and act out motions to a familiar tune;
- Say that being physically active helps us feel good.

Materials Needed

- Spinach lyrics to tune “Old MacDonald Had a Farm”
- Large space for the children to move about

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Become familiar with the words and motions of the song.



Activity Length:
10 minutes

The Activity

- Lead the children in singing these new words to the tune “Old MacDonald Had a Farm” and demonstrate the suggested motions or make up new ones.
- Encourage the children to move about as they are singing.
- Explain that skipping, wiggling, stretching, running, jumping, and playing actively every day helps us to feel good and stay healthy.



Old MacDonald Had a Farm, Spinach Style

The children sing about growing and eating spinach and act out motions to this familiar tune.

1st Verse

Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!
On this farm, he grew some spinach, EIEIO!
Plant seeds here and plant seeds there,
Here seeds, there seeds, everywhere spinach seeds!
Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!

2nd Verse

Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!
On this farm, he grew some spinach, EIEIO!
Water spinach here and water spinach there,
Here water, there water, everywhere water, water!
Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!

3rd Verse

Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!
On this farm, he grew some spinach, EIEIO!
Pick spinach here and pick spinach there,
Here a pick, there a pick, everywhere pick spinach.
Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!

4th Verse

Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!
On this farm, he grew some spinach, EIEIO!
With a bite, bite here, and a bite, bite there,
Here a bite, there a bite, everywhere a spinach bite.
Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!

(Skip in place)

(Pretend to carry a basket of spinach)
(Pretend to dig ground and plant
using large, vigorous motions)

(Skip in place)

(Skip in place)

(Pretend to carry a basket of spinach)
(Pretend to hold a watering can
and water plants-walking along the rows)

(Skip in place)

(Skip in place)

(Pretend to carry a basket of spinach)
(Pretend to kneel and pick spinach)
(Pretend to kneel and pick spinach)

(Skip in place)

(Skip in place)

(Pretend to carry a basket of spinach)
(Pretend to eat spinach)
(Pretend to eat spinach)

(Skip in place)





D. Introducing MyPlate Nutrition Education Activities

Materials Needed

- *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster (see Booklet 1)
- Spinach, romaine, and green leaf lettuce leaves
- Plates and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Review the foods and activities depicted on the poster.
- Display the poster.
- Wash and dry several leaves each of spinach, romaine, and green leaf lettuce; reserve a large leaf of each for display.
- Tear romaine and green leaf lettuce leaves in pieces the size of a spinach leaf, one each per child.
- Make copies of *MyPlate* coloring page (new or use copies from a previous D1 activity)—one per child.
- Copy *Spinach Growing at Home #3*—one set per child.

Spinach Growing at Home #3: Send a copy of this resource home with each child at the start of the Section D activities.

D1: Let Us Try More Leafy Greens

Introduce the children to the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster. The children find spinach and other leafy greens in the Vegetables group. They taste the difference between romaine and green leaf lettuce and spinach leaves.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Say that spinach is found in the Vegetables group.
- Say that eating vegetables like spinach help keep us healthy;
- Compare spinach to other leafy green vegetables;
- Say that being physically active every day helps us feel good and is fun;
- Say that eating foods from the different food groups each day helps us grow and be healthy;
- Identify a food from each of the five food groups.

Before the Activity-Hand Washing and Polite Tasting

- Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43 for directions).
- If necessary, remind the children about polite food tasting habits (see, Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 44 for details).



Activity Length:
25 minutes;
30 minutes if
optional coloring
activity conducted

The Activity

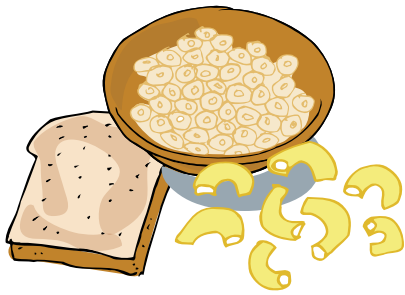
Learning the Food Groups

- Seat the children in a semicircle on the floor in view of the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster.
- Tell the children today they are going to learn about ways to be healthy and have fun every day. Tell the children that the best part is they like to do what helps them be healthy: they like to eat a variety of foods and they like to play.
- Point out the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster to the children. Ask the children to tell you what they see on the poster. Accept all correct answers, such as food, specific foods by name, children playing, and specific activities by name, etc.
- Explain that MyPlate shows the five food groups a person should eat from each day. Each food group has its own color: The Fruit Group is red, the Vegetable Group is green, the Grains Group is orange, the Dairy Group is blue, and the Protein Foods Group is purple. Eating foods from each food group helps us to be healthy and grow

This activity continues on the following pages.

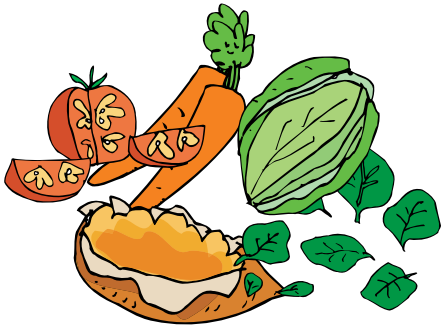


Grains



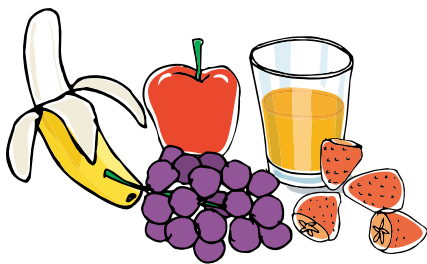
- Point to the orange band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (orange). Tell the children that foods made from grains are in the Grains group represented by the orange color band. Point to the bread and the cereal in the Grains group on the orange band of the poster and state that bread and cereal give us energy to play. Ask two children to come to the poster; point to a food in the orange section, and name the food. After each child names a food, repeat the name of the food, and state that _____ (the food named) and other foods from the Grains group also give us energy to play.
- Children this age may not know what a grain is. Tell them grains come from plants such as wheat, oats, and corn. Grains are used to make foods like cereal, bread, and pasta.

Vegetables



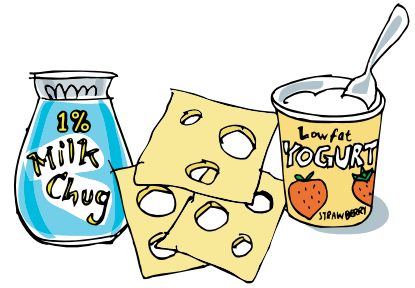
- Point to the green band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (green). Tell the children that foods from plants called vegetables are in the Vegetables group represented by the green color band. Point out the broccoli in the Vegetables group on the green band of the poster. Ask the children to name this vegetable (broccoli). Ask the children to name spinach's color (green). Explain that eating a green-colored vegetable, like spinach, often is a way to be healthy. Ask two children to come to the poster; point to a vegetable on the green section, and name the vegetable. After each child names a vegetable, repeat the name of the vegetable and state that _____ (the vegetable named) and other foods from the Vegetables group also help keep us healthy.

Fruits

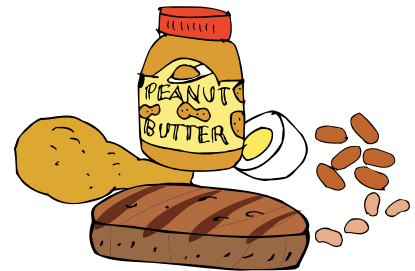


- Point to the red band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (red). Tell the children that foods from plants called fruits are in the Fruits group represented by the red color band. Point to the peach and strawberry shown in the Fruits group on the red band of the poster and state that peaches and strawberries help keep us healthy. Ask two children to come to the poster; point to a fruit in the red section, and name the fruit. After each child names a fruit, repeat the name of the fruit, and state that _____ (the fruit named) and other foods from the Fruits group also help keep us healthy.

- Point to the blue band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (blue). Tell the children that milk and foods made from milk are in the Dairy group represented by the blue color band. Point to the milk and yogurt in the Dairy group on the blue band and state that milk and yogurt help us build strong bones. Tell the children that it is good to choose low-fat and fat-free milk, yogurt, and cheese when given a choice. Ask two children to come to the poster; point out a food in the blue section, and name the food. After each child names a food, repeat the name of the food, and state that _____ (the food named) and other foods from the Dairy group also help us build strong bones.



- Point to the purple band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (purple). Tell the children that foods from animals and some plants are in the Protein foods group represented by the purple color band. Point to the meat, fish, egg, beans and peanut butter in the Protein Foods group below the purple band and state that they help our muscles grow. Ask two children to come to the poster; point out a food in the purple section, and name the food. After each child names a food, repeat the name of the food, and state that _____ (the food named) and other foods from the Protein Foods group also help our muscles grow. (Note: if only foods that come from animals are selected, point out a food from plants and name it. If only foods from plants are selected, point out a food that comes from animals and name it.)





Review Activity

- While the children are still seated, point to each food group color band on the *MyPlate for Preschoolers* poster.
- Ask the children to name the food group each color represents and to name a food from that group.

- **Orange** – Grains group
- **Green** – Vegetables group
- **Red** – Fruits group
- **Blue** – Dairy group
- **Purple** – Protein Foods group

Tasting Activity

- Show the children the romaine and green leaf lettuce. Tell the children that these are leafy greens similar to spinach.
- Give the children individual samples of each leafy green to feel, smell, taste, and compare to spinach. Note all three are chewy.
- After the children have tasted their own samples of the vegetables, invite the children to feel and smell the larger leaves of romaine and green lettuce. Discard the leaves at end of lesson.
- Ask the children to name different ways to eat vegetables like spinach and lettuce at different meals and snacks. Accept all answers such as on sandwiches, in vegetable salads, in dips, etc.

Be Active-Spinach Stretch

Note to Caregiver: Active play and movement are important for every child's growth and development. Although they may seem to be active and energetic, most children do not get the amount of physical activity they need for good health. Child care programs should provide opportunities for young children (2 to 6 years of age) to engage in 90 to 120 minutes (1 ½ to 2 hours) of moderate to vigorous physical activity each day.

Several short periods of activity (10-20 minutes each) work well for young children and are easy to plan into the day. Examples of moderate to vigorous physical activity that kids this age enjoy include: playing on outdoor play equipment, dancing to music, taking a nature (or garden) walk, relay races, movement games, hopping, skipping, galloping, and riding a tricycle or bicycle. For additional information on physical activity for young children, refer to the Nutrition and Wellness Tips for Young Children: Provider Handbook for the Child and Adult Care Food Program at <http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/nutritionandwellness.html>.

- Point to the various activities depicted on the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster. Ask the children to tell you why it is important to be physically active and play every day, i.e., it helps you be strong and healthy, and is fun. Tell the children that today they will learn to be active in a way that reminds them of the leafy greens they just tasted.
- Ask the children to extend their arms out to the side and spread apart from each other so that no one is able to touch easily another child's fingers. When children are spaced around the room, ask them to lower their arms and listen carefully. Tell the children that stretching is an important way to be active. Ask the children to watch you show them a special stretch that celebrates spinach.
- Squat to the ground and wrap the arms around the knees, with the heels slightly raised, creating a ball shape with your body. Tell the children the stretch starts the way a spinach plant starts, with a little round seed. Slowly drop the heels and straighten the legs and extend the arms to touch the toes or reach as far toward the toes as is comfortable, ending in a forward bend from the waist with the arms and head down. Tell the children the spinach plant starts to grow and stretch out. Next, gradually roll the spine up to a standing position and raise the arms above the head. Now fan the arms out to the side, pretending the arms are the edges of the spinach leaf. Sway gently from side to side in the slight breeze that blows through Spinach Lane.
- Ask the children to do the Spinach Stretch with you several times. During each stretch, remind the children of the stages of how spinach grows.
- Conclude the activity by telling the children it is fun to eat spinach and other leafy greens and be physically active by doing a Spinach Stretch.

Optional Concluding Activity: Have the children sit at tables with coloring supplies. Distribute a copy of the *MyPlate* coloring page (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 83) to each child. Ask the children to color the Vegetables group section of MyPlate green and draw and color a spinach leaf near it or use the Blackline master of a spinach leaf (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 75). With older children have them copy the dot-to-dot outline of the word "Vegetables". Ask the children to draw a favorite way they like to be physically active on the page. If desired, collect the sheet for use in future fruit and vegetable units in *Grow It, Try It, Like It!*



Materials Needed

- Spinach-Strawberry-Cantaloupe Salad Recipe ingredients—see the Child Care Center version of this recipe on page 28
- Plates, forks, and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Prepare the recipe.
- Prepare table(s).

D2: Say Hip, Hip, Hooray for Spinach

The children taste a new spinach recipe and talk about the different ways to eat spinach.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Taste spinach in a combination food, Spinach-Strawberry-Cantaloupe Salad;
- Describe many different ways to eat spinach.

Option: Make the recipe as part of the activity.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing and Polite Tasting

- Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).
- If necessary, remind the children about polite food tasting habits (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 44, for details).





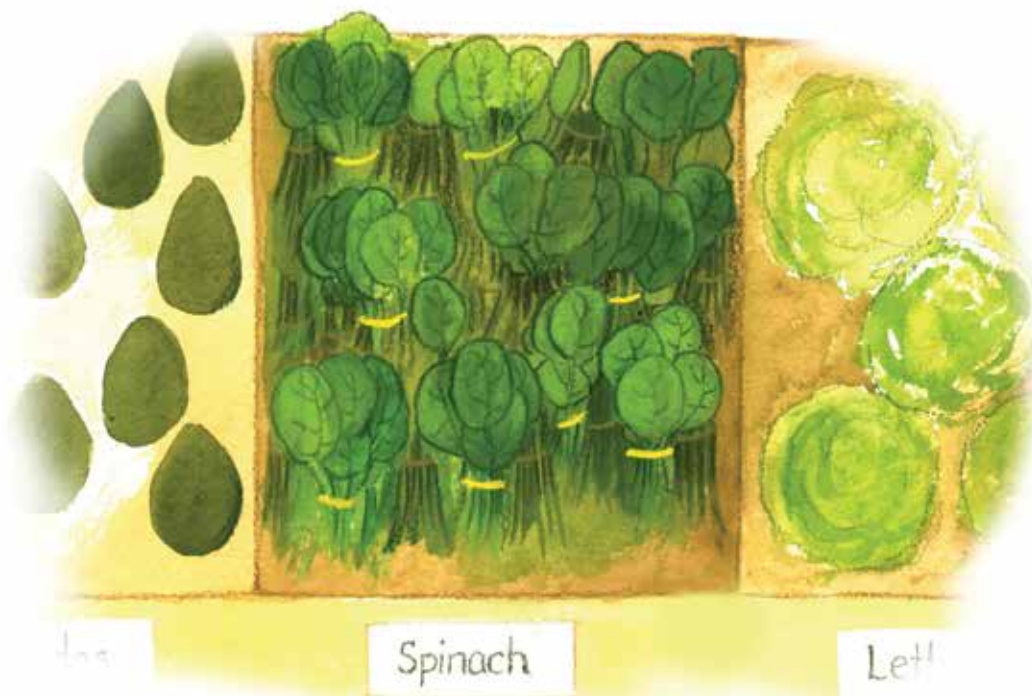
Activity Length:
10-15 minutes

The Activity

- Seat the children at the table(s).
- Ask the children to share what they remember learning about spinach.
- Encourage responses such as how and where spinach grows; how it looks, feels, smells, and tastes; and other material covered in the unit.
- Tell the children that the unit on spinach ends with a celebration of a new way to eat spinach. Spinach can be part of a salad of other foods.
- Show the children the Spinach-Strawberry-Cantaloupe Salad and talk about the other foods in the salad. If making recipe as part of the activity, make it at this point.
- Serve the children the Spinach-Strawberry-Cantaloupe Salad.
- As the children are eating, ask:
 - ▶ What spinach recipes have they made with their parents?
 - ▶ What different ways have they eaten spinach?
 - ▶ What new ways do they think spinach could be eaten?
- Give suggestions such as spinach steamed with olive oil and lemon juice, in vegetable dip, in breads or muffins, in cheesy pie or omelets, in casseroles, as a topping on pizza, and in salads.

Words To Grow

Spinach	Salad
Cantaloupe	Strawberries
Omelets	Pizza topping



Spinach-Strawberry-Cantaloupe Salad

Preparation Time: 15 minutes

Yield: 12 ½-cup child-size servings

½ cup provides ¼ cup fruit/vegetable towards CACFP meal pattern

For the Child and Adult Care Food Program

- **4 cups fresh spinach leaves**
- **1 cup bite-size pieces of fresh strawberries**
- **1 cup bite-size pieces of fresh cantaloupe**
- **Poppy seed salad dressing or raspberry vinaigrette**

1. Wash and prepare spinach, strawberries, and cantaloupe, see Tips below.
2. Tear spinach and cut fruit into bite-size pieces.
3. Toss spinach and fruit pieces together in a large bowl.
4. Dress lightly with dressing of choice.
5. Serve immediately. Refrigerate any leftovers.

Strawberry Tips

Wash strawberries in a colander just before use. Gently dry with paper towel. Remove green leaves and stem with knife.

Cantaloupe Tips

Scrub outside rind of the cantaloupe with vegetable brush. Cut in half, scoop out seeds, remove rind, and store any extra melon in an airtight container in refrigerator.

Spinach Tips

Wash in salad spinner or in colander with lots of water. Press leaves between paper towel sheets to dry before tearing into bite-size pieces.

Cooking with Children

Young children can:

- Wash hands first
- Help use a salad spinner to wash spinach
- Dry spinach leaves washed in a colander between sheets of paper towel
- Tear spinach into pieces
- Help wash and dry strawberries
- Help cut some pieces of strawberries and soft, ripe cantaloupe using a small plastic knife and a cutting board (not the entire recipe amount)

Adults should hull strawberries (remove green leaves and stems), use a sharp knife to cut cantaloupe in half, remove seeds and rind, and cut into smaller chunks. If cantaloupe is firm, an adult should cut it into bite-size pieces.



Nutrients per 1 child-size serving of ½ cup: Calories 43, Protein 0.5 g, Carbohydrate 4 g, Total Fat 3.1 g, Saturated Fat 0.4 g, Cholesterol 2 mg, Vitamin A 1150 IU, Vitamin C 16.9 mg, Iron 0.4 mg, Calcium 14 mg, Sodium 18 mg, Dietary Fiber 0.7 g

Growing at Home Materials...

for Spinach Lane Lessons



Spinach Growing at Home #1

Home Activities From Grow It, Try It, Like It!

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Today we started our unit focusing on the vegetable spinach. Activities focused on spinach are included throughout your child's day.

Today your child learned about spinach and how this vegetable looks, feels, tastes, and smells. Your child has learned that spinach:

- Has large, dark-green crinkled leaves;
- Feels smooth, but bumpy;
- Has thin stems; and
- Has leaves that are chewy.

Dilly Spinach Dip is an easy recipe you and your child can make together. The recipe is on the following page. Children love to dip foods. Every mouthful of this dip gives two bites of vegetables, spinach in the dip and the vegetable used for dipping. You can also try adding spinach to a favorite family dip recipe.

Enclosed with this note is a **Dot-to-Dot activity**; it features the shape of a spinach leaf. While your child does this activity at home with you, count the ways your family enjoys spinach. If you count only a few ways, talk with your child about new ideas for eating spinach. Try a simple change of pace—put a few fresh spinach leaves on a sandwich in place of lettuce.

Please call if you have questions about this activity or want more information.

Sincerely,

Child Care Center Director

Tip:

Be persistent! Studies show children sometimes need to have a new food offered 8-12 times before they will voluntarily choose to eat it. Many parents stop after 4 or 5 times. Go the distance! Keep trying!



Dilly Spinach Dip

Preparation Time: 5 minutes

Serves: (2 cups) 64 child-size 1-Tablespoon portions

Serves: 32 adult-size 2-Tablespoon portions

- **1 10-oz package frozen, chopped, spinach (thawed and squeezed dry)**
- **1 cup low-fat or fat-free cottage cheese**
- **1 cup low-fat or fat-free sour cream**
- **2 tsp dried dill**
- **½ tsp garlic powder**
- **½ tsp onion powder**
- **Cut up vegetables for dipping (e.g., carrots, celery, broccoli, summer squash)**

1. Wash hands thoroughly and squeeze the water from thawed spinach over sink or bowl. Place squeezed spinach into medium-size bowl.
2. Puree cottage cheese and sour cream together in food processor or blender or mash cottage cheese with fork until most of lumps are smooth.
3. Thoroughly mix squeezed spinach and blended mixture in medium size bowl using fork to break the spinach apart.
4. Add seasonings and mix thoroughly.
5. Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours to blend flavors.
6. Serve as a dip with cut-up vegetable pieces for dipping.

Variations: Substitute 1 package of Italian salad dressing mix, vegetable soup mix, or onion soup mix for the seasonings.

Safety Note—Defrost the frozen spinach in the microwave, if desired. Be sure to let microwave-thawed spinach cool for 10 minutes before squeezing liquid out. Thawing in a microwave can create hot spots that might burn hands. Breaking the spinach apart will help any hot spots cool.

Cooking with Children

Young children can:

- Wash hands first
- Help squeeze liquid from spinach – wash hands thoroughly before starting
- Break squeezed spinach apart with a fork
- Sprinkle seasonings measured by adult into mixture
- Pour seasoning from packet opened by adults

Adults should do all steps involving a food processor or blender.



Nutrients per 1 child-size serving of 1 tablespoon: Calories 8.5, Protein .7 g, Carbohydrate .6 g, Total Fat 0.4 g, Saturated Fat 0.3 g, Cholesterol 1.5 mg, Vitamin A 360 IU, Vitamin C 1.2 mg, Iron 1 mg, Calcium 12.5 mg, Sodium 20 mg, Dietary Fiber 0.2 g

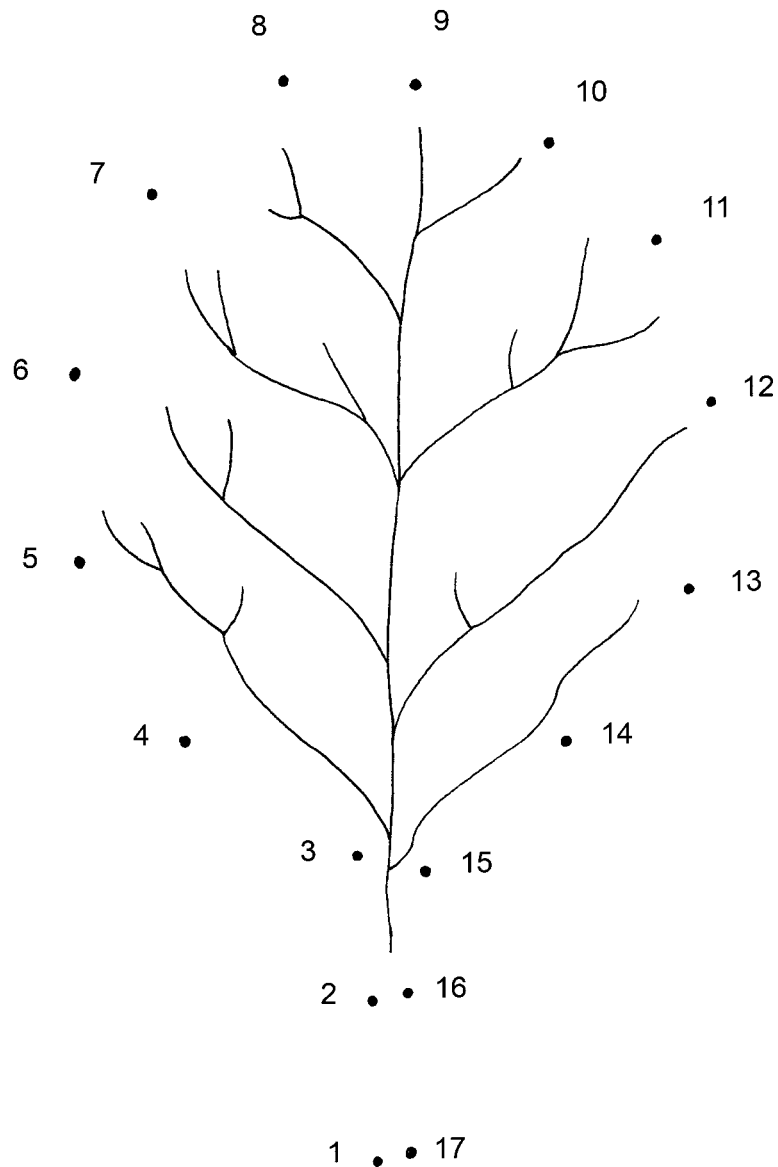
Spinach Dot-to-Dot

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Your child has been learning about spinach, how it looks and feels. Help your child complete this dot-to-dot activity. The completed dot-to-dot reveals

a spinach leaf. Talk with your child about different ways to eat spinach while he or she colors the spinach leaf. Have your child complete the activity below.

Connect the dots



Easy, Cheesy Spinach Pie

Preparation Time: 15 minutes

Cooking Time: 35-45 minutes

Serves: 12 child-size portions of $\frac{1}{12}$ th of the pie

Serves: 6 adult-size portions of $\frac{1}{6}$ th of the pie

- **1 10-oz package frozen chopped, spinach (thawed, and squeezed dry)**
- **4 oz reduced-fat cheddar cheese, shredded (1 cup shredded cheese)**
- **3 Tbsp fresh onions, very finely chopped, or to taste**
- **1 tsp minced garlic (fresh or from jar), or to taste**
- **1 cup reduced fat biscuit mix**
- **2 cups low-fat or fat-free milk**
- **4 large eggs, beaten**
- **Nonstick cooking spray**

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit, with oven rack in lower position.
2. Spray the bottom of 9-inch pie pan with nonstick spray.
3. Remove as much water as possible from thawed spinach. Wash hands thoroughly and squeeze handfuls of thawed spinach over sink or bowl. Place squeezed spinach into pie pan.
4. In pie pan, break apart clumps of squeezed spinach. Mix shredded cheese, onion, and spinach together with fork until evenly mixed.
5. In medium bowl, gradually combine biscuit mix with low-fat or fat-free milk. Using whisk, mix $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of low-fat or fat-free milk at a time into biscuit mix, so mixture blends evenly.
6. Thoroughly mix beaten eggs into biscuit mixture.
7. Pour biscuit mixture evenly over spinach mixture in pan.
8. Place pie pan in oven on lower rack and bake 35-45 minutes until golden brown and a knife inserted in middle of pie comes out clean.

Remove pie from oven. Let pie set 5 minutes. Cut into slices and serve.

Variation: Use muffin tins to make individual pies. Spray 24 muffin tins with nonstick spray. Spoon a tablespoon of the spinach cheese mixture in each muffin tin, dividing the mixture evenly among the tins. Pour $1\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons of biscuit mixture over the top of each muffin tin, dividing mixture evenly between tins. Bake for 15-20 minutes. Make mini pies by spooning a heaping teaspoon of the spinach-cheese mixture into a nonstick-sprayed mini muffin tin. Pour $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon of biscuit mixture over top. Bake for 10-12 minutes. Recipe makes 24 muffin-size or 48 mini-size muffin pies.

Safety Note – Defrost the frozen spinach in the microwave, if desired. Be sure to let microwave-thawed spinach set for 10 minutes before squeezing liquid out. Thawing in a microwave can create hot spots that might burn hands. Breaking the spinach apart will help any hot spots cool.

Cooking with Children

Young children can:

- Wash hands first
- Help squeeze liquid from spinach – wash hands thoroughly before starting
- Count eggs
- Help spoon spinach-cheese mixture into muffin or mini muffin tins

Adults should shred cheese, chop onion, mince garlic, mix spinach-cheese mixture, combine biscuit/milk/egg mixture, and do all tasks involving the oven.



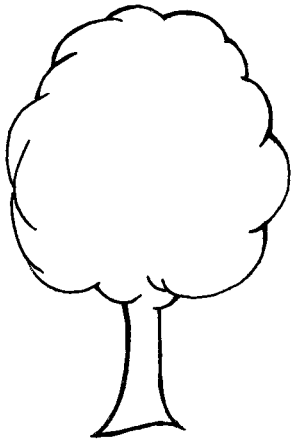
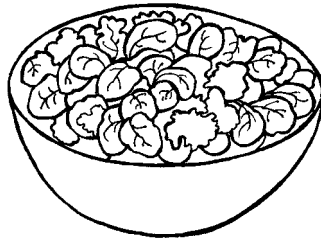
Nutrients (using low-fat milk) per 1 child-size portion of pie, $\frac{1}{12}$ th of pie: Calories 113, Protein 7.5 g, Carbohydrate 10.3 g, Total Fat 4.5 g, Saturated Fat 2 g, Cholesterol 78 mg, Vitamin A 2090 IU, Vitamin C 6.4 mg, Iron 1.1 mg, Calcium 185.9 mg, Sodium 253 mg, Dietary Fiber 1g

Where Does Spinach Grow?

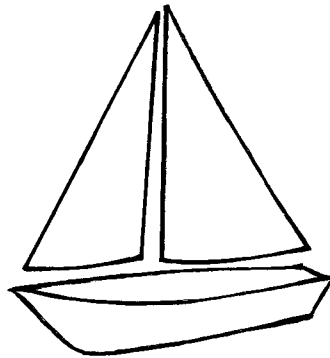
Dear Parents and Guardians:

Help your child recall all we've learned about growing spinach. Have your child draw a line from the bowl of spinach to the picture showing where spinach

grows. Talk with your child about how spinach gets to our homes—we buy it at the store or farmers' market.



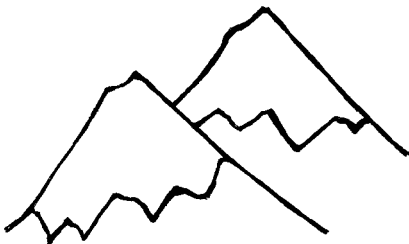
On a tree



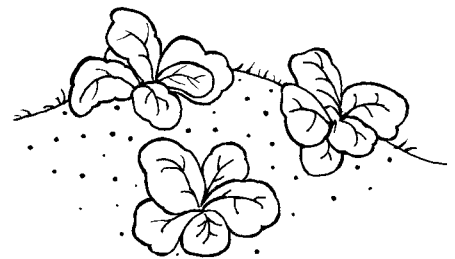
On a boat



In a building



On a snow-covered mountain



In a field



Spinach Growing at Home #3

Home Activities From Grow It, Try It, Like It!



Dear Parents and Guardians:

Our unit on spinach is coming to a close. Today your child learned spinach is prepared and served in many different ways. He/she has learned that spinach:



- Can be steamed with herbs and lemon juice;
- Is used in salads, breads, muffins, and dips; and
- Is served in casseroles, quiches, or as a pizza topping.



Continue learning about spinach with your child. Together, make **Spinach-Strawberry-Cantaloupe Salad**. The recipe is on the following page and includes suggestions for how your child can help you prepare this salad. Or, you may wish to make another family salad recipe featuring spinach with your child.



Sometimes parents are puzzled as to how to encourage their children to eat a variety of foods. Enclosed with this note is a fun activity, **Spinach Puzzle Pieces**, for your child to do at home with you. Talking about different foods such as spinach is a way to make new foods more familiar to your child. The more times your child is exposed to new foods, the more likely your child will be to eat these new foods at child care—and at home!



Please call if you have questions about this activity or want more information.



Sincerely,



Child Care Center Director



Tip:

Help your children learn health habits to last a lifetime. Sing the ABCs or 'Old MacDonald Had a Farm' while washing hands. It takes at least 20 seconds of sudsy scrubbing to get rid of dirt and germs.



Spinach-Strawberry-Cantaloupe Salad

Preparation Time: 15 minutes

Serves: 12 child-size ½-cup portions

Serves: 6 adult-size 1-cup portions

- 4 cups fresh spinach leaves
- 1 cup bite-size pieces of fresh strawberries
- 1 cup bite-size pieces of fresh cantaloupe
- Poppy seed salad dressing or raspberry vinaigrette

1. Wash and prepare spinach, strawberries, and cantaloupe, see Tips below.
2. Tear spinach and cut fruit into bite-size pieces.
3. Toss spinach and fruit pieces together in large bowl.
4. Dress lightly with dressing of choice.
5. Serve immediately. Refrigerate any leftovers.

Strawberry Tips

Wash strawberries in a colander just before use. Gently dry with paper towel. Remove green leaves and stem with knife.

Cantaloupe Tips

Scrub outside rind of cantaloupe with vegetable brush. Cut in half, scoop out seeds, remove rind, and store any extra melon in an airtight container in refrigerator.

Spinach Tips

Wash in salad spinner or in colander with lots of water. Press leaves between paper towel sheets to dry before tearing into bite-size pieces.

Cooking with Children

Young children can:

- Wash hands first
- Help use a salad spinner to wash spinach
- Dry spinach leaves washed in a colander between sheets of paper towel
- Tear spinach into pieces
- Help wash and dry strawberries
- Help cut some pieces of strawberries and soft, ripe cantaloupe using a small plastic knife and a cutting board

Adults should hull strawberries (remove green leaves and stems), use a sharp knife to cut cantaloupe in half, remove seeds and rind, and cut into smaller chunks. If cantaloupe is firm, an adult should cut it into bite-size pieces.



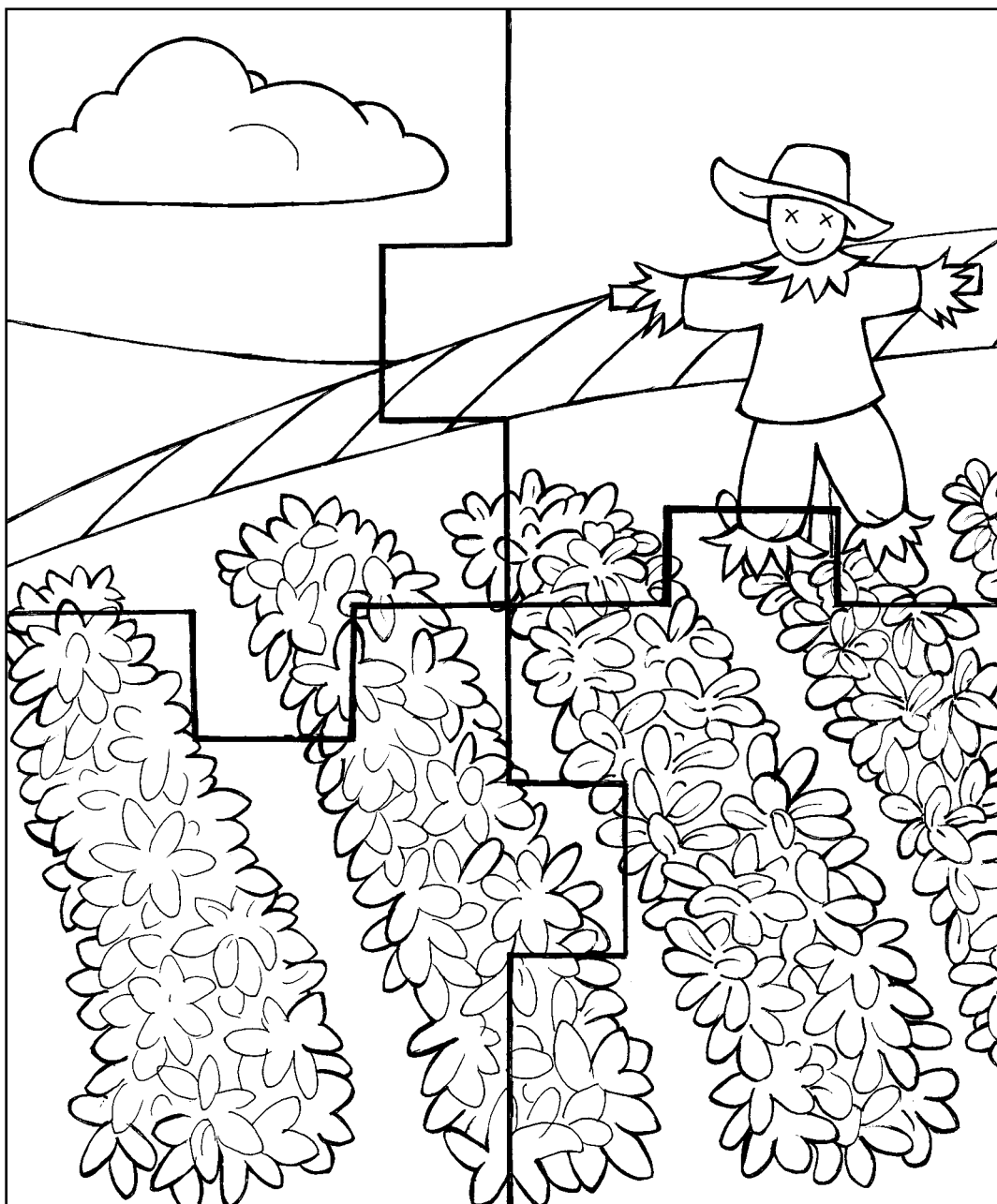
Nutrients per 1 child-size serving of ½ cup: Calories 43, Protein 0.5 g, Carbohydrate 4 g, Total Fat 3.1 g, Saturated Fat 0.4 g, Cholesterol 2 mg, Vitamin A 1150 IU, Vitamin C 16.9 mg, Iron 0.4 mg, Calcium 14 mg, Sodium 18 mg, Dietary Fiber 0.7 g

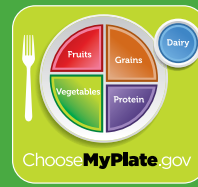
Spinach Puzzle Pieces

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Have your child color this drawing of spinach growing in a field. Glue the colored page to piece of cardboard (a cereal box works great). Cut the puzzle pieces out along the lines. Have your child put the puzzle pieces together.

Keep the puzzle and encourage your child to put it together often. Each time the puzzle is used, talk about spinach. Ask your child how spinach grows. Talk about ways to eat it.





United States Department of Agriculture • Food and Nutrition Service
Find more fun resources at these Web sites:

teammnutrition.usda.gov
choosemyplate.gov

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Grow It, Try It, Like It!

Preschool Fun With Fruits and Vegetables

Sweet Potato Hill



Booklet **4**

Welcome to... Sweet Potato Hill at Tasty Acres Farm!

There is a delicious secret hiding at Sweet Potato Hill. The other plants show off their fruits and vegetables during the growing season. On the hill, the potatoes stay hidden in the ground until harvest time. The children will not be able to hide their delight in learning about this sweet vegetable; it grows in many varieties. Appealing hands-on activities encourage the children to discover how a sweet potato looks, feels, smells, and tastes. The children make a pretend sweet potato hill to learn how this vegetable is grown, harvested, and shipped to farmers' markets and stores. Children have many opportunities to taste sweet potatoes plain and in salads, side dishes, and cookies. Families share in the sweet rewards through the activities and recipes of the Growing at Home materials.

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A Plan For Organizing Sweet Potato Hill Activities

The Sweet Potato Hill lesson plans are designed to be used in their entirety but if your center does not have the time, space, or resources to do all the activities, select the activities best suited to your center's environment and available resources from Section A: hands-on activities, Section B: planting activities, Section C: sweet potato stories and songs, and Section D: nutrition education activities. Be sure that the activities you choose help the children meet the objectives listed at the beginning of each lesson plan section.



Most activities require only 10-15 minutes; pick a few for each day. In this example, all of the activities from the lesson plans are completed, but spaced out over a 5-day period.

Here is one way to arrange the activities in your Sweet Potato Hill. Most activities require only 10-15 minutes; pick a few for each day. In this example, all of the activities from the lesson plans are completed, but spaced out over a 5-day period. Additionally, two activities from the Garden Art and Crafts Section in Booklet 1 are added. These activities are fun and useful ways to help reinforce the objectives of each activity. On page 19, it gives tips for creating successful projects and ideas for harvesting fun month after month. The Garden Art and Crafts chart connects the art and crafts to the lesson activities.

Planning Chart for Sweet Potato Hill Activities

Day One	Day Two	Day Three	Day Four	Day Five
A1 "Eye" Wonder What This Is? Hands-on Activity 	A3 Mashed Sweet Potatoes Hands-on Activity	B2 Start a Sweet Potato Slip Planting Activity 	C3 Old MacDonald Had a Farm Song, Sweet Potato Style	D1 You Say Potato, I Say Potáto Nutrition Education Activity
A2 A Look Inside Hands-on Activity	C1 Cool Puppy Pup Video	B3 Make a Pretend Sweet Potato Hill Planting Activity	Garden Craft Make a Scarecrow	D2 Sweet Endings With Sweet Potato Nutrition Education Activity 
Garden Art Stamped Paper 	B1 Sweet Potatoes Start From Eyes and Slips Planting Activity	C3 Old MacDonald Had a Farm Song, Sweet Potato Style 	C2 Reading Activity 	
Send Home Growing at Home Materials #1		Send Home Growing at Home Materials #2		Send Home Growing at Home Materials #3

Revisit the Farm: Rainy Day Fun All Year Long

When the weather changes your outdoor plans, the activities from Tasty Acres Farm provide a welcome opportunity to revisit and remember all the fun and flavor of *Grow It, Try It, Like It!* Sing the songs, watch the video segments, and use the Garden Art and Crafts Section in Booklet I for ideas. Make a rainy day one to reconnect with these fruits and vegetables.

More Ways To Grow – The Sweet Potato Hill unit can be included in other areas of the curriculum. **Complementary themes include:**

Foods – Vegetable **Shapes** – Oblong **Colors** – Orange **Seasons** – Summer, Fall **Body** – Senses
Opposites – Above & Below **Plants** – Vines, Eyes, Sprouts **Alphabet** – S and P words



A. Sweet Potatoes Are Appealing Hands-On Activities

Materials Needed

- 2 sweet potatoes
- Container and tongs or serving spoon
- Mystery Box/Bag
- Paper and Pencil
- Baseball
- Napkins, one per child

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Wash sweet potatoes.
- Prepare raw sweet potato slices ($\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick), one per child.
- Place a clean sweet potato in the Mystery Box/Bag.
- Make copies of Sweet Potato Growing at Home #1—one set per child.
- Review Make a Mystery Box or Bag (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 45).

Growing at Home Introduction Letter and Hand Washing and Polite Tasting Guidelines: Send a copy of these resources home before starting the first unit from *Grow It, Try It, Like It!* If you have already sent these resources home, you may omit this step. (See Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 42-44.)

Sweet Potato Growing at Home #1: Send a copy of this resource home with each child at the start of the Section A activities.

A1: “Eye” Wonder What This Is

Use the Mystery Box/Bag to create interest by having the children feel the outside of a sweet potato before revealing the “mystery” item to all.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Identify a sweet potato as a heavy, oblong-shaped, orange-brown vegetable;
- Describe the outward appearance and smell of a sweet potato.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing and Polite Tasting

- Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).
- If this is the first activity involving food tasting, talk with the children about polite food tasting habits. (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 44, for details).



Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Introduce or reintroduce the Mystery Box/Bag if you have used it before.
- One at a time, ask each child to come and feel inside the box or bag without looking. If a child seems afraid, feel inside the box/bag with the child.
- Ask each child to describe quietly to you what he/she feels.
- After everyone has guessed, reveal the sweet potato. Let each child hold the sweet potato, if desired.
- Note the children's guesses that were close (a plant, food) or correct (sweet potato).
- Talk about the sweet potato. Ask the questions below and any other questions you like.
 - ▶ Is sweet potato a fruit or a vegetable? (Vegetable)
 - ▶ What shape is it? (Oblong, like a squished ball)
 - ▶ What color is the outside of the sweet potato? (Light to bright orange)
 - ▶ How does the outside of it feel? (Bumpy)
 - ▶ Does it have a smell? (May have no smell or smell musky like soil)
 - ▶ Is it light or heavy? (Heavy like a baseball—let the children feel the baseball)
 - ▶ Is it soft or hard? (Hard)
 - ▶ Has anyone ever tasted a sweet potato? (Yes or No)

Words To Grow

Sweet Potato	Vegetable
Oblong	Heavy (weight)
Orange	Bumpy
Hard	Brown



Tip: Save the sweet potato from the box or bag for use in Activity B1.

Activity Conclusion—Tasting

- Conclude the lesson by offering the children a piece of raw sweet potato to taste.
- As necessary, remind the children how the group follows polite tasting manners.



A2: Sweet Potato...A Look Inside

Engage all the senses! The children see and feel the inside of a sweet potato, then smell and taste it.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Describe the appearance, smell, and taste of a sweet potato;
- Tell that all of the sweet potato can be eaten including the peel.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing

- Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet I, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).

Materials Needed

- Sweet potatoes (one can be from Activity A1)
- Sharp knife
- Cutting board or surface
- Container for cooked potato pieces
- Forks and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Scrub the outside of the sweet potatoes well.
- Cut one cooked and cooled sweet potato into bite size cubes, at least one cube per child.
- Assemble supplies in a central area; keep the knife in a safe place until ready to use.





Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Have the children gather around the area with the uncooked sweet potato and cutting board. If necessary, review with children how to be safe around sharp knives: only adults use, children keep hands away, and don't touch a sharp knife.
- Review what was learned about sweet potatoes in Activity A1. If you didn't do Activity A1, tell the children you have a sweet potato to share today.
- Tell the children that because sweet potatoes grow in the ground, we have to scrub the outside with a brush very well to remove soil and germs before we cut it open. Tell the children you have already washed the sweet potato.
- Cut the sweet potato in half to reveal the inside. Pass the sweet potato around for the children to examine. Talk with the children about the inside of the sweet potato. Ask the questions below and ask additional questions if you like.
 - ▶ What colors are on the inside of the sweet potato? (Orange, skin may be brown).
 - ▶ What part of the sweet potato can be eaten? (The orange part of the sweet potato is eaten; the peel can also be eaten)
 - ▶ How does the inside flesh feel? (The flesh feels smooth and hard)
 - ▶ How does the sweet potato smell? (Sweet)



Tip: Save the raw potato pieces to use in Garden Art Stamped Wrapping Paper (see Booklet 1, Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 32).

Words To Grow

Orange	Brown
Skin or peel	Flesh
Smooth	Hard
Sweet	

Tasting Activity

- Once the children have explored the piece of sweet potato, invite them to taste a cooked cube of sweet potato.
- Continue the activity:
 - ▶ How does the sweet potato feel in their mouth? (Smooth)
 - ▶ How does the sweet potato taste? (Sweet)



Materials Needed

- Sweet potatoes
- Brown sugar
- Margarine
- Orange juice concentrate
- Potato masher(s)
- Paper plates, spoons, and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Wash sweet potatoes.
- Prepare two batches of mashed sweet potatoes – see Mashed Sweet Potato Recipe on page 31, steps 1-6.
- For one batch add 1-2 teaspoons of brown sugar and 1-2 teaspoons margarine per large cooked sweet potato ($\frac{1}{2}$ pound raw weight).
- For the other batch add 1 tablespoon of orange juice concentrate per large cooked sweet potato ($\frac{1}{2}$ pound raw weight).

A3: Mashed Sweet Potatoes

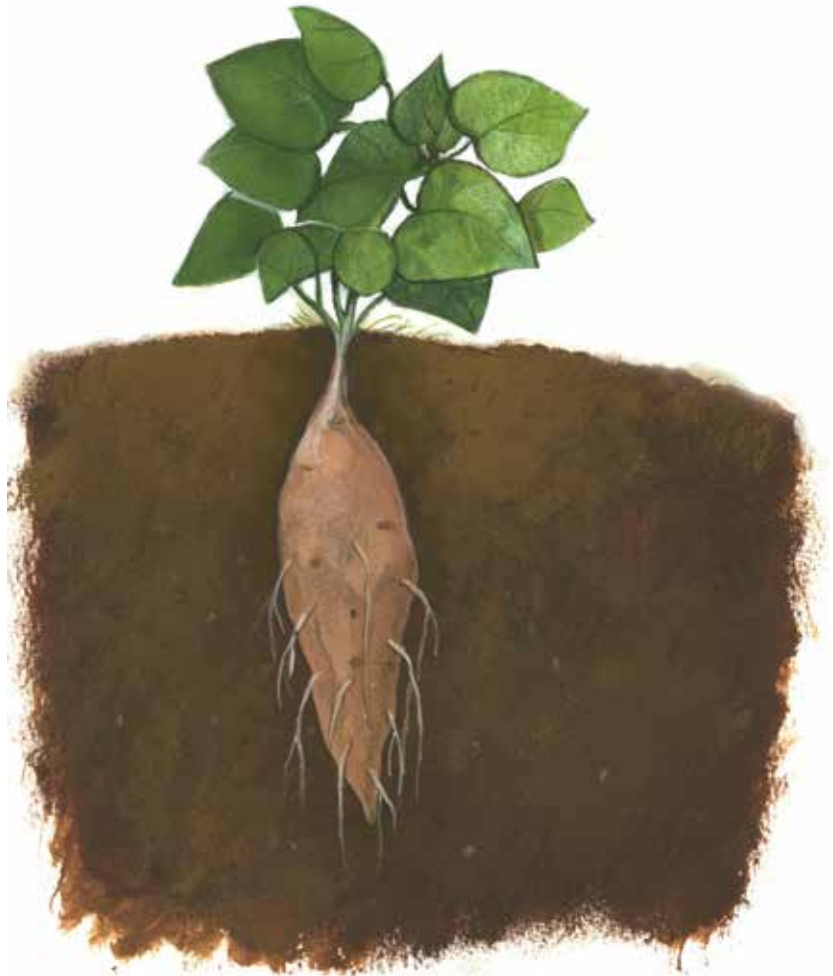
The children taste two types of mashed potatoes. They explore the feel, smell, and taste of sweet potatoes.

Objective

The children will be able to taste a new food featuring sweet potato.

Before the Activity-Hand Washing

- Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).





Activity Length:
10-minutes

The Activity

- Have each child seated at the table(s).
- Explain that we should always wash and scrub potatoes under running water before they are eaten. Let the children know you have already washed the potatoes.
- Ask them if they have had sweet potatoes at their family's Thanksgiving or other holiday or family meals.
- Make sure potatoes are not too hot.
- Let each child take a turn mashing the potatoes.
- Tell the children they will taste the sweet potatoes cooked and mashed with two different seasonings added.
- Season the cooked sweet potatoes while the children watch.

Words To Grow

Sweet Potato
Mashed
Sugar

Orange
Peel

Activity Conclusion—Tasting

- Give each child a small serving of each type of mashed sweet potatoes. Make sure the potatoes are warm but not too hot.
- Have the children taste both types of mashed potatoes. As they taste their potatoes, have them notice any differences in the taste of the sweet potatoes.
- As the children are eating, ask them to describe how the mashed sweet potatoes:
 - ▶ smell (sweet, may smell of brown sugar or oranges);
 - ▶ feel in the mouth (smooth, warm); and
 - ▶ taste (sweet, may have orange flavor).



B. Sweet Potato... Where Do You Come From? Planting Activities

Sweet Potato Growing at Home #2: Send a copy of this resource home with each child at the start of the Section B activities.

Materials Needed

- Fresh sweet potatoes with eyes
- Drawing of sweet potato (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 65)

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Assemble materials.
- Make copies of Sweet Potato Growing at Home #2—one set per child.
- Plan to serve sweet potatoes at meal or snack time (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, Ten Terrific Ways..., page 48).

B1: Sweet Potatoes Grow From Eyes and Slips

The children see and touch the eyes of sweet potato and learn how slips grow from the eyes of the sweet potato.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Describe how a sweet potato grows from a slip into a plant that produces more sweet potatoes;
- Describe the resources needed to grow sweet potatoes.





Activity Length:
10 minutes

The Activity

- Tell the children that today they will learn about how sweet potatoes grow. Show the children a fresh sweet potato with eyes on it. Eyes or buds are small bumps on the sweet potato's peel that can be rubbed off. Let the children hold and touch the sweet potato.
- Explain that sweet potatoes grow from slips (plant parts) that grow from the "eyes" or buds of the sweet potato.
- Explain that the sweet potato slips are planted in long narrow rows and covered by the soil.
- Explain that the sweet potato slips grow in the soil; the sun and rain help them grow.
- Explain that sweet potatoes grow under the soil while their leaves grow above the ground. Show drawing of sweet potato plants.
- Explain to the children that sweet potatoes are gently removed from the soil before the weather turns cold.
- Explain to the children that after the sweet potatoes are gently pulled up out of the ground, they are carefully placed in baskets or boxes so the tender peel is not hurt.
- Explain that the sweet potatoes are taken to a store or a farmers' market where people buy them and take them home to eat.
- Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).

Words To Grow

Eye	Slip
Peel	Soil
Sun	Water



Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Sweet Potato Seed Art:
Decorate a sweet potato shape with seeds. Use small white beans to show the eyes or buds of the potato (see Booklet 1, the Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 34).

Activity Connection to Snack or Mealtime

While eating sweet potatoes in some form (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, Ten Terrific Ways..., page 48) at snack or mealtime, talk about how sweet potatoes grow.



Materials Needed

- Unwashed sweet potatoes with eyes, one per child
- Sharp knife
- Permanent marker
- Wooden craft sticks, three per sweet potato
- Narrow-mouth quart-size jar (an empty mayonnaise jar works well), one per child
- Distilled or spring water

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Make three ½-inch horizontal slits evenly spaced around the middle of each sweet potato.
- Organize materials in central area.
- Plan to serve sweet potatoes in some form at snack or mealtime (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, Ten Terrific Ways..., page 48).

B2: Start a Sweet Potato Slip

The children start a sweet potato slip from sweet potatoes and learn what slips need to grow into plants.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Describe the resources needed to grow sweet potatoes;
- Experience starting a sweet potato slip.

Option: Start a sweet potato start one month before doing the activity with the children to have a slip to show during the activity.





Activity Length:
10 minutes

The Activity

- Have each child seated at the table(s).
- Explain to the children that sweet potatoes are different from plants that start from seeds. Sweet potatoes start from slips that grow from the eyes on the sweet potato. Tell the children that after the sweet potato slip grows, it is planted in the soil. Tell the children that today they are going to start a sweet potato slip.
- Help the children fill their jars with water, leaving $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of space between the water and top of the jar.
- Give each child a sweet potato and three wooden craft sticks. Write each child's name on one of the wooden sticks with permanent marker. Help each child push a wooden craft stick into each slit, at least $\frac{1}{2}$ inch into the sweet potato flesh. The wooden craft sticks create a tripod that supports the sweet potato on the rim of the jar. This allows half of the potato to be below the water level and half above.
- Explain to the children that the sweet potato grows in the jar like plants outside grow in the soil.
- Take the children to the window. Point to the sun. Ask them to think about how the sun feels on their skin. (Warm) Explain that the light and warmth of the sun helps plants to grow.
- Place the jars in a warm location at or above 65 degrees F. In about a month, the slip sprouts will grow 8 to 10 inches, which is the best length for transplanting to the garden.
- Have the children check the jars weekly to see the progress of their slip sprouts.
- NOTE: Place the jars on top of a water heater to speed the growing process.
- Explain to the children that the sweet potato slips are planted in the soil outside. The slips need soil, rain, sun, and time to grow into sweet potato plants. Sweet potatoes will grow from the plants under the ground. The sweet potatoes will be ready to be pulled gently from the soil in the fall.



Green Thumb Guide

Sweet potatoes require a warm, long growing season. Sweet potato slips started the end of April can be planted at the end of May. The plants will produce sweet potatoes ready to gently pull from the soil and eat in the fall. To grow plants that will produce sweet potatoes, purchase sweet potatoes from a nursery or mail order catalog; follow instructions provided. A sweet potato from the grocery store will sprout leaves and roots, but will not produce sweet potatoes if planted.

Activity Connection to Snack or Mealtime

While eating sweet potatoes at snack or mealtime, talk about starting sweet potato slips and how sweet potatoes grow.



B3: Make a Pretend Sweet Potato Hill

The children make a pretend sweet potato hill and learn about the growing stages of sweet potatoes.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Describe the resources needed to grow sweet potatoes;
- Experience making a pretend sweet potato hill.

Materials Needed

- Large pieces of brown and blue paper, each 3 to 6 feet long and 18 inches wide
- Sweet Potato Blackline Master (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 76)
- Drawings of sweet potatoes (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, pages 65-66)
- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils, green and orange
- White yarn cut into sets of 3-, 5-, and 7-inch lengths, one set per child
- Blunt-tip scissors
- Paper punch
- Double-stick tape

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Attach the papers to the wall with the brown below the blue to represent ground and sky.
- Copy Sweet Potato Blackline Master on white paper, one per child.
- Organize the supplies.
- Plan to serve sweet potatoes in some form at snack or mealtime (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, Ten Terrific Ways... , page 48).

The Activity

- Have each child seated at the table(s), near the supplies.
- Review with the children how sweet potatoes grow from slips planted in the ground. The slips need soil, rain, sun, and time to grow into a sweet potato plant. While the plant leaves grow above the ground, the sweet potatoes grow below the ground. The sweet potatoes are grown and ready to be dug up from the ground when the weather turns cool in the fall. The farmer gently pulls the sweet potatoes from the soil and sends them to stores or farmers' markets. That is where we buy sweet potatoes to take home to eat. Tell the children they are going to make a pretend sweet potato hill.
- Show the children drawings of sweet potatoes. Give each child a copy of the Sweet Potato Blackline Master. Ask the children to color the parts of the sweet potato plant on their sheet just like the drawings. The leaves are green and the potato is orange. Help any children who need assistance.
- Help the children cut out, or cut for them, the colored sweet potato parts.

Optional Activity: Make Individual Pretend Sweet Potato Plants.

- Overlap 8½- by 11-inch sheets of brown and blue paper ½ inch along the 11-inch edge and tape together to create a surface approximately 16 by 11-inches.
- Make one set per child; attach the colored potato parts to the lower brown section (below ground) and upper blue section (above ground).
- Write each child's name on the sheet of paper.



Activity Length:
15 minutes

Activity continued...

- Take the sweet potato and make a hole with a paper punch through each of the three eyes.
- Give each child a set of cut yarn lengths. Help each child thread yarn through the three holes and tape the tip of the yarn to the backside of the potato to represent the roots of a slip.
- Position the sweet potato on the brown paper so that the end of the potato without the yarn touches where the brown and blue papers meet. Use a piece or two of additional double-stick tape to secure the potato to the paper.
- Position the green leaves on the blue section directly touching the top of the potato. When done, it should represent the leaves growing above the ground.
- When finished, the assembled pieces should look like a sweet potato with slips growing underneath the ground while the green plant leaves grow above the ground.
- Talk about how the plant grows sweet potatoes while attaching each part of the sweet potato plant to the papers.
- Have the children wash their hands for snack or mealtime.

Words To Grow

Slip Leaves
Roots Underground
Sweet potato



Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Produce Placemat: Use the Pretend Sweet Potato Plant to decorate a placemat. Use the individual plant option and attach the finished plant to one side of the placemat. Have the children add drawings of their favorite sweet potato recipes on the reverse side of the placemat. Laminate and use this reversible placemat to review how sweet potatoes grow and the different ways we enjoy sweet potatoes (see Booklet 1, Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 29).

Activity Connection to Snack or Mealtime

While eating sweet potatoes at snack or mealtime, talk about how sweet potatoes grow.



C. Sweet Potato Stories and Songs

C1: Cool Puppy Pup's Sweet Potato Lunch Party Video

View Cool Puppy Pup's Sweet Potato Lunch Party segment with the children. Discuss the sweet potato facts covered in this delightful video and have them try Cool Puppy Pup's favorite way to eat sweet potatoes.

Objective

The children will be able to describe how sweet potatoes are grown, harvested, and eaten.

Materials Needed

- Cool Puppy Pup DVD
- TV and DVD Player
- Sweet potatoes, brown sugar, and butter
- Plates, spoons, and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Cue the DVD to start at the Sweet Potato segment.
- Prepare mashed sweet potatoes with brown sugar and butter.





Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Gather the children and watch the Sweet Potato segment of the video.
- After viewing the segment, ask the children to name their favorite parts of the video. Use their responses to lead into a discussion about the video. During the discussion, include the questions below to review Cool Puppy Pup's main points from the video segment.
- In the video, did Cool Puppy Pup say:
 - ▶ A sweet potato was a fruit or a vegetable? (Vegetable)
 - ▶ What shape is a sweet potato? (Oblong like a squished ball)
 - ▶ What color is a sweet potato? (Orange)
 - ▶ How does the outside feel? (Bumpy, yet smooth)
- At Tasty Acres Farm, the farmer talked about how sweet potatoes grow.
 - ▶ Do sweet potatoes grow above or below the ground? (Below the ground on a farm)
 - ▶ Where can our families buy sweet potatoes from once they are shipped from the farm? (Grocery stores and farmers' markets)
- Have the children name some of the ways that sweet potato can be eaten. (In a pie, baked and sprinkled with orange juice and cinnamon, cooked with apples, or mashed with a little butter and brown sugar)
- Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).
- Conclude the activity by telling the children they are going to eat a sweet potato, the way that Cool Puppy Pup likes sweet potatoes best of all.
- Serve the mashed sweet potatoes.



Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Tasty Acres Mobile: Create a sweet potato mobile decorating the circles of the mobile with drawings of how sweet potatoes grow and favorite sweet potato recipes (see Booklet 1, Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 31).



C2: Reading Activity

Read story books to the children that are about or include the activities of growing and/or eating fruits and vegetables. Listening to such stories can encourage children to adopt positive behaviors that can last a lifetime, like trying new fruits and vegetables.

Objective

Children will describe the fun and interesting stories about fruits and/or vegetables that were read to them.

Materials Needed

- Books from a library or purchased books
- Space for the children to sit

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Clear a space for the children to sit around you.
- Choose a book from the Harvest of Books list (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 50).
- Select a book you would like to read and either borrow it from a library or purchase it.
- Use books relevant to fruits and vegetables that may already be available to you.





Activity Length:
10 to 20 minutes
depending on the
length of the book

The Activity

- Have the children sit around you as you read them the book.
- Ask the children to listen for the names of fruits and vegetables as the story is read.

Discussion Questions:

- After reading the story, ask the children which fruits and vegetables were named in the story and what happened to them. For example,
 - ▶ Where were the fruits and vegetables grown?
 - ▶ What happened to the fruits and vegetables after they were picked?
 - ▶ Who ate the fruits and vegetables?

Add other questions that relate to the story.





C3: Old MacDonald Had a Farm, Sweet Potato Style

The children sing about sweet potatoes and act out motions to this familiar tune.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Sing and act out motions to a familiar tune;
- Say that being physically active helps us feel good.

Materials Needed

- Sweet potato lyrics to tune “Old MacDonald Had a Farm”
- Large space for the children to move about

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Become familiar with the words and motions of the song.



Activity Length:
10 minutes

The Activity

- Lead the children in singing these new words to the tune “Old MacDonald Had a Farm” and demonstrate the suggested motions or make up new ones.
- Encourage the children to move about as they are singing.
- Explain that skipping, wiggling, stretching, running, jumping, and playing actively every day helps us to feel good and stay healthy.



Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Make a Scarecrow: Make a Scarecrow, for a creative connection to this activity (see Booklet I, Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 38).

Old MacDonald Had a Farm, Sweet Potato Style

The children sing about growing and eating sweet potatoes and act out motions to this familiar tune.

1st Verse

Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!
On this farm he grew some sweet potatoes, EIEIO!
With plant slips here and plant slips there,
Here a slip, there a slip, everywhere plant slips!
Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!

2nd Verse

Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!
On this farm he grew some sweet potatoes, EIEIO!
With a tater vine here and a tater vine there,
Here a vine, there a vine, everywhere a tater vine!
Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!

3rd Verse

Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!
On this farm he grew some sweet potatoes, EIEIO!
Sweet tater here, and sweet tater there,
Here a tater, there a tater, everywhere a sweet tater.
Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!

4th Verse

Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!
On this farm he grew some sweet potatoes, EIEIO!
With a bite, bite here, and a bite, bite there,
Here a bite, there a bite, everywhere a sweet bite.
Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!

(Skip in place)

(Pretend to carry a basket of sweet potatoes)
(Pretend to hoe ground and plant slips
using large, vigorous motions)

(Skip in place)

(Skip in place)

(Pretend to carry a basket of sweet potatoes)
(Squat, wiggle arms & hands like vines,
jump forward in squat & repeat motions)

(Skip in place)

(Skip in place)

(Pretend to carry a basket of sweet potatoes)
(Pretend to dig a sweet potato)
(Pretend to dig a sweet potato)

(Skip in place)

(Skip in place)

(Pretend to carry a basket of sweet potatoes)
(Pretend to eat a sweet potato)
(Pretend to eat a sweet potato)

(Skip in place)





D. Introducing MyPlate Nutrition Education Activities

Sweet Potato Growing at Home #3: Send a copy of this resource home with each child at the start of the Section D activities.

Materials Needed

- *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster (see Booklet 1)
- Sweet potatoes and red and white skin potatoes, two of each to show and at least one of each to cook
- Plates and napkins
- Spoons or forks, if needed

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Review the foods and activities depicted on the poster.
- Display the poster.
- Wash potatoes, leave one of each type whole, and cut one of each type in half.
- Prepare bite-size pieces of baked or cooked sweet, red and white skin potatoes, one each per child.
- Make copies of *MyPlate* coloring page (new or use copies from a previous D1 activity), one per child.
- Copy *Sweet Potato Growing at Home #3*—one set per child.

D1: You Say Potato and I Say Potáto

Introduce the children to the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster. The children find sweet and white potatoes in the Vegetables group. They taste the difference between sweet potatoes and other potatoes.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Say that sweet potatoes are found in the Vegetables group.
- Say that eating vegetables like sweet potatoes help keep us healthy;
- Compare sweet potatoes to other potatoes;
- Say that being physically active every day helps us feel good and is fun;
- Say that eating foods from the different food groups each day helps us grow and be healthy;
- Identify a food from each of the five foods groups.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing and Polite Tasting

- Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).
- If necessary, remind the children about polite food tasting habits (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 44, for details).



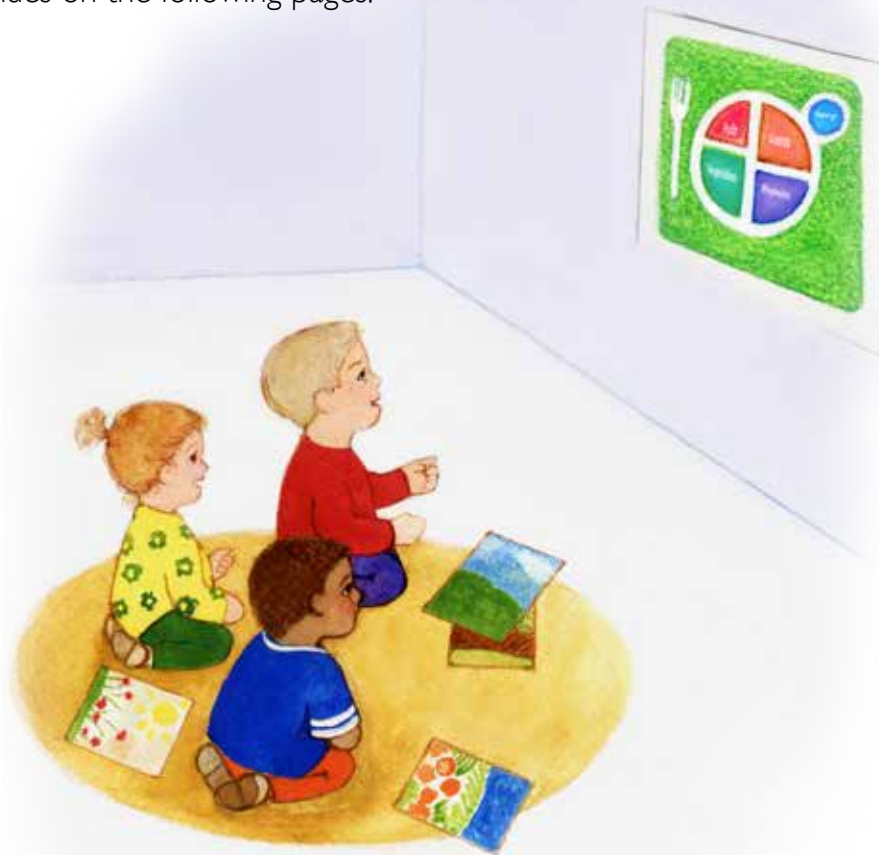
Activity Length:
25 minutes;
30 minutes if
optional coloring
activity
conducted

The Activity

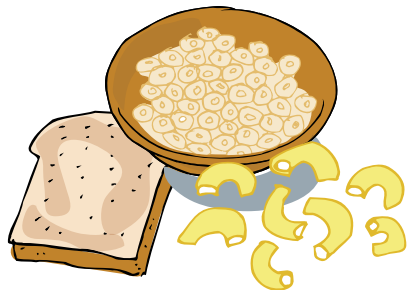
Learning the Food Groups

- Seat the children in a semicircle on the floor in view of the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster.
- Tell the children today they are going to learn about ways to be healthy and have fun every day. Tell the children that the best part is they like to do what helps them be healthy: they like to eat a variety of foods and they like to play.
- Point out the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster to the children. Ask the children to tell you what they see on the poster. Accept all correct answers, such as food, specific foods by name, children playing, and specific activities by name, etc.
- Explain that MyPlate shows the five food groups a person should eat from each day. Each food group has its own color. The Fruit Group is red, the Vegetable Group is green, the Grains Group is orange, the Dairy Group is blue, and the Protein Foods Group is purple. Eating foods from each food group helps us to be healthy and grow."

This activity continues on the following pages.



Grains



- Point to the orange band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (orange). Tell the children that foods made from grains are in the Grains group represented by the orange color band. Point to the bread and the cereal in the Grains group on the orange band of the poster and state that bread and cereal give us energy to play. Ask two children to come to the poster, point to a food in the orange section, and name the food. After each child names a food, repeat the name of the food, and state that _____ (the food named) and other foods from the Grains group also gives us energy to play.
- Children this age may not know what a grain is. Tell them grains come from plants such as wheat, oats, and corn. Grains are used to make foods like cereal, bread, and pasta.

Vegetables



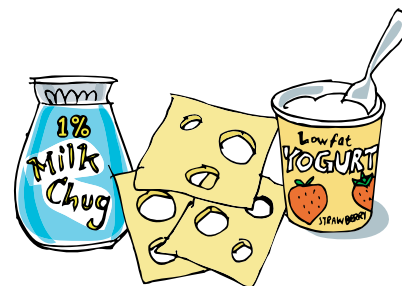
- Point to the green band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (green). Tell the children that foods from plants called vegetables are in the Vegetables group represented by the green color band. Point out the sweet potato in the Vegetables group on the green band of the poster. Ask the children to name this vegetable (sweet potato). Ask the children to name a sweet potato's color (orange or yellow/orange). Explain that eating a yellow/orange-colored vegetable, like a sweet potato, often is a way to be healthy. Ask two children to come to the poster, point to a vegetable on the green section, and name the vegetable. After each child names a vegetable, repeat the name of the vegetable and state that _____ (the vegetable named) and other foods from the Vegetables group also help keep us healthy.

Fruits

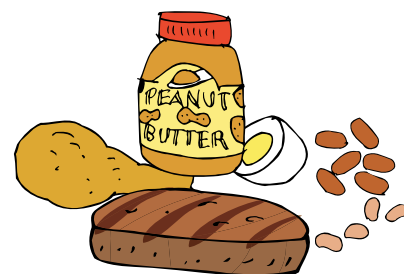


- Point to the red band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (red). Tell the children that foods from plants called fruits are in the Fruits group represented by the red color band. Point to the peach and strawberry shown in the Fruits group below the red band of the poster and state that peaches and strawberries help keep us healthy. Ask two children to come to the poster, point to a fruit in the red section, and name the fruit. After each child names a fruit, repeat the name of the fruit, and state that _____ (the fruit named) and other foods from the Fruits group also help keep us healthy.

- Point to the blue band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (blue). Tell the children that milk and foods made from milk are in the Dairy group represented by the blue color band. Point to the milk and yogurt in the Dairy group below the blue band and state that milk and yogurt help us build strong bones. Tell the children that it is good to choose low-fat and fat-free milk, yogurt, and cheese when given a choice. Ask two children to come to the poster, point out a food in the blue section, and name the food. After each child names a food, repeat the name of the food, and state that _____ (the food named) and other foods from the Dairy group also help us build strong bones.



- Point to the purple band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (purple). Tell the children that foods from animals and some plants are in the Protein foods group represented by the purple color band. Point to the meat, fish, egg, beans and peanut butter in the Protein foods group below the purple band and state that they help our muscles grow. Ask two children to come to the poster, point out a food in the purple section, and name the food. After each child names a food, repeat the name of the food, and state that _____ (the food named) and other foods from the Protein food group also help our muscles grow. (Note: if only foods that come from animals are selected, point out a food from plants and name it. If only foods from plants are selected, point out a food that comes from animals and name it.)





Review Activity

- While the children are still seated, point to each food group color band on the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster.
- Ask the children to name the food group each color represents and to name a food from that group.

- **Orange** – Grains group
- **Green** – Vegetables group
- **Red** – Fruits group
- **Blue** – Dairy group
- **Purple** – Protein Foods group

Tasting Activity

- Show the children the sweet potato and red and white skin potatoes.
- Tell the children that these are potatoes similar to the sweet potato, but different in color and taste.
- Give the children samples of each potato to taste and compare to the sweet potato.
- Invite the children to feel and smell the different whole and cut potatoes.
- Ask the children to name different ways to eat vegetables like potatoes at different meals and snacks. Accept all answers such as mashed, in vegetable salads, baked, etc.

Be Active-Potato Sack Hop

Note to Caregiver: Active play and movement are important for every child's growth and development. Although they may seem to be active and energetic, most children do not get the amount of physical activity they need for good health. Child care programs should provide opportunities for young children (2 to 6 years of age) to engage in 90 to 120 minutes (1 ½ to 2 hours) of moderate to vigorous physical activity each day.

Several short periods of activity (10-20 minutes each) work well for young children and are easy to plan into the day. Examples of moderate to vigorous physical activity that kids this age enjoy include: playing on outdoor play equipment, dancing to music, taking a nature (or garden) walk, relay races, movement games, hopping, skipping, galloping, and riding a tricycle or bicycle. For additional information on physical activity for young children, refer to the Nutrition and Wellness Tips for Young Children: Provider Handbook for the Child and Adult Care Food Program at <http://teamnnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/nutritionandwellness.html>."

- Point to the various activities depicted on the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster. Ask the children to tell you why it is important to be physically active and play every day, i.e., it helps you to be strong and healthy, and is fun. Tell the children that today they will learn to be physically active in a way that reminds them of the potatoes they just tasted.
- Take the children to a large open space or outdoors. Ask the children to stand in a straight line across one end of the open space. Explain to the children that farmers sometimes ship potatoes in large, sturdy fabric bags. Tell the children that farm children have created a fun game using the empty bags.
- Tell the children they are going to play with imaginary potato sacks today and pretend to give each child a sack. Tell the children the sack is large enough for each child to step into the sack and pull it up to his or her waist. Explain that since both legs are in the sack, the children can only hop to move - they can not run, walk, or skip. Show the children how to step into their imaginary sack and pull it up to the waist.
- Tell the children that when you count to 3, each child should hop in their imaginary potato sack toward the other end of the open space. Tell the children when they reach the end of the space, they should hop around and hop back to where they started.
- Ask the children to pull their imaginary potato sacks securely around their waists, and say, "1, 2, 3, Hop!"
- Conclude the activity by telling the children it is fun to eat potatoes and be physically active by doing a Potato Sack Hop.

Option: If available, show a burlap potato sack or picture of a potato sack to the children. If available, give each child a burlap potato sack to use for the activity. If fabric potato sacks (real or made from burlap fabric) are used, omit the references to imaginary sacks in the activity above.

Optional Concluding Activity: Have the children sit at tables with coloring supplies. Distribute a copy of the *MyPlate* coloring page (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 83) to each child. Ask the children to color the Vegetables group section of MyPlate green and draw and color a sweet potato near the Vegetables group or use the Blackline Master of a sweet potato (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 76) and have the children color the sweet potato. With older children have them copy the dot-to-dot outline of the word "Vegetables." Ask the children to draw a favorite way they like to be physically active on the page. If desired, collect the sheet for use in future fruit and vegetable units in *Grow It, Try It, Like It!*



Materials Needed

- Sweet Potato-Oatmeal-Chocolate Chip Bars—see the Child Care Center version of this recipe on page 28
- Milk, ½ cup per child
- Cups and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Prepare the recipe.
- Prepare table(s).

D2: A Sweet Ending With Sweet Potatoes

The children taste a new sweet potato recipe and talk about different ways to eat sweet potatoes.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Taste sweet potato in a combination food, Sweet Potato-Oatmeal-Chocolate Chip Bars;
- Describe many different ways to eat sweet potatoes.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing and Polite Tasting

- Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).
- If necessary, remind the children about polite food tasting habits (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 44, for details).





Activity Length:
10-15 minutes

The Activity

- Seat the children at the table(s).
- Ask the children to share what they remember learning about a sweet potato.
- Encourage responses such as how and where a sweet potato grows; how it looks, feels, smells, and tastes and other material covered in the unit.
- Tell the children that the unit on sweet potato ends with a celebration of a new way to eat sweet potatoes. Sweet potatoes can be part of baked foods.
- Show the children the Sweet Potato-Oatmeal-Chocolate Chip Bars and talk about the other foods in the bars.
- Serve the children the Sweet Potato-Oatmeal-Chocolate Chip Bars and milk.
- As the children are eating, ask:
 - ▶ What sweet potato recipes have they made with their parents?
 - ▶ What different ways have they eaten sweet potatoes?
 - ▶ What new ways do they think sweet potatoes could be eaten?
- Give suggestions such as sweet potato fries; in breads, muffins and cookies, and pies; in potato salads; cooked with apples and pork chops; mashed with a bit of brown sugar and butter.

Words To Grow

Sweet potato	Oatmeal
Chocolate chip	Salad
Muffin	Mashed
Oven-baked	

Sweet Potato-Oatmeal-Chocolate Chip Bars

For the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Preparation Time: 30 minutes

Cooking Time: 25-30 minutes

Yield: 64 child-size portions of ½ bar

½ bar provides the equivalent of ¼ slice of bread towards CACFP meal pattern

- **2 large, fresh sweet potatoes cooked and mashed** (see Tip below)
- **¾ cup sugar**
- **¼ cup canola oil**
- **¼ cup low-fat or fat-free plain yogurt**
- **1 large egg, beaten**
- **¾ cup all-purpose flour**
- **¼ cup whole-wheat flour**
- **1 ¼ cups quick-cook oatmeal (not instant)**
- **1 tsp baking soda**
- **1 tsp ground cinnamon**
- **½ tsp ground nutmeg**
- **1 cup (6 ounces) of semisweet mini chocolate chips or regular size chocolate chips**

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Place sweet potato and sugar in large mixing bowl; mash until smooth.
3. Add oil, yogurt, and egg and mix thoroughly.
4. Measure and mix flours, oatmeal, baking soda, and spices in a medium-size bowl.
5. Add dry ingredients to sweet potato mixture and stir just enough to combine.
6. Add chocolate chips and stir to mix.
7. Spray 13"x 9"x 2" baking pan with nonstick cooking spray.
8. Pour batter into pan; smooth out batter evenly in pan and place pan on middle rack in oven.
9. Bake for 25-30 minutes or until lightly brown.
10. Remove from oven and let cool in pan for 8-10 minutes. Cut into bars (4 cuts by 8 cuts) and remove from pan. Cool before serving.

Variation: Substitute drained, canned sweet potatoes (15-ounce can) for fresh sweet potatoes. Do not use canned, candied sweet potatoes.

Tip: Scrub fresh sweet potatoes, prick them with a fork, and cook in the microwave 10-15 minutes until done. Cool sweet potatoes to a temperature comfortable to the touch and remove flesh from skins.

Cooking with Children

Young children can:

- Wash hands first
- Help scrub sweet potato
- Mash cooled sweet potato – do not allow child to mash hot sweet potatoes
- Help measure ingredients
- Stir dry ingredients with supervision
- Stir wet ingredients with some assistance

Adults should prick and cook potatoes, prepare pan, and do all steps involving the use of an oven.



Nutrients per 1 child-size serving of ½ bar: Calories 52.5, Protein 1 g, Carbohydrate 8.6 g, Total Fat 1.9 g, Saturated Fat .6 g, Cholesterol 3.5 mg, Vitamin A 1233 IU, Vitamin C 1.4 mg, Iron 0.4 mg, Calcium 6.7mg, Sodium 22.5 mg, Dietary Fiber .7 g

Growing at Home Materials...

for Sweet Potato Hill Lessons



Sweet Potato Growing at Home #1

Home Activities From Grow It, Try It, Like It!

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Today we began our series featuring sweet potatoes. Sweet potatoes are similar to other potatoes and are found in the produce section of the grocery store. Sweet potatoes may also be called yams in various parts of the country. Sometimes stores will feature both sweet potatoes and yams—the difference is the color of the inside of the potato and the region of the country. Sweet potatoes and yams are sweeter in flavor than other types of potatoes.

Today your child learned about sweet potatoes and how this vegetable looks, feels, tastes, and smells. He/she learned that sweet potatoes:

- Are oblong shaped, like a squished ball;
- Feel bumpy but smooth and have a thin peel, similar to white potatoes;
- Are light to bright orange on the outside;
- Are orange inside; and
- Taste sweet.

Try making the **Mashed Sweet Potatoes** recipe shown on the following page with your child. These are a delicious change of taste from white potatoes. Or, you may wish to make a family recipe with your child that includes sweet potatoes.

If sweet potatoes are a new food to your family, have your child share with you what was learned today. The enclosed activity, **Sweet Potato Number Match**, gives your child a chance to talk with you about sweet potatoes. Young children love to do activities with their parents. Working with your child at home helps support what we teach during the day. Your child may be more willing to try new and different foods at child care—and at home!

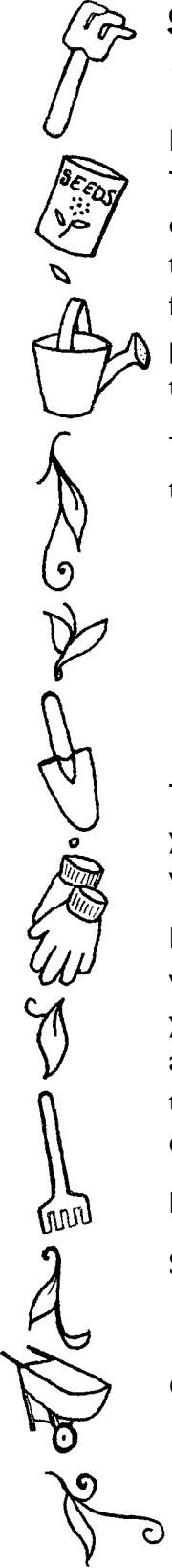
Please call if you have questions about this activity or want more information.

Sincerely,

Child Care Center Director

Tip:

Visit a farmers' market with your child. Chances are you'll find new varieties of mouth-watering fruits or vegetables to try.



Mashed Sweet Potatoes

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Serves: 12 child-size portions of ¼ cup

Serves: 6 adult-size portions of ½ cup

Cooking Time: 1-1¼ hours

- **2 lbs (4 medium) fresh sweet potatoes**
- **1 Tbsp soft margarine**
- **1 Tbsp brown sugar**

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Scrub sweet potatoes under cool tap water with vegetable brush. Use knife to remove any bad spots or defects on the potato. Keep sweet potatoes whole and do NOT peel.
3. Prick sweet potatoes with fork in several spots. Wrap in aluminum foil.
4. Bake sweet potatoes 1 to 1 ¼ hours or until tender when pressed.
5. When the sweet potatoes are done, remove from oven. Let potatoes cool briefly; remove foil. Slit open potato, taking care to avoid skin contact with escaping steam.
6. Scoop flesh into serving dish.
7. Add margarine and brown sugar to sweet potatoes. Lightly mash sweet potatoes and flavorings together with fork.
8. Serve immediately.

Variations: Substitute 2 tablespoons frozen, thawed concentrated orange juice for margarine and brown sugar. Substitute 1 tablespoon cinnamon for brown sugar.

Tip: To save time, cook sweet potatoes in microwave oven. Be sure to prick holes in potato with fork before cooking, but do NOT wrap in aluminum foil. Microwave on high for 10-15 minutes or until knife easily inserts into potatoes. Adults should do all steps involving microwave oven.

Cooking with Children

Young children can:

- Wash hands first
- Help scrub potatoes with a brush
- Wrap potatoes in aluminum foil

Adults should use sharp knives and forks to prick potato skins, place and remove potatoes from hot oven, remove foil from hot potatoes, and mash hot potatoes with seasonings.



Nutrients per 1 child-size serving of ¼ cup: Calories 52, Protein 1 g, Carbohydrate 10 g, Total Fat 1 g, Saturated Fat 0.2 g, Cholesterol 0 mg, Vitamin A 9267 IU, Vitamin C 9.4 mg, Iron 0.3 mg, Calcium 18.6 mg, Sodium 29 mg, Dietary Fiber 1.6 g

Sweet Potato Number Match

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Your child has been learning about sweet potatoes. A sweet potato is an oblong shaped, orange vegetable that tastes sweet. Help your child count

the sweet potatoes and draw a line between each sweet potato group to the correct matching number. See if your child can tell you five facts about sweet potatoes.

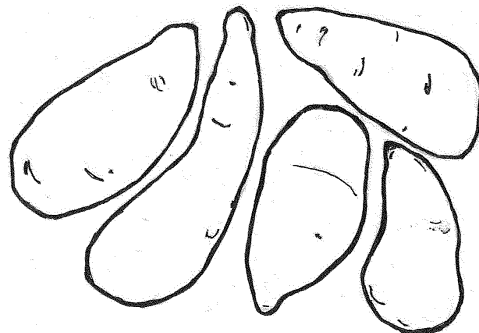
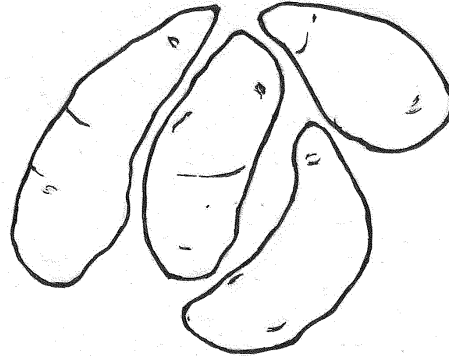
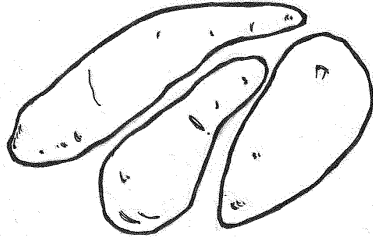
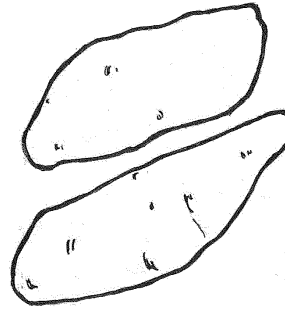
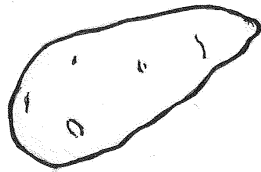
1

2

3

4

5



Sweet Potato Growing at Home #2

Home Activities From Grow It, Try It, Like It!

Dear Parents and Guardians:

We continue to learn about sweet potatoes in our daily activities. Sweet potatoes are an interesting food; the way they grow interests children.

Today your child learned about sweet potatoes and how this vegetable grows and is harvested. Your child has learned that sweet potatoes:

- Start from slips that grow from the “eyes” or buds of the potato;
- Need sun, soil, water, and time to grow;
- Have plants that grow above ground;
- Grow in the ground; and
- Are dug out of the ground during the early part of fall before the weather turns cold.

Talk with your child about how sweet potatoes grow while the two of you make **Oven-Baked Sweet Potato Planks**, the recipe is attached. This easy-to-prepare recipe is sure to please the entire family. Make it, or another favorite recipe, featuring sweet potatoes this week with your child.

Take a few minutes to help your child complete the attached activity, **Sweet Potatoes Grow From Eyes**. Serving colorful vegetables like sweet potatoes often will help your child accept new foods at child care—and at home!

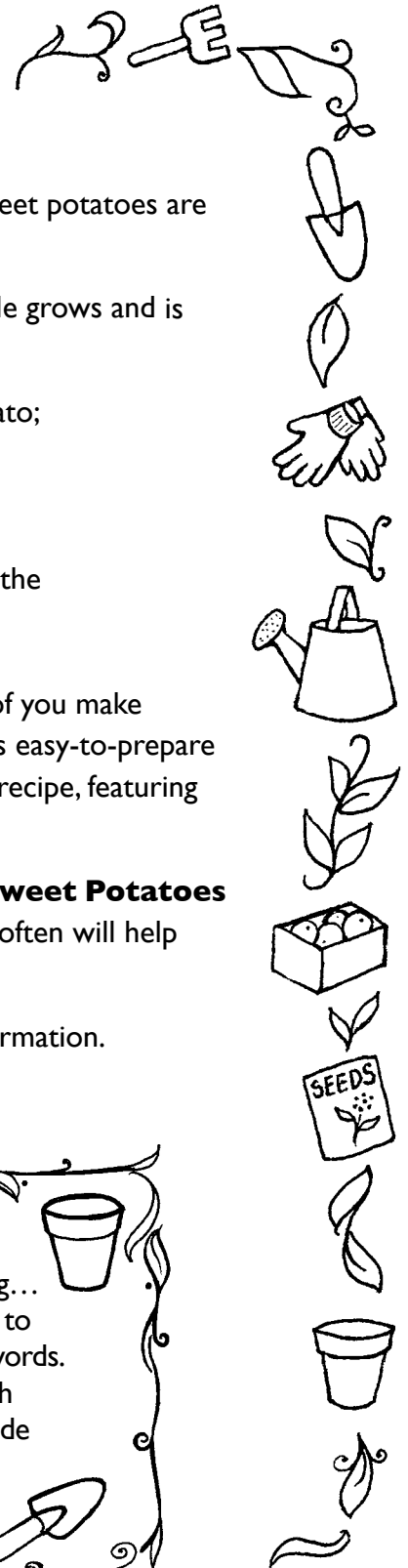
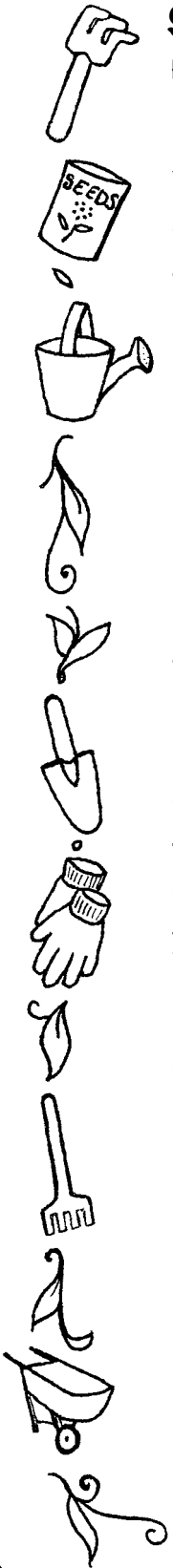
Please call if you have questions about this activity or want more information.

Sincerely,

Child Care Center Director

Tip:

Somebody’s eyes are watching... you! Children are more likely to follow our actions than our words. Serve different vegetables with dinner and show you eat a wide variety. Your child will follow your lead.



Oven Baked Sweet Potato Planks (Wedges)

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Serves: 16 child-size portions of 2 planks

Serves: 8 adult-size portions of 4 planks

Cooking Time: 20 minutes

- **nonstick cooking spray**
- **1 ½ lbs (2 large) fresh sweet potatoes**
- **⅛ tsp black pepper**
- **½ tsp salt**

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Spray 10"x14" cookie sheet with nonstick cooking spray.
3. Scrub potatoes under cool tap water with vegetable brush. Use knife to remove any bad spots or defects on the potato. Do NOT peel.
4. Cut each potato in half and each half into 8 wedges or plank-size fries. Spread potato planks evenly on cookie sheet, and spray potatoes with nonstick cooking spray.
5. Sprinkle salt and pepper evenly over planks.
6. Place cookie sheet in oven and bake for approximately 20-30 minutes or until potatoes are just tender. If desired, the potatoes can be placed under oven broiler for about 3 minutes, turned, and broiled 3 minutes on other side.
7. Remove from oven and serve.

Note: The size of the potato planks may cause cooking time to vary. Pointed ends will cook faster; trimming ends of points prevents overcooking.

Tips:

1. Sprinkle Parmesan cheese over potatoes after they are removed from oven for extra flavor.
2. Oven-bake a mixture of sweet potatoes and other root vegetables, such as turnips, parsnips, and baking potatoes.

Cooking with Children

Young children can:

- Wash hands first
- Help scrub potatoes with a brush
- Sprinkle salt and pepper evenly over the planks

Adults should remove any bad spots or defects on the potato with a knife, and place and remove potatoes from hot oven.



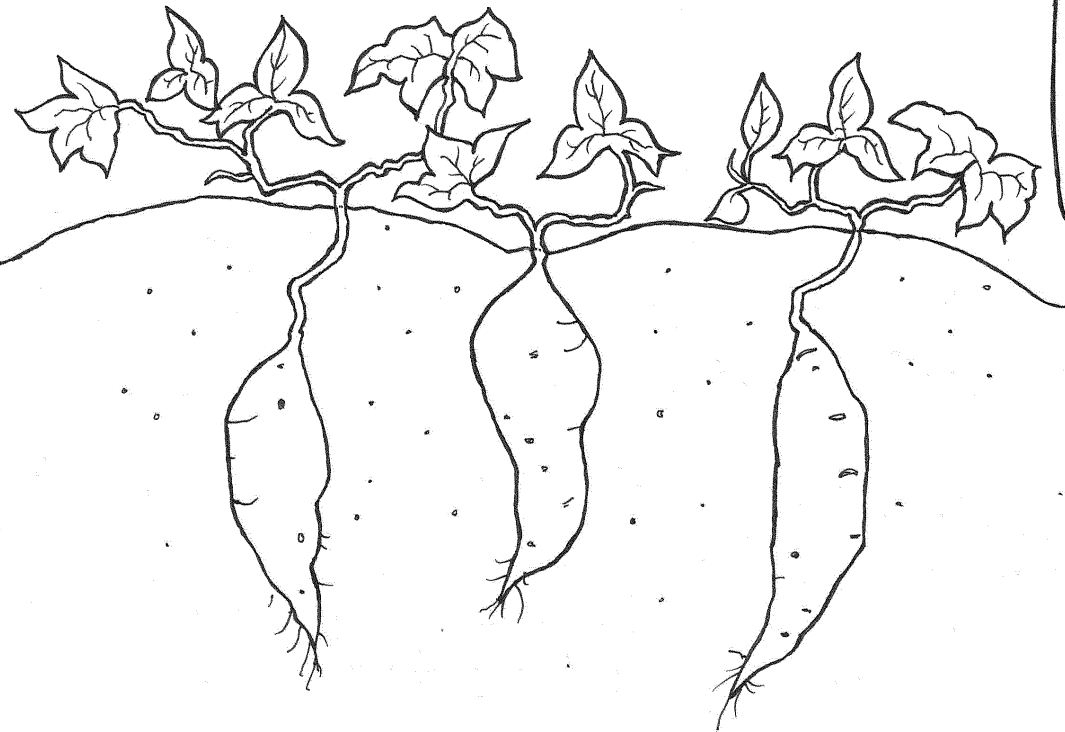
Nutrients per 1 child-size serving of 2 planks: Calories 27, Protein 0.5 g, Carbohydrate 6.6 g, Total Fat 0 g, Saturated Fat 0 g, Cholesterol 0 mg, Vitamin A 5892 IU, Vitamin C 6.6 mg, Iron 0.1 mg, Calcium 7.5 mg, Sodium 76 mg, Dietary Fiber 0.8 g

Sweet Potatoes Grow From Eyes

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Your child has been learning about sweet potatoes. Talk with your child about how sweet potatoes grow while he or she colors the drawings below. Sweet potato plants grow from the eyes (buds) on sweet potatoes. The plant grows above the ground and the actual sweet potatoes grow in the ground.

A farmer plants slips in the ground to grow more sweet potatoes. You can start a sweet potato slip at home by suspending a sweet potato in a jar of water; see the directions on the other side of this page. In a few weeks, leaves and roots will grow from the sweet potato.



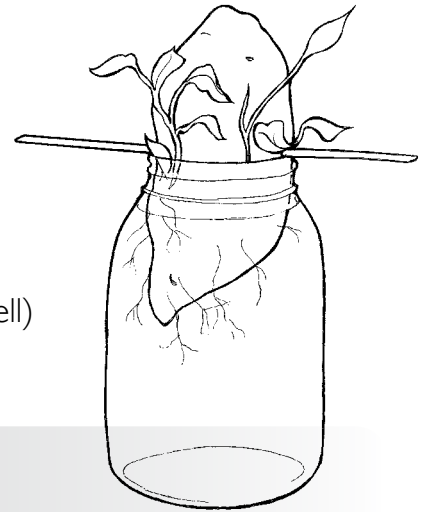
Start a Sweet Potato Slip

This activity starts a sweet potato slip from sweet potatoes and shows what slips need to grow into plants.

To grow plants that will produce sweet potatoes, purchase sweet potatoes from a nursery or mail order catalog; follow instructions provided. A sweet potato from the grocery store will sprout leaves and roots, but will not produce sweet potatoes if planted.

Materials Needed

- Unwashed sweet potato with eyes
- Sharp knife
- Permanent marker
- 3 wooden craft sticks
- Narrow mouth quart-size jar (an empty mayonnaise jar works well)
- Distilled or spring water



The Activity

- Help your child fill the quart-size jar with water, leaving $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of space between the water and top of the jar.
- Make three $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch horizontal slits evenly spaced around the middle of the sweet potato.
- Help your child push a wooden craft stick into each slit, at least $\frac{1}{2}$ inch into the sweet potato flesh. The wooden craft sticks create a tripod that supports the sweet potato on the rim of the jar. This allows half of the potato to be below the water level and half above.
- Place the jars in a warm location at or above 65 degrees F. In about a month, the slip sprouts will grow 8 to 10 inches from the top half of the sweet potato, which is the best length for transplanting to the garden.
- Have your child check the jar weekly to see the progress of the slip sprouts.
- NOTE: Place the jars on top of a water heater to speed the growing process.
- Explain to your child that the sweet potato slips are planted in the soil outside. The slips need soil, rain, sun, and time to grow into sweet potato plants. Sweet potatoes will grow on the plants under the ground. The sweet potatoes will be ready to remove gently from the soil in the fall.



Sweet Potato Growing at Home #3

Home Activities From Grow It, Try It, Like It!



Dear Parents and Guardians:

We are finishing our series of lessons on sweet potatoes. We have had fun completing the many activities featuring this vegetable with your child.



Today your child learned some ways sweet potatoes are prepared and served. Sweet potatoes can be:

- Used in potato salads;
- Served as sweet potato fries;
- Used in muffins and cookies; and
- Cooked with apples and pork chops.



Sweet Potato-Oatmeal-Chocolate Chip Bars (recipe attached) brought a sweet ending to our tasting of foods made with sweet potatoes. Try this recipe at home; your child would love to help! Or have your child help select and prepare a family recipe that includes sweet potatoes.



Your child will enjoy making a **Sweet Potato Windsock** with you. The activity is included with this packet. With just a little assistance from you, your child will have a cheerful reminder to enjoy sweet potatoes often—whenever the wind blows. We appreciate your time at home helping your child with activities that extend our daytime lessons. Keep reviewing the information and offering the fruits and vegetables we study at child care in your home meals. These are two ways to help your child's mind and body grow.



Please call if you have questions about this activity or want more information.



Sincerely,



Child Care Center Director



Tip:
Involve your child in planning meals and snacks. Let your child choose fruit for a snack and a vegetable for dinner.



Sweet Potato-Oatmeal-Chocolate Chip Bars

Preparation Time: 30 minutes

Serves: 64 child-size portions of ½ bar

Serves: 32 adult-size portions of 1 bar

Cooking Time: 25-30 minutes

- **2 large, fresh sweet potatoes cooked and mashed (see Tip below)**
- **¾ cup sugar**
- **¼ cup canola oil**
- **¼ cup low-fat or fat-free plain yogurt**
- **1 large egg, beaten**
- **¾ cup all-purpose flour**
- **¾ cup whole-wheat flour**
- **1 ¼ cups quick-cook oatmeal (not instant)**
- **1 tsp baking soda**
- **1 tsp ground cinnamon**
- **½ tsp ground nutmeg**
- **1 cup (6 ounces) of semisweet mini chocolate chips or regular size chocolate chips**

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Place sweet potato and sugar in large mixing bowl; mash until smooth.
3. Add oil, yogurt, and egg; mix thoroughly.
4. Measure and mix flours, oatmeal, baking soda, and spices in medium-size bowl.
5. Add dry ingredients to sweet potato mixture; stir just enough to combine.
6. Add chocolate chips and stir to mix.
7. Spray 13"x 9"x 2" baking pan with nonstick cooking spray.
8. Pour batter into pan; smooth out batter evenly in pan and place pan on middle rack in oven.
9. Bake at 350 degrees Fahrenheit for 25-30 minutes or until lightly brown.
10. Remove from oven and let cool in pan for 8-10 minutes. Cut into bars (4 cuts by 8 cuts) and remove from pan. Cool before serving.

Variation: Substitute drained, canned sweet potatoes (15-ounce can) for fresh sweet potatoes. Do not use canned, candied sweet potatoes.

Tip: Scrub fresh sweet potatoes, prick them with a fork, and cook in the microwave 10-15 minutes until done. Cool sweet potatoes to temperature comfortable to the touch and remove flesh from skins.

Cooking with Children

Young children can:

- Wash hands first
- Help scrub sweet potato
- Mash cooled sweet potato – do not allow child to mash hot sweet potatoes
- Help measure ingredients
- Stir dry ingredients with supervision
- Stir wet ingredients with some assistance

Adults should prick and cook potatoes, combine dry and wet batter ingredients, prepare pan, and do all steps involving the use of an oven.



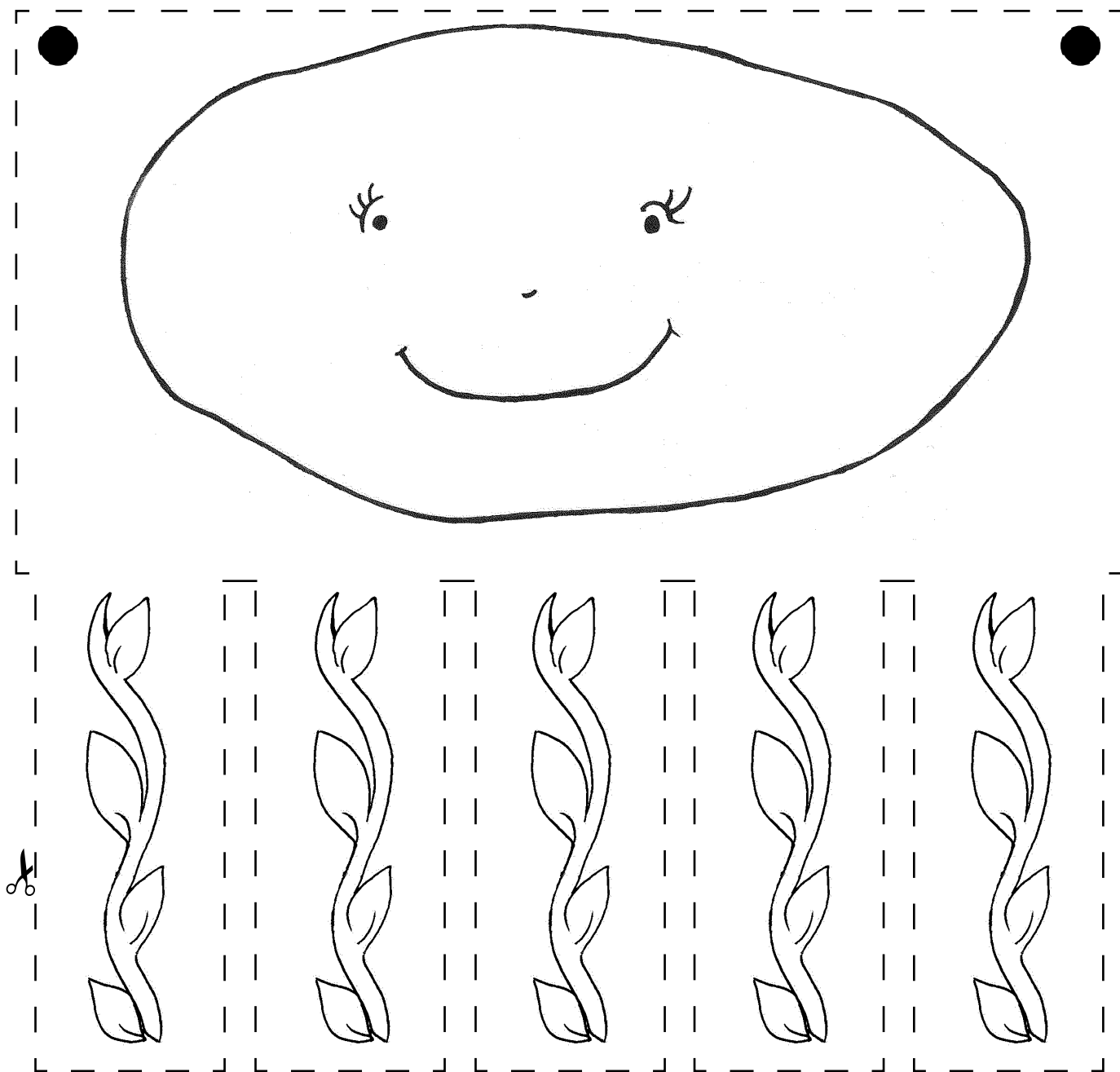
Nutrients per 1 child-size serving of ½ bar: Calories 52.5, Protein 1 g, Carbohydrate 8.6 g, Total Fat 1.9 g, Saturated Fat .6 g, Cholesterol 3.5 mg, Vitamin A 1233 IU, Vitamin C 1.4 mg, Iron 0.4 mg, Calcium 6.7mg, Sodium 22.5 mg, Dietary Fiber .7 g

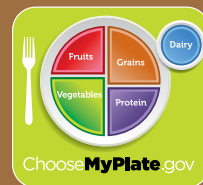
Make a Sweet Potato Windsock

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Have your child color the drawing with crayons, paint, or markers. Help your child cut along the dashed lines of the windsock. Make sure to cut each individual vine banner separately so they can move freely. Help tape or staple together the edges of the paper to form a tube with the sweet potato at the

top and the vine banners hanging down. Punch the two holes in the top of the windsock at the dark circles. Thread ribbon, yarn, or string through the holes and tie together. Hang the windsock up and watch the sweet potato and vines dance in the breeze.





United States Department of Agriculture • Food and Nutrition Service
Find more fun resources at these Web sites:

teammnutrition.usda.gov
choosemyplate.gov

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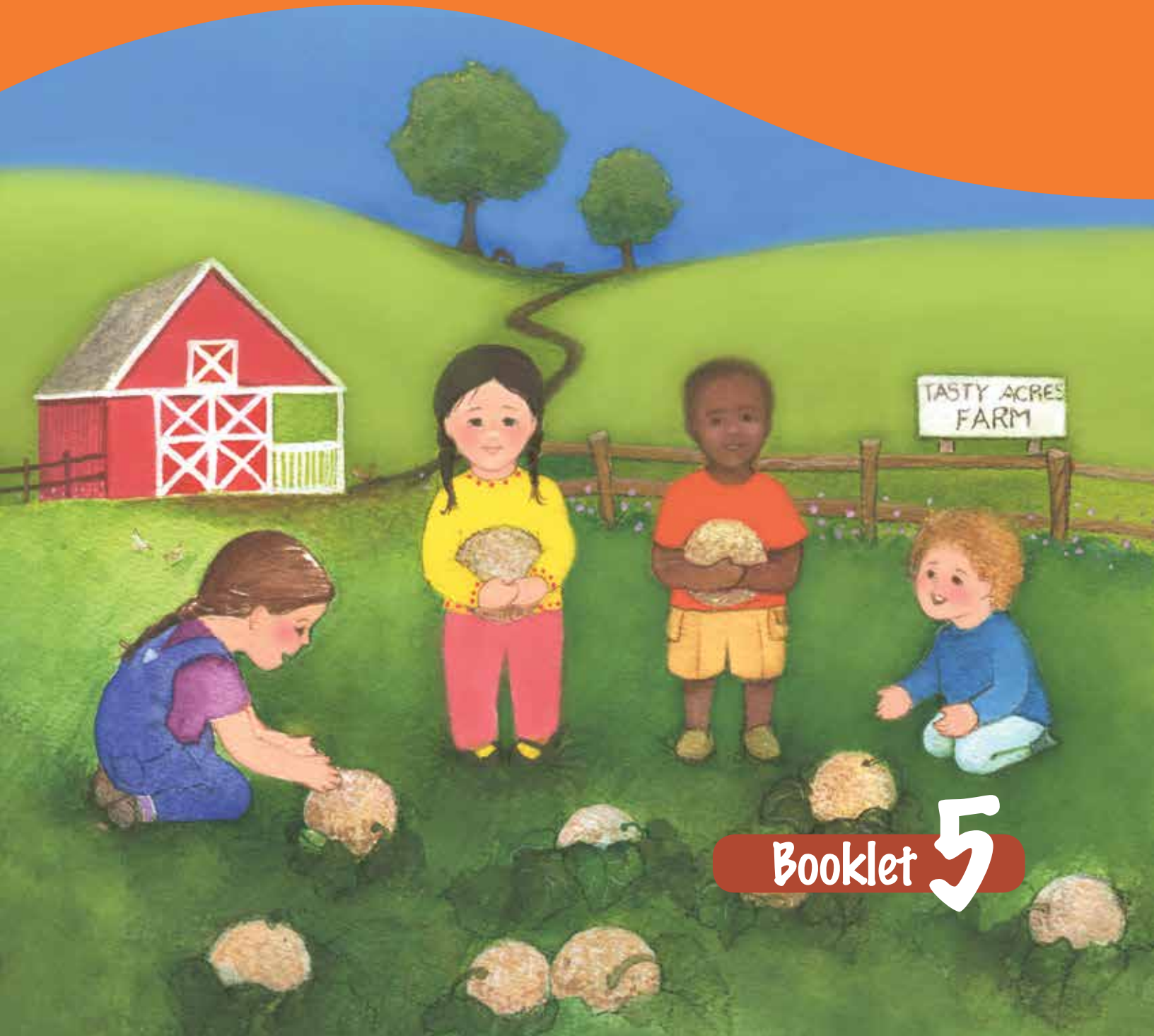
Revised June 2013
September 2009
FNS-406



Grow It, Try It, Like It!

Preschool Fun With Fruits and Vegetables

Cantaloupe Corner



Booklet **5**

Welcome to...

Cantaloupe Corner at Tasty Acres Farm!

Cantaloupe Corner is home to vine ripened, sweet juicy cantaloupe. Tasty Acres Farm grows the best cantaloupe activities for a country mile. Children learn about cantaloupe through hands-on activities. They experience how a cantaloupe looks, feels, tastes, and smells. Cantaloupe Corner connects the cantaloupes grown on the farm to the fruit in the store or farmers' market. The children can't resist the cantaloupe tasting activities from plain wedges to soup to salad. Growing at Home materials create review options for the daily Cantaloupe Corner activities.

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Most activities require only 10-15 minutes; pick a few for each day. In this example, all of the activities from the lesson plans are completed, but spaced out over a 5-day period.

A Plan for Organizing the Cantaloupe Corner Activities

Check with local farms and farmers' markets to find out when cantaloupes are in peak season. Cantaloupes are interesting and seeing cantaloupes growing makes a great farm field trip for preschoolers. If a farm is not nearby, visit a produce stand or farmers' market to see fresh cantaloupe.

The Cantaloupe Corner lesson plans are designed to be used in their entirety but if your center does not have the time, space, or resources to do all the activities select the activities best suited to your center's environment and available resources from Section A: hands-on activities, Section B: planting activities, Section C: cantaloupe stories and songs, and Section D: nutrition education activities. Be sure that the activities you choose help the children meet the objectives listed at the beginning of each lesson plan section.

Here is one way to arrange the activities in your Cantaloupe Corner. Most activities require only 10-15 minutes; pick a few for each day. In this example, all of the activities from the lesson plans are completed, but spaced out over a 5-day period. Additionally, two activities from the Garden Art and Crafts Section in Booklet I are added. These activities are fun and useful ways to help reinforce the objectives of each activity. On page 19, it gives tips for creating successful projects and ideas for harvesting fun month after month. The Garden Art and Crafts chart connects the art and crafts to the lesson activities.

Planning Chart for Cantaloupe Corner Activities

Day One	Day Two	Day Three	Day Four	Day Five
A1 Can You Tell What's Hiding? Hands-on Activity 	A3 Cantaloupe Shapes Hands-on Activity	C1 Cool Puppy Pup video	B3 Plant a Seed or Start Outside Planting Activity 	D1 Meet Cantaloupe's Melon Friends Nutrition Education Activity 
A2 Cantaloupe... A Look Inside Hands-on Activity	C3 Old MacDonald Had a Farm Song, Cantaloupe Style	B2 Plant a Cantaloupe Seed Planting Activity 	C2 Reading Activity 	D2 Can't Resist Cantaloupe Nutrition Education Activity
Garden Craft Row Markers 	B1 Cantaloupe Start as Seeds Planting Activity	Garden Craft Seed Art	Garden Art Decorated Bags	C3 Old MacDonald Had a Farm Song Cantaloupe Style 
Send Home Growing at Home Materials #1		Send Home Growing at Home Materials #2		Send Home Growing at Home Materials #3

Revisit the Farm: Rainy Day Fun All Year Long

When the weather changes your outdoor plans, the activities from Tasty Acres Farm provide a welcome opportunity to revisit and remember all the fun and flavor of *Grow It, Try It, Like It!* Sing the songs, watch the video segments, and use the Garden Art and Crafts Section in Booklet I for ideas. Make a rainy day one to reconnect with these fruits and vegetables.

More Ways To Grow – The Cantaloupe Corner unit can be included in other areas of the curriculum.

Complementary themes include:

Foods – Fruits **Shapes** – Round **Colors** – Orange **Seasons** – Summer **Body** – Senses

Opposites – Inside & Outside **Plants** – Vines, Melons **Alphabet** – C words



A. Can You Tell Me About Cantaloupe?

Hands-On Activities

Materials Needed

- Two cantaloupes, both well scrubbed, one whole and one cut into bite-size pieces
- Forks and napkins
- Mystery Box/Bag
- Paper and Pencil
- Basketball (optional)

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Wash cantaloupe; prepare bite size pieces.
- Put a well-scrubbed whole cantaloupe in the Mystery Box/Bag.
- Make copies of Cantaloupe Growing at Home #1—one set per child.
- Review Make a Mystery Box or Bag (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 45).

Growing at Home Introduction Letter and Hand Washing and Polite Tasting Guidelines: Send a copy of these resources home before starting the first unit in *Grow It, Try It, Like It!* If you have already sent these resources home, you may omit this step. (See Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 42-44.)

Cantaloupe Growing at Home #1: Send a copy of this resource home with each child at the start of Section A activities.

A1: Can You Tell What's Hiding?

Use the Mystery Box/Bag to create interest by having the children feel the outside of a cantaloupe before revealing the “mystery” item to all.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Identify a cantaloupe as a heavy, round fruit;
- Describe the outside appearance and smell of cantaloupe.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing and Polite Tasting

- Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).
- If this is the first activity involving food tasting, talk with the children about polite food tasting habits (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 44, for details).



Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Introduce the Mystery Box/Bag, or reintroduce it if you have used it before.
- One at a time, ask each child to come and feel inside without looking. If a child seems afraid, feel inside the box/bag with the child.
- Ask each child to describe quietly to you what he/she feels.
- After everyone has guessed, reveal the cantaloupe. Let each child hold the cantaloupe, if desired.
- Note the children's guesses that were close (round, a plant, food) or correct (cantaloupe).
- Talk about the cantaloupe. Ask the questions below and any other questions you like.
 - ▶ Is cantaloupe a fruit or a vegetable? (Fruit)
 - ▶ What shape is it? (Round like a ball)
 - ▶ What color is the outside of the cantaloupe? (Tan like the color of sand)
 - ▶ How does the outside of it feel? (Rough like a basketball – let children feel the basketball, if available)
 - ▶ Does it have a smell? (May have no smell or smell sweet like a flower)
 - ▶ Has anyone ever tasted a cantaloupe? (Yes or No)

Activity Conclusion–Tasting

- Conclude the lesson by offering the children a piece of cantaloupe to taste.
- Let each child take a piece with a fork.
- As necessary, remind children how the group follows polite tasting manners.

Words To Grow

Fruit	Heavy (weight)
Round	Tan
Rough	Sweet



Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Garden Bookmark:

The children make cantaloupe decorated Garden Bookmarks by gluing cantaloupe seeds in a design on the bookmark (see Booklet 1, Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 28).



Materials Needed

- Cantaloupe (can be the one used in Activity A1)
- Sharp knife
- Cutting board
- Spoon and container to hold removed seeds
- Damp cloth and dry towel for wiping and drying hands
- Paper plates and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Scrub the outside of the cantaloupe well.
- Assemble supplies in a central area; keep the knife in a safe place until ready to use.

A2: Cantaloupe...A Look Inside

Engage all the senses! The children see and feel the inside of a cantaloupe, then smell and taste it.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Describe the appearance, smell, and taste of cantaloupe;
- Tell that the orange flesh of a cantaloupe can be eaten, but not the rind or seeds.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing

Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).



Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Have the children gather around the area with the cantaloupe and cutting board. Review with children how to be safe around sharp knives: only adults use them, children keep their hands away, and do not touch sharp knives.
- Review with the children what they learned about cantaloupe in Activity A1. If you didn't do Activity A1, tell the children you have a cantaloupe to share today.
- Tell the children cantaloupes grow on the ground. We have to wash the outside very well to remove soil and germs before we cut it open. Tell them you have already washed the cantaloupe.
- Cut the cantaloupe in half to reveal the inside. Have paper towel handy to wipe up extra juices. Using the spoon, scoop the center strings and seeds into a bowl and set aside. Let the children know they will get to touch the seeds a little later.

Activity continued ...


- Cut a section of cantaloupe into small wedges with the rind intact. Give each child a small wedge of cantaloupe for individual exploration.
- Talk with the children about the inside of the cantaloupe. Lead the children through the questions below and ask additional questions if you like.
 - ▶ What colors are on the inside of the cantaloupe? (Orange, green, white)
 - ▶ What does the inside of the cantaloupe look like? (Seeds, slippery string-like fibers, and the orange flesh of the cantaloupe)
 - ▶ How does the inside flesh feel? (Cool and smooth)
 - ▶ How does the cantaloupe smell? (Sweet)

Words To Grow

Seeds	Juicy
Strings	Orange
Slippery	White
Cool	Green
Smooth	

Tasting Activity

- Invite children to taste the cantaloupe. Remind them not to eat the rind.
- Continue the activity, asking:
 - ▶ How does the cantaloupe feel in their mouth? (Smooth and juicy)
 - ▶ How does the cantaloupe taste? (Sweet)
- After everyone has sampled their own cantaloupe wedge, invite the children to come to the bowl and feel the string-like fibers and seeds, from the inside of the cantaloupe.
 - ▶ How do the seeds and string-like fibers feel? (Wet and Slippery)
- After the children have felt the seeds and strings, have them wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).



Tips: If desired, save the seeds for use in activity B1 or in the Seed Art or Garden Bookmark Activity in the Garden Art and Crafts Section. A packet of seeds is needed for planting and growing plants to produce more cantaloupes in activities B2 and B3. Otherwise, discard the strings and seeds, rinds, and any pieces of cantaloupe that have been touched.

Cover and refrigerate any remaining untouched cantaloupe for use in future activities or snacks in the next day or two.



Materials Needed

- Cantaloupe cut into thin slices
- Small cookie cutters (triangles, circles, squares, alphabet shapes)
- Paper plates and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Scrub the outside of the cantaloupe well.
- Cut the cantaloupe into the largest slices possible by following the slicing tips in How to Slice a Cantaloupe for Activity A3 Cantaloupe Shapes, page 7.
- Refrigerate the remaining cantaloupe pieces to make Cantaloupe Soup for a tasting opportunity, such as Activity B2.
- Prepare a plate with two or more cantaloupe slices.

A3: Cantaloupe Shapes

The children use cookie cutters to make shapes from cantaloupe. They explore the feel, smell, and taste of cantaloupe.

Objective

The children will be able to make a simple snack with cantaloupe.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing

Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).



Activity Length:
10-15 minutes

The Activity

- Have each child seated at the table(s).
- Explain we always scrub the rind of a cantaloupe under running water before we cut it. Let the children know you have already washed the cantaloupe.
- Give each child a paper plate with at least two thin slices of cantaloupe. Let each child select a small cookie cutter(s).
- Show the children how to press the cookie cutter into the flesh of the cantaloupe.
- Assist any children needing help.
- Use the cookie cutters to make shapes from the cantaloupe slices.

Activity Conclusion—Tasting

- After making the cantaloupe shapes, enjoy eating this snack.
- As the children eat, ask them to describe how the cantaloupe:
 - ▶ Smells (sweet),
 - ▶ Feels in the mouth (cool, smooth and slippery); and
 - ▶ Tastes (juicy and sweet).

How To Slice a Cantaloupe for Activity A3 Cantaloupe Shapes



Step 1: Prepare the cantaloupe – thoroughly scrub the outside of the cantaloupe with a vegetable brush.



Step 2: Cut the rind from the stem end and blossom end of the cantaloupe, creating two flat surfaces.



Step 3: Place the cantaloupe on one flat, sliced end so that the rind of the cantaloupe can be trimmed easily from the orange flesh of the whole cantaloupe.



Step 4: Remove all of the rind from the cantaloupe by cutting down along the curve of the fruit. Be careful to trim as little orange flesh with the rind as possible; as necessary trim any green from the cantaloupe.



Step 5: Slice thin sheets of cantaloupe from an outer edge to the center until the hollow center with seeds is revealed.

Step 7: Slice thin sheets of cantaloupe from the side opposite of the first slices. Slice thin sheets of cantaloupe from the two remaining edges, stopping each time when the center is reached.



Step 6: Use a small spoon to scoop and remove the seeds—a grapefruit spoon works well—and discard seeds.

Step 8: Refrigerate the remaining center section and any trimmings or small pieces of cantaloupe to make Cantaloupe Soup in Activity A4.



B. Cantaloupe... Where Do You Come From? Planting Activities

Cantaloupe Growing at Home #2: Send a copy of this resource home with each child at the start of Section B activities.

Materials Needed

- Dried cantaloupe seeds (clean and dry from Activity A) or a packet of cantaloupe seeds
- Yardstick
- Drawings of cantaloupe (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, pages 67-68)
- Cantaloupe for tasting
- Melon ball kitchen tool
- Forks and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Prepare cantaloupe balls for tasting.
- Assemble materials.
- Make copies of Cantaloupe Growing at Home #2—one set per child.

B1: Cantaloupe Start as Seeds

The children see and touch cantaloupe seeds and learn how far apart to plant seeds.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Describe how cantaloupe grow from a seed into a plant that produces cantaloupe;
- Describe the resources needed to grow cantaloupe.





Activity Length:
10 minutes

The Activity

- Tell the children they will learn about how cantaloupes grow. Show the children the cantaloupe seeds. If you are using seeds from a packet, tell the children the seeds are just like the ones from the inside of the cantaloupe. People buy packages of seeds to grow cantaloupes in gardens.
- Pass the seeds around. Let the children touch and count the seeds.
- Explain that the cantaloupe seeds are planted in the soil at least 3 feet apart. Cantaloupe plants need enough room to spread out when they grow. Have two children hold the yardstick between them to show a 3-foot length. Or have a child whom is at least 36" tall lie down between two children to show the distance.
- Explain that the cantaloupe seeds are planted in the soil in the spring. The sun and rain help them grow into long vines above the ground. Yellow flowers bloom on the vines. Where the flowers bloomed on the vine, cantaloupe fruits will grow during the summer.
- Explain that the cantaloupe is picked when the skin becomes tan in color. Show drawing of a ripe cantaloupe in a field (see the Tool Shed Resources, page 67).
- Explain that ripe cantaloupes are picked and taken to a grocery store or a farmers' market. That is where people buy cantaloupes and take them home to eat. Show drawing of cantaloupes in the grocery store (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 68).
- Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43).
- Offer cantaloupe balls for tasting. Note that the balls are the same shape as the cantaloupe (round).

Words To Grow

Seeds	Soil
Sun	Water
Space	Plants



Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Garden Scene Note Cards: Children make a Garden Scenes Note Card featuring drawings of cantaloupe for parents or grandparents telling them what was learned today (see Booklet 1, Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 30).



Materials Needed

- Packets of cantaloupe seeds
- Paper cups, 5 to 6 ounces in size
- Potting mix or soil
- Water in a small spray bottle
- Plastic spoons
- Unsharpened pencils, with a line marking 1/2 inch
- Waterproof pens or markers
- Wooden sticks for plant markers (one per child),
- Table covers and smocks for the children, if desired
- Space with sunlight and/or fluorescent lights

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Prepare potting mix or soil.
- Divide prepared soil into containers, one for every three children.
- Write Cantaloupe on the wooden stick plant marker.
- At the table(s), place a small paper cup, three seeds, and a plastic spoon per child.
- Plan to serve Cantaloupe Soup at snack or mealtime (see Cantaloupe Growing at Home Recipe, page 34).

B2: Plant a Cantaloupe Seed

The children plant cantaloupe seeds in soil and learn what the seeds need to grow.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Describe the resources needed to grow cantaloupe;
- Experience planting cantaloupe seeds.

Optional Activity: Grow a Seedling in a Bag (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 52) Display this visual in the classroom. Check daily for progress and compare to the growth of the children's plants.





Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Help each child write his/her name on a cup.
- During the activity, help the children:
 - ▶ Fill their cups about $\frac{3}{4}$ full with moist potting soil.
 - ▶ Gently tap the sides and bottom of their container with their index finger to settle but not pack the soil.
 - ▶ Poke three holes in the soil spaced around the cup. Use the marked unsharpened pencil to make holes $\frac{1}{2}$ inch deep.
 - ▶ Place a seed in each hole and gently cover the seeds with soil.
 - ▶ Lightly spray water over the top of the soil. Help any children needing assistance.
 - ▶ Stick wooden plant markers in the soil close to the inside curve of the cup.
- During the activity, tell the children:
 - ▶ The seeds will grow in the potting soil as plants grow in the soil outside.
 - ▶ The seeds need soil, water, light, and warmth to grow into plants.
 - ▶ Inside, we can use lights to give plants warmth and light, just as the sun helps outside plants grow.
 - ▶ The seeds will grow first into very small plants (seedlings or starts), then into larger plants. These larger plants, if planted outside in a garden, will continue to grow with sunlight and water. Cantaloupe will grow on the larger plants.
- Have the children set their cups in a sunny spot or under lights.
- Have the children check their cups weekly to see the progress of the seeds growing into plants.



Green Thumb Guide

Choose the right seeds. If you will be planting the seedlings in containers outside, select a miniature variety of cantaloupe seeds. Consider making Decorated Garden Bags and Garden Art Row Markers to send home with the cantaloupe plants. (see Booklet I, Garden Art and Crafts Section.)



Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Gardening Gloves Craft: The children make Gardening Gloves with Cantaloupe shapes, an easy shape for little hands to draw and color (see Booklet I, Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 37).

Activity Connection to Snack or Mealtime

While eating Cantaloupe Soup at snack or mealtime, talk about how the seeds planted in the soil will grow into plants. The plants will grow and produce cantaloupes after a summer of water, sun, and warmth.



Materials Needed

- Cantaloupe seeds, a seed tape, or cantaloupe start
- Garden or flowerbed, 12 feet or longer by 12 to 18 inches wide
- Hoe or trowel to make space to plant seed tape
- Garden hose with nozzle or watering can

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Prepare a cantaloupe seed tape (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, Green Thumb Guide—Make a Seed Tape, page 54) or purchase a cantaloupe start.
- Prepare garden or flowerbed for planting (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, Green Thumb Guide—Gardening Outdoors, page 58).
- Plan to serve cantaloupe in some form at snack or mealtime (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, Ten Terrific Ways..., page 48).

B3: Plant a Seed or Start Outside

The children make a cantaloupe seed tape and plant it, or a cantaloupe plant start, to help them learn what seeds need to grow into plants.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Describe the resources needed to grow cantaloupe;
- Experience planting a cantaloupe seed or start.

Optional Activity: Visit a local farm or nursery and see how cantaloupes grow.





Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Take the children and the cantaloupe seeds or seed tape outside. Explain that today they will plant cantaloupe seeds and learn what seeds need to grow into plants.
- Point to the sun. Ask the children how the sunlight feels on their skin (warm).
- Explain that the light and warmth of the sun helps cantaloupe seeds grow into plants that will produce more cantaloupe.
- Show the children the soil in a garden or flowerbed. Let them touch the soil. Ask them how the soil feels (wet or dry, hard or soft). Explain that cantaloupe seeds grow in soil.
- Run some water from a hose or pour some from a container and let the children touch it. Ask how it feels (wet). Explain that water helps plants grow. Explain that water for plants usually comes as rain. Juicy foods like cantaloupe need lots of water, so farmers and gardeners use sprinklers in addition to rain to make sure the plants have plenty of water.
- Have the children help lay the prepared seed tape in the soil at the preferred planting depth of one half inch, cover with soil, and water. Remind the children of how far apart cantaloupes are planted.



Green Thumb Guide:

Is space limited? Grow miniature varieties of cantaloupe in a container (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, Green Thumb Guide, Container Gardens, page 55). To adapt this activity to plant in a container, see Plant a Strawberry Jar, Strawberry Patch Activity B3.

Activity Connection to Snack or Mealtime

Talk about the cantaloupe seeds planted while eating cantaloupe at snack or mealtime.

Planting Options: Follow the directions on the back of the cantaloupe seed packet to plant seeds directly into the ground. If you have grown cantaloupe seedlings from seeds inside and hardened the plants for outdoor planting, you can substitute the plants for the seeds or seed tape. You can also purchase cantaloupe starts at a greenhouse and plant directly into the ground.



C. Cantaloupe Stories and Songs

C1: Cool Puppy Pup's Cantaloupe Lunch Party Video

View Cool Puppy Pup's Cantaloupe Lunch Party segment with the children. Discuss the cantaloupe facts covered in this delightful video and have them try Cool Puppy Pup's favorite way to eat cantaloupe.

Materials Needed

- Cool Puppy Pup DVD
- TV and DVD player
- Slices of cantaloupe, at least one per child
- Plates and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Cue the DVD to start at the Cantaloupe segment.
- Prepare cantaloupe slices.

Objective

The children will be able to describe how cantaloupe are grown, harvested, and eaten.





Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Gather the children and watch the Cantaloupe segment of the video.
- After viewing the segment, ask the children to name their favorite parts of the video. Use their responses to lead into a discussion about the video. During the discussion, include the questions below to review Cool Puppy Pup's main points from the video segment.
- In the video, did Cool Puppy Pup say:
 - ▶ Cantaloupe was a fruit or a vegetable? (Fruit)
 - ▶ What color is a cantaloupe? (Orange)
 - ▶ What shape is cantaloupe? (Round like a ball)
 - ▶ What color is the outside rind? (Tan)
 - ▶ How does it feel? (Rough)
- At Tasty Acres Farm, the farmer talked about how cantaloupes grow.
 - ▶ Where do cantaloupes grow? (In the soil, on a farm)
 - ▶ What is inside the cantaloupe? (Little seeds)
 - ▶ Do cantaloupes grow on vines above or below the ground? (Above the ground)
 - ▶ Where are cantaloupes shipped after they are picked? (To stores and farmers' markets)
- Have the children name some of the ways that cantaloupe can be eaten (In fruit salads, salsas, shakes, or fresh and sliced).
- Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).
- Conclude the activity by telling the children they are going to eat fresh sliced cantaloupe, the way that Cool Puppy Pup likes cantaloupe best of all.
- Serve the cantaloupe slices.



Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Make a Scarecrow:

The children decorate the scarecrow's pants with cantaloupe shapes and color with fabric paint (see Booklet 1, Garden Art and Crafts Section for Make a Scarecrow directions, page 38).



C2: Reading Activity

Read story books to the children that are about or include the activities of growing and/or eating fruits and vegetables. Listening to such stories can encourage children to adopt positive behaviors that can last a lifetime, like trying new fruits and vegetables.

Objective

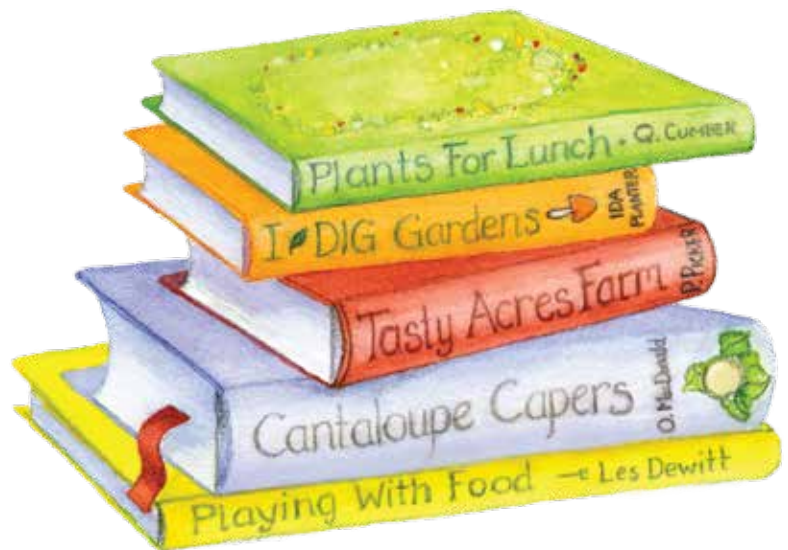
Children will describe the fun and interesting stories about fruits and/or vegetables that were read to them.

Materials Needed

- Books from a library or purchased books
- Space for the children to sit

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Clear a space for the children to sit around you.
- Choose a book from the Harvest of Books list (see Booklet I, Tool Shed Resources, page 50).
- Select a book you would like to read and either borrow it from a library or purchase it.
- Use books relevant to fruits and vegetables that may already be available to you.





Activity Length:
10 to 20 minutes
depending on the
length of the book

The Activity

- Have the children sit around you as you read them the book.
- Ask the children to listen for the names of fruits and vegetables as the story is read.

Discussion Questions:

- After reading the story, ask the children which fruits and vegetables were named in the story and what happened to them. For example,
 - ▶ Where were the fruits and vegetables grown?
 - ▶ What happened to the fruits and vegetables after they were picked?
 - ▶ Who ate the fruits and vegetables?

Add other questions that relate to the story.





C3: Old MacDonald Had a Farm, Cantaloupe Style

The children sing about growing and eating cantaloupe and act out motions to this familiar tune.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Sing and act out motions to a familiar tune;
- Say that being physically active helps us feel good.

Materials Needed

- Cantaloupe lyrics to tune “Old MacDonald Had a Farm”
- Large space for the children to move about

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Become familiar with the words and motions of the song.



Activity Length:
10 minutes

The Activity

- Lead the children in singing these new words to the tune “Old MacDonald Had a Farm” and demonstrate the suggested motions or make up new ones.
- Encourage the children to move about as they are singing.
- Explain that skipping, wiggling, stretching, running, jumping, and playing actively every day helps us to feel good and stay healthy.



Old MacDonald Had a Farm, Cantaloupe Style

The children sing about growing and eating cantaloupe and act out motions to this familiar tune.

1st Verse

Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!
On this farm he grew some cantaloupe, EIEIO!
With plant seeds here and plant seeds there,
Here seeds, there seeds, everywhere plant seeds!
Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!

2nd Verse

Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!
On this farm he grew some cantaloupe, EIEIO!
With a sprout, sprout here and a sprout, sprout there,
Here a sprout, there a sprout, everywhere sprouts!
Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!

3rd Verse

Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!
On this farm he grew some cantaloupe, EIEIO!
With a munch, munch here and a munch, munch there,
Here a munch, there a munch, every where a
cantaloupe munch.
Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!

4th Verse

Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!
On this farm he grew some cantaloupe, EIEIO!
With a juicy bite here and juicy bite there,
Here a bite, there a bite, everywhere a juicy bite.
Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!

(Skip in place)

(Pretend to carry a basket of cantaloupe)
(Pretend to dig ground and plant seeds
using large, vigorous motions)

(Skip in place)

(Skip in place)

(Pretend to carry a basket of cantaloupe)
(Squat to ground and 'sprout' up, jumping
& moving hands, until hands are above head)

(Skip in place)

(Skip in place)

(Pretend to carry a basket of cantaloupe)
(Pretend to eat cantaloupe)
(Pretend to eat cantaloupe)

(Skip in place)

(Skip in place)

(Pretend to carry a basket of cantaloupe)
(Pretend to eat and wipe juice from chin)

(Skip in place)





D. Introducing MyPlate Nutrition Education Activities

Cantaloupe Growing at Home #3: Send a copy of this resource home with each child at the start of Section D activities.

Materials Needed

- *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster (see Booklet 1)
- Cantaloupe, honeydew, and watermelon
- Plates and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Review the foods and activities depicted on the poster.
- Display the poster.
- Add a photo or illustration of cantaloupe to the Fruits group of the poster.
- Prepare a wedge each of cantaloupe, honeydew, and watermelon with the rind intact.
- Prepare bite-size pieces of cantaloupe, honeydew, and watermelon.
- Make copies of *MyPlate* coloring page (new or use copies from a previous D1 activity), one per child.
- Copy *Cantaloupe Growing at Home #3*—one set per child.

D1: Meet Cantaloupe's Melon Friends

Introduce the children to the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster. The children find cantaloupe in the Fruits group. They taste the difference between cantaloupe and other melons.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Say that cantaloupe is found in the Fruits group.
- Say that eating fruits like cantaloupe help keep us healthy;
- Compare cantaloupe to other melons;
- Say that being physically active every day helps us feel good and is fun;
- Say that eating foods from the different food groups each day helps us grow and be healthy;
- Identify a food from each of the five food groups.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing and Polite Tasting

- Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).
- If necessary, remind the children about polite food tasting habits (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 44 for details).



Activity Length:
25 minutes; 30 minutes
if optional coloring
activity conducted

The Activity

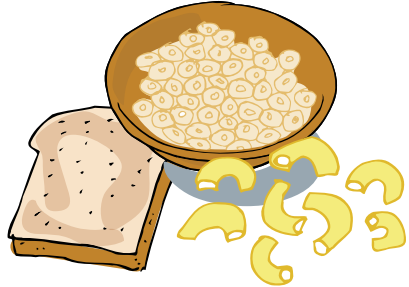
Learning the Food Groups

- Seat the children in a semicircle on the floor in view of the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster.
- Tell the children today they are going to learn about ways to be healthy and have fun every day. Tell the children that the best part is they like to do what helps them be healthy: they like to eat a variety of foods and they like to play.
- Point out the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster to the children. Ask the children to tell you what they see on the poster. Accept all correct answers, such as food, specific foods by name, children playing, and specific activities by name, etc.
- Explain that MyPlate shows the five food groups a person should eat from each day. Each food group has its own color: The Fruit Group is red, the Vegetable Group is green, the Grains Group is orange, the Dairy Group is blue, and the Protein Foods Group is purple. Eating foods from each food group helps us to be healthy and grow.

This activity continues on the following pages.



Grains



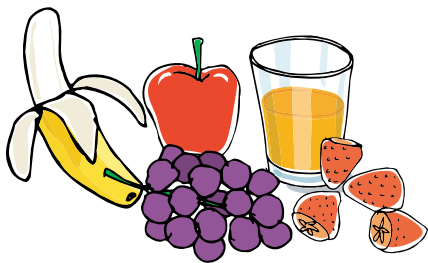
- Point to the orange band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (orange). Tell the children that foods made from grains are in the Grains group represented by the orange color band. Point to the bread and the cereal in the Grains group on the orange band of the poster and state that bread and cereal give us energy to play. Ask two children to come to the poster; point to a food in the orange section, and name the food. After each child names a food, repeat the name of the food, and state that _____ (the food named) and other foods from the Grains group also give us energy to play.
- Children this age may not know what a grain is. Tell them grains come from plants such as wheat, oats, and corn. Grains are used to make foods like cereal, bread, and pasta.

Vegetables



- Point to the green band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (green). Tell the children that foods from plants called vegetables are in the Vegetables group represented by the green color band. Point to the broccoli and the sweet potatoes in the Vegetables group below the green band of the poster and state that vegetables such as sweet potatoes and broccoli help keep us healthy. Ask two children to come to the poster; point to a vegetable on the green section, and name the vegetable. After each child names a vegetable, repeat the name of the vegetable and state that _____ (the vegetable named) and other foods from the Vegetables group also help keep us healthy.

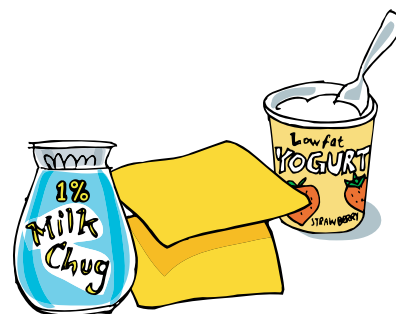
Fruits



- Point to the red band and ask the children to name the color of the band (red). Tell the children that foods from plants called fruits are in the Fruits group represented by the red color band. Point to the peach, strawberry, and the picture of cantaloupe you placed in the Fruits group below the red band of the poster and state that fruits such as peaches, strawberries, and cantaloupe help keep us healthy. Ask two children to come to the poster; point to a fruit in the red section, and name the fruit. After each child names a fruit, repeat the name of the fruit, and state that _____ (the fruit named) and other foods from the Fruits group help keep us healthy.

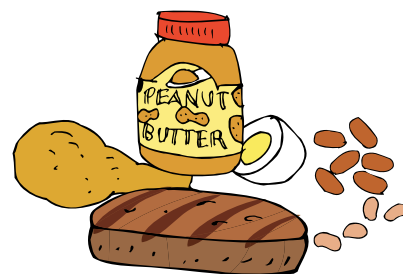
Dairy

- Point to the blue band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (blue). Tell the children that milk and foods made from milk are in the Dairy group represented by the blue color band. Point to the milk and yogurt in the Dairy group on the blue band and state that milk and yogurt help us build strong bones. Tell the children that it is good to choose low-fat and fat-free milk, yogurt, and cheese when given a choice. Ask two children to come to the poster, point out a food in the blue section, and name the food. After each child names a food, repeat the name of the food, and state that _____ (the food named) and other foods from the Dairy group also help us build strong bones.



Protein Foods

- Point to the purple band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (purple). Tell the children that foods from animals and some plants are in the Protein Foods group represented by the purple color band. Point to the meat, fish, egg, beans and peanut butter in the Proteins Foods group below the purple band and state that they help our muscles grow. Ask two children to come to the poster, point out a food in the purple section, and name the food. After each child names a food, repeat the name of the food, and state that _____ (the food named) and other foods from the Protein Foods group also help our muscles grow. (Note: if only foods that come from animals are selected, point out a food from plants and name it. If only foods from plants are selected, point out a food that comes from animals and name it.)





Review Activity

- While the children are still seated, point to each food group color band on the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster.
- Ask the children to name the food group each color represents and to name a food from that group.

- **Orange** – Grains group
- **Green** – Vegetables group
- **Red** – Fruits group
- **Blue** – Dairy group
- **Purple** – Protein Foods group

Tasting Activity

- Show the children the cantaloupe, honeydew, and watermelon wedges. Tell the children that honeydew and watermelon are melons similar to cantaloupe, but different in color.
- Give the children the melon samples to taste on a plate with a napkin. Note all three are juicy and taste sweet.
- After tasting the samples of melon, invite the children to feel and smell the different melon wedges. Discard wedges at end of lesson.
- Ask the children to name different ways to eat orange fruits like cantaloupe at different meals and snacks. Accept all answers such as in fruit salads, plain or with yogurt, etc.

Be Active-Cantaloupe Curl-ups

Note to Caregiver: Active play and movement are important for every child's growth and development. Although they may seem to be active and energetic, most children do not get the amount of physical activity they need for good health. Child care programs should provide opportunities for young children (2 to 6 years of age) to engage in 90 to 120 minutes (1½ to 2 hours) of moderate to vigorous physical activity each day.

Several short periods of activity (10-20 minutes each) work well for young children and are easy to plan into the day. Examples of moderate to vigorous physical activity that kids this age enjoy include: playing on outdoor play equipment, dancing to music, taking a nature (or garden) walk, relay races, movement games, hopping, skipping, galloping, and riding a tricycle or bicycle. For additional information on physical activity for young children, refer to the Nutrition and Wellness Tips for Young Children: Provider Handbook for the Child and Adult Care Food Program at <http://teamnnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/nutritionandwellness.html>."

- Point to the various activities depicted on the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster. Ask the children to tell you why it is important to be physically active and play every day, i.e., it helps you be strong and healthy, and is fun. Tell the children that today they will learn to be physically active in a way that reminds them of the cantaloupe they just tasted.
- Ask the children to extend their arms out to the side and spread apart from each other so that no child is able to easily touch another child's fingers. When the children are spaced around the room, ask them to sit down and listen carefully. Tell the children that building strength is an important way to be active. Ask the children to watch you show them a special strength building activity that celebrates cantaloupe.
- Ask the children to watch you as you lie on your back on the floor, with knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Place your hands on the back of your head with the elbows pointed out to the side. Gently tighten the stomach muscles and raise your head and upper body off the floor a few inches in a slight sit-up. Point out to the children that a shape similar to the curve of a slice of cantaloupe is made between the bent knees and raised head. Hold this position for 3 seconds and gently release back to the floor.
- Repeat the curl-up several times with the children, saying, "Cantaloupe curl-up (do slight sit up), cantaloupe down (return to floor)."
- Conclude the activity by telling the children it is fun to eat cantaloupe and be physically active by doing Cantaloupe Curl-ups.

Optional Concluding Activity: Have the children sit at tables with coloring supplies. Distribute a copy of the *MyPlate* coloring page (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 83) to each child. Ask the children to color the Fruits group band red and draw section color a cantaloupe wedge near it or use the Blackline Master of a cantaloupe (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 77) and have the children color the cantaloupe. With older children have them copy the dot-to-dot outline of the word "Fruits". Ask the children to draw a favorite way they like to be physically active on the page. If desired, collect the sheet for use in future fruit and vegetable units in *Grow It, Try It, Like It!*



Materials Needed

- Cantaloupe Fruit Salad Recipe ingredients—see the Child Care Center version of this recipe on page 28.
- Plates, spoons, and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Prepare the recipe.
- Prepare table(s).

D2: Can't Resist Cantaloupe

The children taste a new cantaloupe recipe and talk about different ways to eat cantaloupe.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Taste cantaloupe in a combination food, Cantaloupe Fruit Salad;
- Describe many different ways to eat cantaloupe.

Option: Make the recipe as part of the activity.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing and Polite Tasting

- Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet I, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).
- If necessary, remind the children about polite food tasting habits (see Booklet I, Tool Shed Resources, page 44 for details).





Activity Length:
10-15 minutes

The Activity

- Seat the children at the table(s).
- Ask the children to share what they remember learning about cantaloupe.
- Encourage responses such as how and where a cantaloupe grows; what it looks, feels, smells, and tastes like; and other material covered in the unit.
- Tell the children that the unit on cantaloupe ends with a celebration of a new way to eat cantaloupe. Cantaloupe can be part of a mixture of other foods.
- Show the children the Cantaloupe Fruit Salad and talk about the other foods in the salad. If making the recipe as part of the activity, make it at this point.
- Serve the children the Cantaloupe Fruit Salad.
- As the children are eating, ask:
 - ▶ What cantaloupe recipes they have made with their parents?
 - ▶ What different ways have they eaten cantaloupe?
 - ▶ What new ways do they think cantaloupe could be eaten?
- Give suggestions such as cantaloupe in salads, salsas, smoothies, mixed fruit salads, chilled soups, and cantaloupe wedges.

Words To Grow

Salad

Peach

Strawberry

Cantaloupe

Mixture



Cantaloupe Fruit Salad

For the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Yield: 16 child-size portions of ½-cup

- **1 ¼ cups fresh cantaloupe**
- **1 ¼ cups fresh strawberries**
- **1 ¼ cups fresh peaches**
- **3 Tbsp frozen orange juice concentrate, thawed**

1. Wash cantaloupe with cool tap water. Cut open and remove seeds. Cut cantaloupe flesh from rind and cut into small pieces. Place in a medium-size bowl.
2. Wash strawberries and remove green tops. Cut strawberries into small pieces and place on top of cantaloupe.
3. Blanch fresh peaches to remove skin if desired (see Tips). Cut into small pieces and place on top of cantaloupe/strawberry mixture.
4. Pour orange juice concentrate over fruit and mix. Cover and refrigerate 2 hours.
5. When ready to serve, stir fruit to mix.

Variations: Substitute unsweetened, whole frozen strawberries (thawed) for fresh strawberries. Substitute canned peaches (packed in water or juice), drained, or frozen peach slices (thawed) for fresh peaches.

Cooking with Children

Young children can:

- Wash hands first
- Help thoroughly wash the outside rind of the cantaloupe
- Help wash fresh peaches and strawberries in a colander
- Help cut cantaloupe, peaches, and strawberries into small pieces using a cutting board and plastic knife
- Pour orange juice concentrate over fruit pieces

Adults should cut the melon from the rind and blanch and peel the peaches if using fresh peaches.



Nutrients per 1 child-size serving of ½ cup: Calories 21, Protein, 0.4 g, Carbohydrate 5.2 g, Total Fat 0.1 g, Saturated Fat 0 g, Cholesterol 0 mg, Vitamin A 625 IU, Vitamin C 19.9 mg, Iron 0.1 mg, Calcium 5.4 mg, Sodium 1.7 mg, Dietary Fiber 0.8 g

Growing at Home Materials...

for Cantaloupe Corner Lessons



Cantaloupe Melon Kabobs

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Serves: 12 child-size portions of 1 kabob with 2 tsp yogurt (about ¼ cup fruit)

Serves: 6 adult-size portions of 2 kabobs with 4 tsp yogurt

- 1 cup fresh cantaloupe, cut in 1-inch cubes
- 1 cup fresh honeydew melon, cut in 1-inch cubes
- 1 cup fresh watermelon, cut in 1-inch cubes, remove seeds
- 1 cup low-fat or fat-free vanilla or fruit-flavored yogurt, for dipping or drizzling
- 12 wooden craft sticks

1. Wash melons under cool running tap water. Scrub outside of melons with clean vegetable brush and rinse. Cut open and remove seeds of cantaloupe and honeydew melons. Cut melon flesh from rind and remove any bruised or damaged areas. Cut into 1-inch cubes.
2. Press wooden stick through center of a piece of cantaloupe, leaving 1-inch of stick bare for a handle at one end.
3. Repeat pressing other pieces of melon on wooden stick alternating types until stick is full. Refrigerate or serve immediately. Offer yogurt as sauce for dipping kabobs.

Tip: Freeze kabobs for a cool, frosty fruit treat on a hot summer day. Place kabobs on a tray and place in the freezer. After 30 minutes, transfer to a zipper lock freezer bag, label, and date.

Cooking with Children

Young children can:

- Wash hands first
- Help thoroughly wash the outside rinds of melons
- Help thread pieces of fruit on sticks

Adults should cut melons and remove seeds and rinds; cut fruit into 1-inch pieces, and help thread fruit onto wooden sticks.



Nutrients per 1 child-size serving of 1 kabob (about ¼ cup fruit): Calories 34, Protein 1.1 g, Carbohydrate 7.1 g, Total Fat 0.3 g, Saturated Fat 0.2 g, Cholesterol 1 mg, Vitamin A 492.5 IU, Vitamin C 10.5 mg, Iron 1 mg, Calcium 31.6 mg, Sodium 13.7 mg, Dietary Fiber 0.3 g

What Do Cantaloupe Look Like?

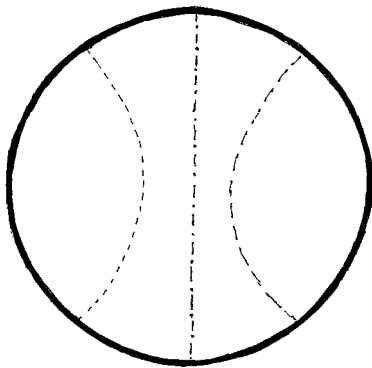
Dear Parents and Guardians:

Generally, children are more eager to try and eat foods that are familiar. Help your child review what they have learned about cantaloupe in child care. If possible, buy a cantaloupe and explore it with your child as you complete this activity. Your child will love sharing with you everything we've learned about how a cantaloupe looks, feels, and tastes! We've learned:

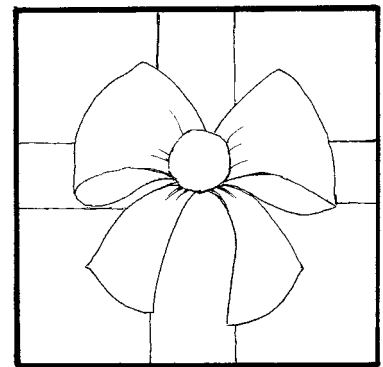
Cantaloupe is round with tan colored skin. The outside rind of a cantaloupe feels rough when you touch it. We scrub the outside well before we cut a cantaloupe in half. The inside of cantaloupe is orange, soft, and smooth. The seeds of the cantaloupe are in the center. We remove these seeds before we eat cantaloupe.

Have your child complete the activity below.

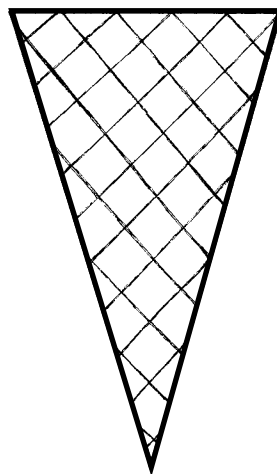
What shape is cantaloupe? Draw a circle around the object with the same shape as cantaloupe.



Round like a basketball



Square like a box



Triangle shape like an ice cream cone

Cantaloupe Growing at Home #2

Home Activities From Grow It, Try It, Like It!

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Today our lessons about cantaloupe focused on the garden. Your child learned about planting cantaloupe seeds and how this fruit grows and is harvested. Ask your child to share what we learned about growing cantaloupe. Some points we covered included that cantaloupes:

- Grow from seeds that are found inside them;
- Need soil, sun, water, and time to grow;
- Grow on long vines above the ground; and
- Are cut from the vine when the outside turns tan in color.

Continue learning experiences at home by making the attached recipe, **Cantaloupe Soup**, with your child. It is easy to do and tastes great! You may wish to make other family recipes with your child that include cantaloupe. Frequently offering cantaloupe will encourage your child to eat this healthful fruit.

The activity page enclosed, **The Story of How a Cantaloupe Grows**, will help your child remember what we learned in class today. Create a special memory by reading the activity and snacking on the Cantaloupe Soup you made together! When done, follow the directions to create a game your child can play over and over again. Offering a new food such as cantaloupe many times is another great way to help your child develop healthful eating habits.

Please call if you have questions about this activity or want more information.

Sincerely,

Child Care Center Director

Tip:

Fruit is the original fast food snack. Keep plenty on hand and easy to reach. Prepare a plate of fruit kabobs and set next to low-fat or fat-free yogurt in the refrigerator. It's a snack waiting to happen!

Cantaloupe Soup

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Serves: 6 child portions of ½ cup

Serves: 3 adult portions of 1 cup

- **3 cups fresh, chilled cantaloupe chunks**
- **1 cup cold orange juice**
- **Sugar is optional**

1. Put chunks of cantaloupe in blender or food processor.
2. Pour orange juice and sugar, if used, over cantaloupe.
3. Cover tightly with lid and puree or blend until very smooth.
Pour into bowls and serve immediately. Refrigerate any leftovers.

Variation: Make half a recipe with cantaloupe and transfer to a pitcher. Make another half a recipe with strawberries (or another fruit) and transfer to a second pitcher. Make half-and-half soup by pouring from both pitchers at the same time into bowls. Pouring at the same time will keep the two colors from mixing.

Tip: Freeze soup in 9" by 13" by 2" pan for 20-30 minutes in the freezer, stirring every 5-10 minutes until slushy. Scoop icy fruit slush into bowls for a frosty, refreshing dessert.

Cooking with Children

Young children can:

- Wash hands first
- Help cut cantaloupe into small pieces using a cutting board and plastic knife.
- Help add ingredients to blender pitcher.
- Help cover blender and watch as adult operates blender.
- Help stir slushy cantaloupe soup if icy fruit slush option is made.

Adults should cut melons and remove seeds and rinds; cut fruit into 1-inch pieces, and do all steps involving the blender.



Nutrients per 1 child-size serving of ½ cup: Calories 46, Protein 1 g, Carbohydrate 10.8 g, Total Fat 0.2 g, Saturated Fat 0.1 g, Cholesterol 0 mg, Vitamin A 2788 IU, Vitamin C 50 mg, Iron 0.3 mg, Calcium 11.8 mg, Sodium 13 mg, Dietary Fiber 0.8 g

Story of How a Cantaloupe Grows

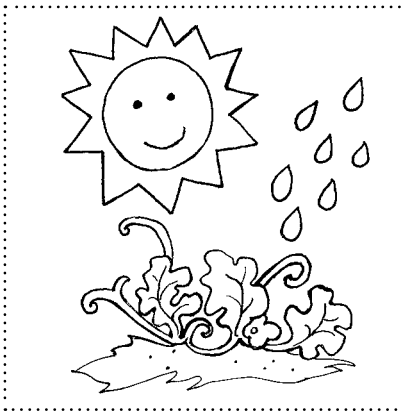
Dear Parents and Guardians:

Your child has learned about growing and harvesting cantaloupe. Review what they have learned by reading this story together. The pictures show the steps of growing and harvesting a cantaloupe. Enjoy eating Cantaloupe Soup while you read this story

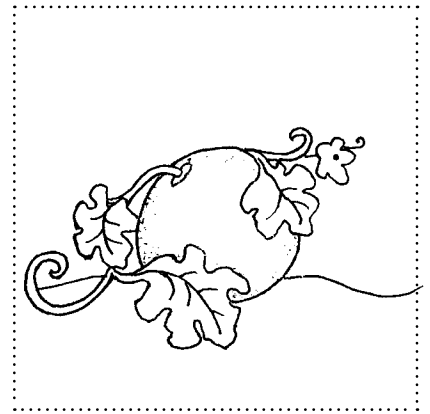
together. After you have read the story, you can cut the pictures apart and create a game for your child. Have your child practice putting the story of how a cantaloupe grows in the right order.



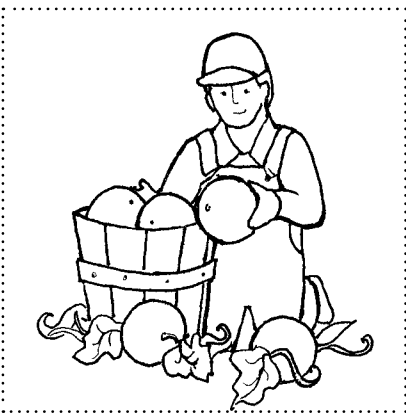
In spring, a farmer plants cantaloupe seeds in the ground.



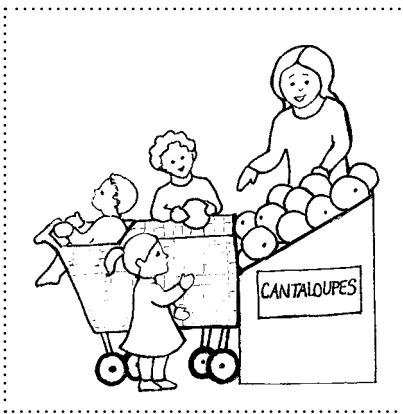
The cantaloupe seeds grow vines on top of the ground. The plants need soil, a lot of sun, warm weather, water, and time to grow.



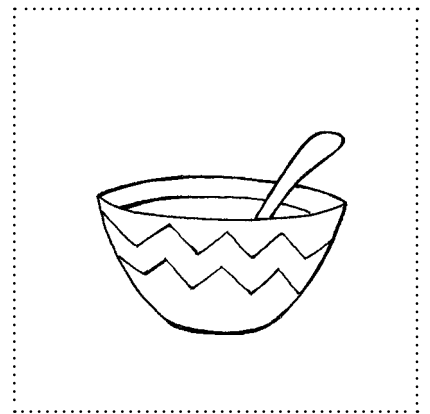
Cantaloupes grow on the vines and ripen to a tan color during the summer.



The farmer picks the cantaloupes.



The family chooses a cantaloupe at the grocery store or farmers' market.



The family makes and eats cantaloupe soup at home. Yum!

Cantaloupe Growing at Home #3

Home Activities From Grow It, Try It, Like It!

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Today we concluded our lessons on cantaloupe with a celebration of taste. Cantaloupe tastes wonderful prepared and served in many different ways. Ask your child to tell his/her favorite ways to eat cantaloupe. Some of the new ideas for cantaloupe we discussed were:

- Mixed in salads;
- Cubed for kabobs or scooped into balls for snacks;
- Blended in cold soups and smoothies; and
- Chopped for salsas.

Help your child continue learning at home in a fun and tasty way. Together, make the delicious and easy **Cantaloupe Fruit Salad** recipe shown on the following page. It is sure to become a favorite family cantaloupe recipe.

Cantaloupe Cuisine—New Ideas for Enjoying Cantaloupe is an activity to get your child and you thinking about cantaloupe and all the different ways to eat this juicy, sweet fruit. Have fun trying cantaloupe in different foods with your child. Trying new and different foods helps your child enjoy new taste experiences.

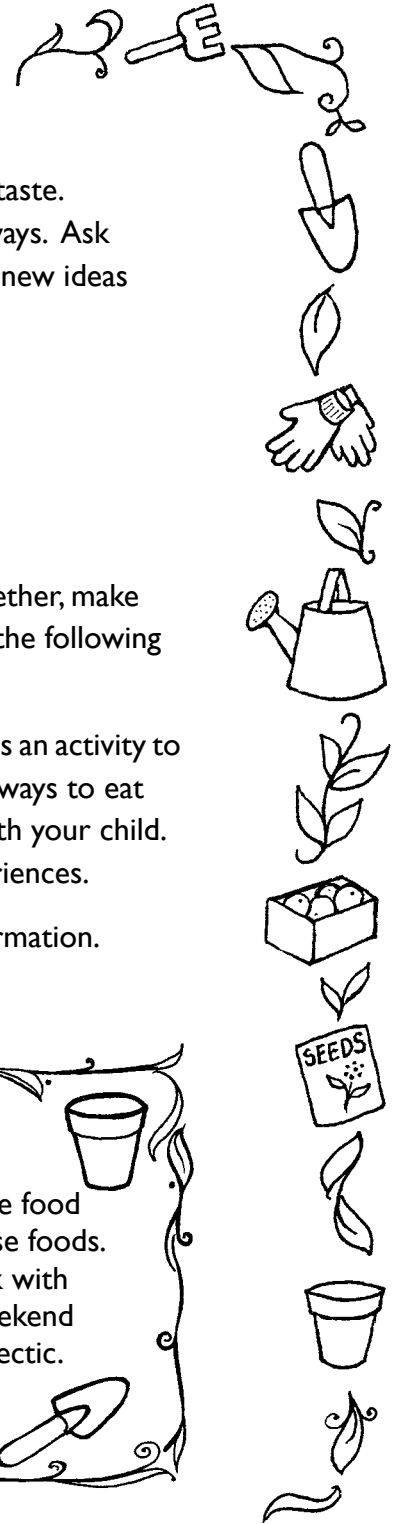
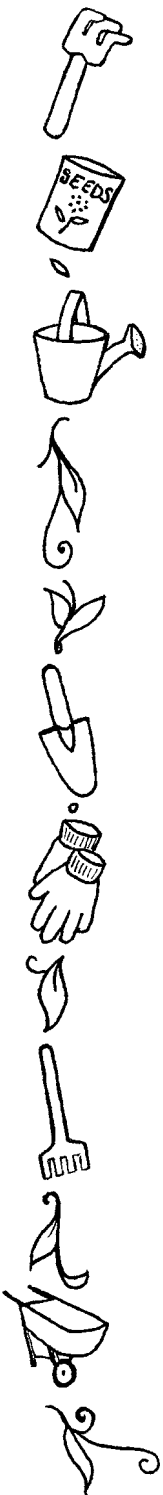
Please call if you have questions about this activity or want more information.

Sincerely,

Child Care Center Director

Tip:

Children who help prepare food are more likely to try those foods. Plan regular times to cook with your child, maybe on a weekend when schedules are less hectic.



Cantaloupe Fruit Salad

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Serves: 16 child-size portions of ½-cup

Serves: 8 adult-size portions of 1 cup

- **1 ½ cups fresh cantaloupe** • **1 ¼ cups fresh strawberries**
- **1 ¼ cups fresh peaches** • **3 Tbsp frozen orange juice concentrate, thawed**

1. Wash cantaloupe with cool tap water. Cut cantaloupe open and remove seeds. Cut cantaloupe flesh from rind and cut into small pieces. Place in a medium-size bowl.
2. Wash strawberries and remove green tops. Cut strawberries into small pieces and place on top of cantaloupe.
3. Blanch fresh peaches to remove skin if desired (see Tips). Cut into small pieces and place on top of cantaloupe/strawberry mixture.
4. Pour orange juice concentrate over fruit and stir gently to mix. Cover and refrigerate 2 hours.
5. When ready to serve, stir fruit to mix.

Variations: Substitute unsweetened, whole frozen strawberries (thawed) for fresh strawberries. Substitute canned peaches (packed in water or juice), drained, or frozen peach slices (thawed) for fresh peaches.

Cooking with Children

Young children can:

- Wash hands first
- Help thoroughly wash the outside rind of the cantaloupe
- Help wash fresh peaches and strawberries in a colander
- Help make cantaloupe balls with a melon ball kitchen tool
- Help cut cantaloupe, peaches, and strawberries into small pieces using a cutting board and plastic knife
- Pour orange juice concentrate over fruit pieces

Adults should cut melon from the rind and blanch and peel the peaches if using fresh peaches.



Nutrients per 1 child-size serving of 1/2 cup: Calories 21, Protein, 0.4 g, Carbohydrate 5.2 g, Total Fat 0.1 g, Saturated Fat 0 g, Cholesterol 0 mg, Vitamin A 625 IU, Vitamin C 19.9 mg, Iron 0.1 mg, Calcium 5.4 mg, Sodium 1.7 mg, Dietary Fiber 0.8 g

Cantaloupe Cuisine New ideas for enjoying cantaloupe

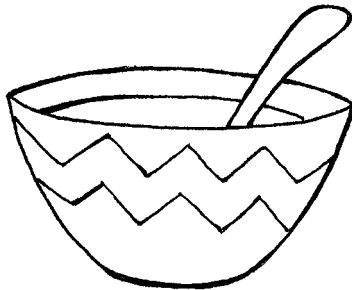
Dear Parents and Guardians:

Encourage children to enjoy foods in many different ways. The chance to experiment and try different dishes featuring cantaloupe is a great family activity. While everyone might not like every food the same, that's okay! It is fun to try. It is sometimes surprising to find out what tastes are favored.

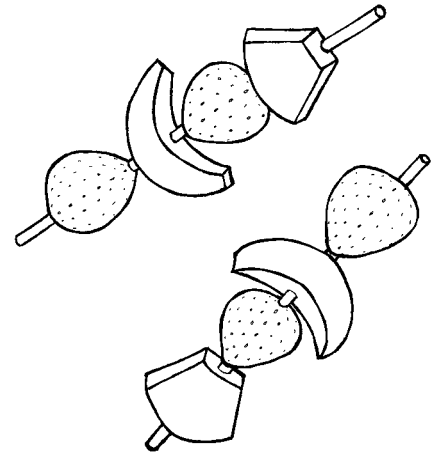
Talk with your child about eating cantaloupe. Explore ways that are familiar and ways that may be new. The activity below is a great way to start.

Have your child draw a circle around the ways they know they like to eat cantaloupe. Talk with your child about new cantaloupe ideas your family could try. Invite your child to draw a picture of a brand new idea. Make a plan to taste a new recipe with cantaloupe, either one shown here or the idea your child creates with you. Your child can have also fun coloring the pictures of cantaloupe ideas below.

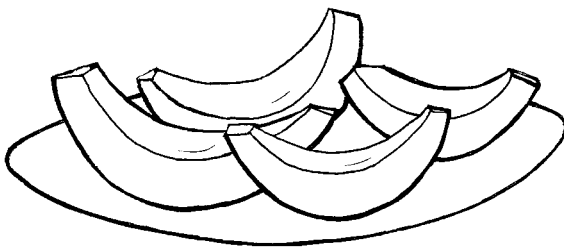
Try one of these ideas this week!



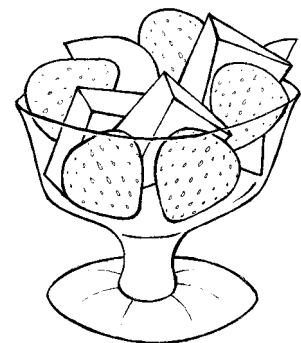
Cantaloupe soup



Cantaloupe Kabobs

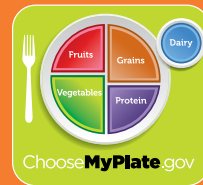


Cantaloupe sections on a plate



Cantaloupe Fruit Salad

Help your child create and draw a new idea for eating cantaloupe on the reverse side of page.



United States Department of Agriculture • Food and Nutrition Service
Find more fun resources at these Web sites:

teammnutrition.usda.gov
choosemyplate.gov

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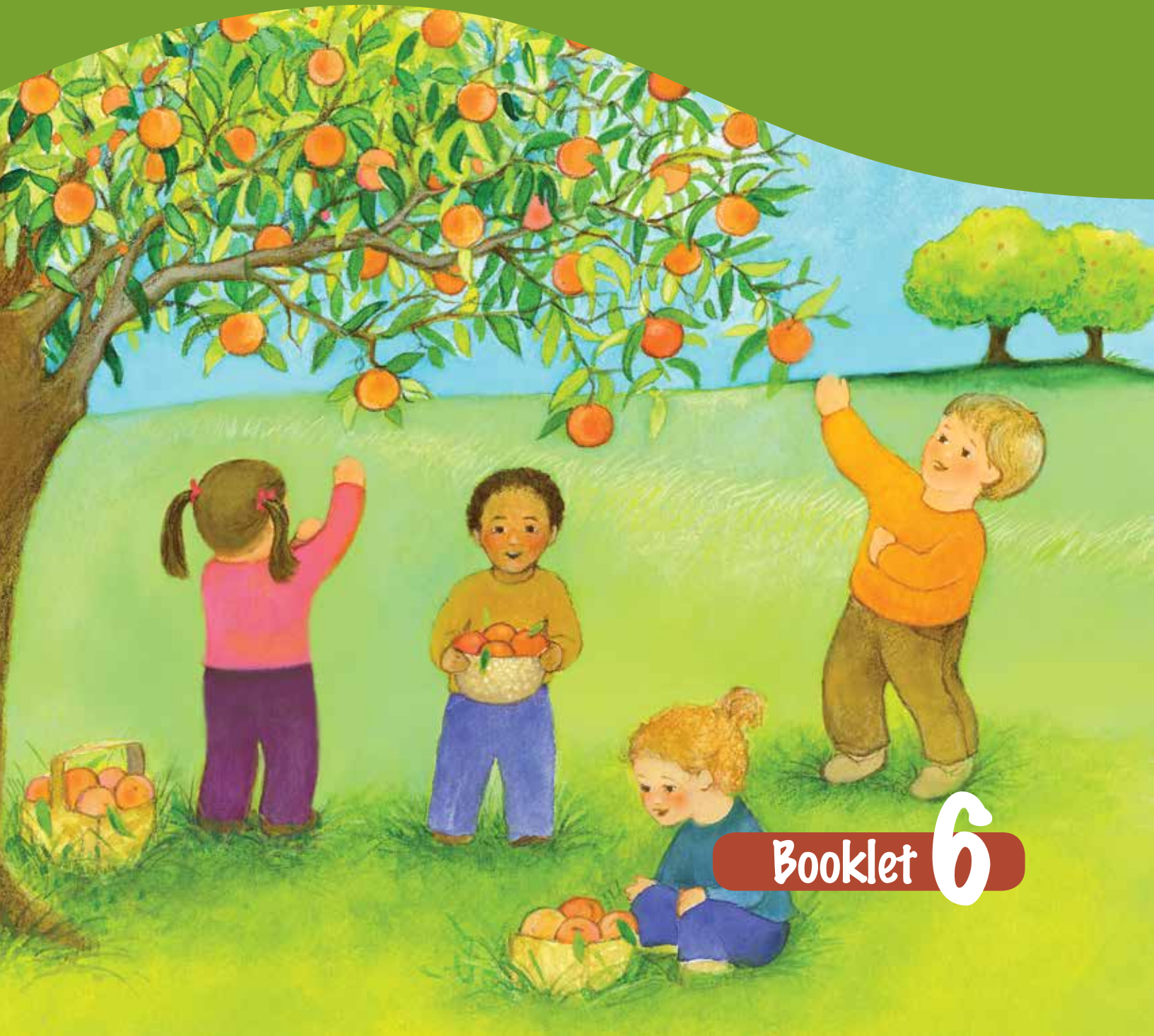
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Grow It, Try It, Like It!

Preschool Fun With Fruits and Vegetables

Peach Tree Orchard



Booklet **6**

Welcome to... Peach Tree Orchard at Tasty Acres Farm!

Close your eyes, tip your head back, and breathe in the sweetly scented air at Peach Tree Orchard. Look high above your head to find this fuzzy-skinned fruit. Children will reach new heights as they experience how a peach looks, feels, tastes, and smells. Peach Tree Orchard highlights how peaches grow from pits into trees. Then, the trees grow peaches that are picked and shipped to farmers' markets and stores. Youngsters' taste buds are treated to fresh peaches and peaches in delicious recipes. The learning and tasting experiences branch out further through Growing at Home activities.

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A Plan For Organizing the Peach Tree Orchard Activities

Check with local farms and farmers' markets to find out when peaches are in peak season. Learning about peaches is fun and seeing peaches growing makes a great orchard field trip for preschoolers. If an orchard is not nearby, have the children visit a produce stand or farmers' market to see fresh peaches.



Most activities require only 10-15 minutes; pick a few for each day. In this example, all of the activities from the lesson plans are completed, but spaced out over a 5-day period.

The Peach Orchard lesson plan is designed to be used in its entirety but if your center does not have the time, space, or resources to do all the activities, select the activities best suited to your center's environment and available resources from Section A: hands-on activities, Section B: planting activities, Section C: peach stories and songs, and Section D: nutrition education activities. Be sure that the activities you choose help the children meet the objectives listed at the beginning of each lesson plan section.

Here is one way to arrange the activities in your Peach Tree Orchard. Most activities require only 10-15 minutes; pick a few for each day. In this example, all of the activities from the lesson plans are completed, but spaced out over a 5-day period. Additionally, two activities from the Garden Art and Crafts Section in Booklet I are added. These activities are fun and useful ways to help reinforce the objectives of each activity. On page 19, it gives tips for creating successful projects and ideas for harvesting fun month after month. The Garden Art and Crafts chart connects the art and crafts to the lesson activities.

Planning Chart for Peach Tree Orchard Activities

Day One	Day Two	Day Three	Day Four	Day Five
A1 Something Feels Fuzzy Hands-on Activity 	B2 Make and Grow a Pretend Peach Tree Activity	B2 Make and Grow a Pretend Peach Tree Activity	B2 Make and Grow a Pretend Peach Tree Activity	B2 Make and Grow a Pretend Peach Tree Activity
B2 Make items for Pretend Peach Tree	A2 Peach...A Look Inside Hands-on Activity	C1 Cool Puppy Pup Video	Garden Seed Art 	D1 Reach for the Peach Nutrition Education Activity 
B2* Make and Grow a Pretend Peach Tree Activity	B1 Peach Trees Grow from Pits Planting Activity	Garden Art Produce Placemats 	C3 Old MacDonald Had a Farm Song, Peach Style 	D2 Party With Peaches Nutrition Education Activity
Send Home Growing at Home Materials #1	C3 Old MacDonald Had a Farm Song, Peach Style 	Send Home Growing at Home Materials #2	C2 Reading Activity 	Send Home Growing at Home Materials #3

*This plan includes how to show the growth of the peach tree (B2) over a week. If desired, do B2 as a single day activity on Day 3 and send Peach Growing at Home Materials #2 home at the end of that day.

Revisit the Farm: Rainy Day Fun All Year Long

When the weather changes your outdoor plans, the activities from Tasty Acres Farm provide a welcome opportunity to revisit and remember all the fun and flavor of *Grow It, Try It, Like It!* Sing the songs, watch the video segments, and use the Garden Art and Crafts Section in Booklet I for ideas. Make a rainy day one to reconnect with these fruits and vegetables.

More Ways to Grow – The Peach Tree Orchard unit can be included in other areas of the curriculum.

Complementary themes include:

Foods – Fruits **Colors** – Yellow, Orange **Seasons** – Summer **Opposites** – Inside & Outside

Plants – Trees, Blossoms, Pits **Alphabet** – P Words **Shapes** – Round **Body** – Senses



A. Teach About Peach Hands-On Activities

Materials Needed

- A peach, whole and washed
- Container of peach pieces, at least one piece per child
- Napkins and spoons
- Mystery Box/Bag
- Paper and pencil
- Tennis ball (optional)

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Wash peaches; prepare bite-size pieces; keep pieces out of sight.
- Place a clean, fresh peach in the Mystery Box/Bag.
- Make copies of Peach Growing at Home #1—one set per child.
- Review Make a Mystery Box or Bag (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 45).

Growing at Home Introduction Letter and Hand Washing and Polite Tasting Guidelines: Send a copy of these resources home before starting the first unit from *Grow It, Try It, Like It!* If you have already sent these resources home, you may omit this step. (See Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 42-44.)

Peach Growing at Home #1: Send a copy of this resource home with each child at the start of the Section A activities.

A1: Something Feels Fuzzy

Use the Mystery Box/Bag to create interest. The children feel the outside of a peach before revealing the “mystery” item to all.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Identify a peach as a lightweight, round fruit;
- Describe the outward appearance and smell of a peach.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing and Polite Tasting

- Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).
- If this is the first activity involving food tasting, talk with the children about polite food tasting habits (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 44 for details).



Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Introduce the Mystery Box/Bag, or reintroduce if you have used it before.
- One at a time, ask each child to come and feel inside the box or bag without looking. If a child seems afraid, feel inside the box/bag with the child.
- Ask each child to describe quietly to you what he/she feels.
- After everyone has guessed, reveal the peach. Let each child hold the peach, if desired.
- Note the children's guesses that were close (round, a plant, food) or correct (a peach).
- Talk about the peach. Ask the questions below and any other questions you like.
 - ▶ Is a peach a fruit or a vegetable? (Fruit)
 - ▶ What shape is it? (Round, like a ball)
 - ▶ What color is the outside? (Yellow and red)
 - ▶ How does the outside of it feel? (Fuzzy like a baby chick or a tennis ball)
 - ▶ Does it have a smell? (May have no smell or smell sweet like a flower)
 - ▶ Is it light or heavy? (Small, round, and light like a tennis ball—let the children feel the tennis ball, if available)
 - ▶ Has anyone ever tasted a peach? (Yes or No)

Words to Grow

Round

Light (weight)

Red

Fuzzy

Yellow

Fruit

Activity Conclusion – Tasting

- Conclude the lesson by offering the children a piece of a peach to taste.
- Give each child a piece on a spoon and a napkin.
- As necessary, remind children how the group follows polite tasting manners.



Materials Needed

- A peach (can be the one used in Activity A1 if not bruised)
- Sharp knife
- Cutting board
- Damp cloth and dry towel for wiping and drying hands after exploring the peach
- Paper plates and napkins, one each per child

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Prepare the peach—wash the outside of a peach well.
- Assemble supplies in a central area; keep the knife in a safe place until ready to use.

A2: Peach...A Look Inside

Engage all the senses! The children see and feel the inside of a peach, then smell and taste it.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Describe the appearance, smell, and taste of a peach;
- Tell that all of the peach can be eaten except the pit.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing

Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43 for directions).



Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Have the children gather around the area with the peach and cutting board. Review with children how to be safe around sharp knives: only adults use them, children keep their hands away, and do not touch sharp knives.
- Review with the children what they learned about a peach in Activity A1. If you didn't do Activity A1, tell the children you have a peach to share with them today.
- Tell the children we have to wash the outside of a peach with lots of water to remove soil and germs before we cut it open. Tell the children you have already washed the peach.
- Cut the peach in half to reveal the inside. Have paper towel handy to wipe up extra juices. Let the children know they will get to touch the peach half with the pit in a few minutes.
 - ▶ Cut the peach half without the pit into small slices with the skin intact; make enough slices for one per child present.
- On a plate, give each child a small slice of a peach to look at, touch, and smell.

Activity continued...

- Talk with the children about the inside of the peach. Lead the children through the questions below and ask additional questions if you like.
 - ▶ How does the outside of the peach feel? (Fuzzy)
 - ▶ What color is on the inside of the peach? (Light orange)
 - ▶ What was in the center of the peach? (A large seed called the pit that is not eaten)
 - ▶ How does the inside flesh feel? (Cool and smooth)
 - ▶ How does the peach smell? (Sweet)

Tasting Activity

- Invite the children to taste the peach. (Note—if desired make additional peach slices available for seconds.)
 - ▶ How does the peach feel in their mouth? (Smooth and juicy)
 - ▶ How does the peach taste? (Sweet)
- After everyone has sampled a peach slice, invite the children to feel the half peach with the pit intact. After everyone has explored the pit, ask the children what differences they felt between the flesh of the peach and the pit.
 - ▶ How does the pit feel? (Rough and hard)
- After the children have felt the peach and pit, have the children wash their hands (see Booklet I, Tool Shed Resources, page 43 for directions).

Words to Grow

Fuzzy	Smooth
Pit	Rough
Hard	Juicy
Sweet	



Tips: Save the pit for use in Activity B1. Discard any pieces of a peach that have been touched but not eaten.

Dip any remaining untouched peach in a mixture of 1 teaspoon lemon juice mixed in 1 cup of water. Cover and refrigerate for use in the next day or two in future activities or snacks.



Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Garden Seed Art: Decorate a peach shape with yellow, orange, and red seeds. Try popcorn and millet for yellow, dye pumpkin seeds orange, and use red lentils for red (see Booklet I, Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 34).



B. Peach... Where Do You Come From? Planting Activities

Peach Growing at Home #2: Send a copy of this resource home with each child at the start of the Section B activities.

Materials Needed

- Peach pits, at least two
- Drawings of peaches growing on trees and in a grocery store (see Booklet I, Tool Shed Resources, page 69-70)
- Plates and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Assemble materials in a central area.
- Make copies of Peach Growing at Home #2—one set per child.
- Plan to serve Peach Cobbler or peaches in some form at meal or snack time (see Peach Cobbler Recipe, page 33).

B1: Peach Trees Grow From Pits

The children see and touch peach pits. They learn that peach trees grow in an orchard.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Describe how peaches grow from a pit into a tree that produces peaches;
- Describe the resources needed to grow peaches.

Optional Activity: Visit a local farm or nursery and see how peaches grow.





Activity Length:
10 minutes

The Activity

- Tell the children that today they will learn how peaches grow. Show the children the peach pits.
- Pass the pits around. Let the children touch and count the pits.
- Explain that the peach pits are seeds. They are planted in the soil. Explain that the sun and rain help the pits grow into trees that stand above the ground. It takes a long time, at least 3 years, for a peach tree to grow big enough to produce a peach. Compare this length of time to the ages of the children.
- Show drawing of a peach tree growing in an orchard.
- Explain that an orchard is a field where many trees that produce fruits and nuts grow.
- When the trees are at least 3 years old, flowers called blossoms appear on the trees in the spring of the year. Where the blossoms were on the tree, peaches will grow during the summer.
- Explain that the peach is ripe when the skin becomes a nice shade of yellow/red and the peach feels firm.
- Explain that when peaches are ripe, they are picked from the trees. The peaches are taken to a store or a farmers' market where people buy them and take them home to eat. Show the drawing of peaches at the grocery store.
- Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43 for hand washing directions).

Words to Grow

Pit	Soil
Sun	Water
Tree	Blossom
Peach	Orchard



Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Painted Pots: Have the children make the Painted Pot, (see Booklet 1, Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 35), and fill the pot with peach-scented potpourri for a unique gift.

Activity Connection to Snack or Mealtime

While eating Peach Cobbler or peaches in some form at snack or mealtime, talk about how peaches grow (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, Ten Terrific Ways..., page 48).

Materials Needed

- Brown paper, at least 4 feet in height, cut to look like a tree trunk with limbs
- Green paper, cut to look like peach leaves
- Peach Blackline Masters, include one set per child (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 78)
- Drawing of peaches (See Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 69)
- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils (Yellow-green, orange, and red)
- Blunt-tip scissors
- Reusable adhesive or double stick tape

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Create a paper peach tree and attach to a wall.
- Copy and cut out, from white paper, one peach blossom per child.
- Copy and cut out, from yellow paper, one set of peaches (2", 3", 4") per child
- Organize the supplies.
- Plan to serve peaches in some form at snack or mealtime (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, Ten Terrific Ways..., page 48).

B2: Make and Grow a Pretend Peach Tree

The children make a pretend peach tree and learn about the growing stages of peaches.

Note: As described, this is a weeklong activity. Should you wish to complete this activity in one day, make the materials at the beginning of the day. Follow the steps to Grow a Pretend Peach Tree throughout the day and end with harvesting peaches at the end of the day. See Grow a Pretend Peach Tree Daily Steps at the end of the activity to complete on a single day.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Experience making a pretend peach tree;
- Describe the resources needed to grow peaches.

Option: Paint a tree trunk, limbs, and leaves on a large piece of white paper, at least 4 feet in height.





Activity Length:
15 minutes
to prepare
materials; 5
minutes a day
to simulate how
peaches grow

The Activity

- Have each child seated at the table(s), near the supplies.
- Tell the children that peaches grow from seeds called peach pits that are planted in the ground. The pit needs soil, water, sun, and time to grow into a peach tree.
- When the tree is at least 3 years old, the tree grows flowers called peach blossoms every spring. The blossoms fall away and peaches grow where the flowers were. At first the peaches are small, hard, and slightly yellow-green with some orange in color.
- By the middle of summer, the peaches have grown larger, are changing in color to have less green and more orange and red.
- By the end of the summer, the large peaches on the tree are soft, round, and creamy yellow with orange-red in color. Once the peaches are ripe, they are picked and sent to stores or farmers' markets. That is where we buy peaches to take home and eat.
- Tell the children they are going to make a pretend peach tree. Show drawing of peaches growing on a tree.
- Ask the children to finish adding color to the yellow paper peaches. The smallest peach (2" size) is the least ripe; it appears yellow-green with some orange. The medium size peach (3" size) is growing and ripening; it appears to have a little yellow-green, more orange and the beginning of red tones. The largest peach (4" size) is ripe and ready to pick; it is yellow-orange with more red. Help any children who need assistance.
- Have the children cut each colored peach from the sheet. Help any children who need assistance. Have each child write his or her name on the back of each of the three peaches; assist any children needing help.

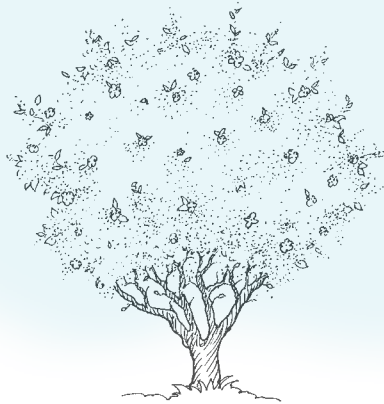


Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Get double duty from the Make a Pretend Peach Tree Activity—save the large peach to use in the Tasty Acres Mobile and add all the fruits and vegetables featured at Tasty Acres Farm (see Booklet 1, Garden Art and Crafts Section, Tasty Acres Mobile, page 31).

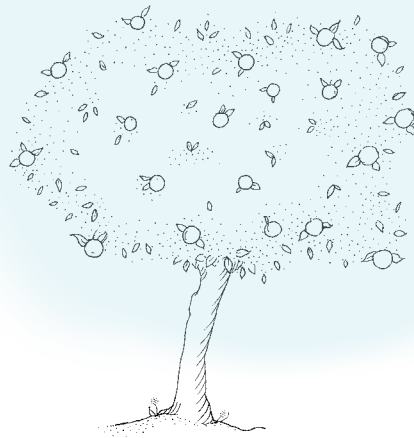
Grow a Pretend Peach Tree...Daily Steps

- **Day 1:** Help the children attach a peach blossom to the tree with reusable adhesive or tape. As the blossoms are added, remind the children that the tree has grown for 3 years before it produces blossoms.



- **Day 2:** Remove the blossoms and place the 2" peaches in the blossom positions. As the small peaches are added, remind the children that peaches start to grow where the blossoms were located on the tree. Talk with the children about the resources needed for the tree to grow peaches (water, sun, soil, and time).

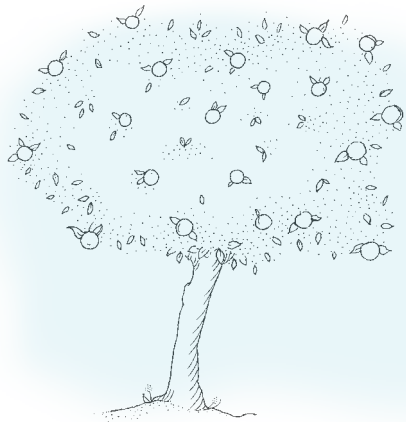
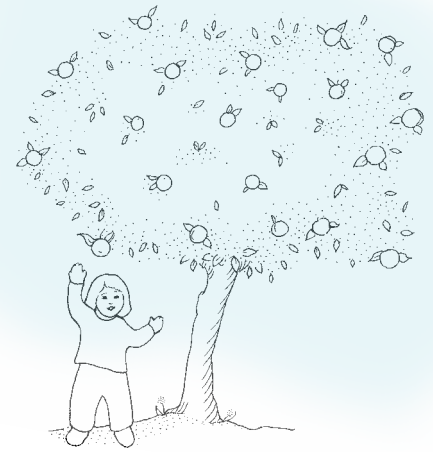
- **Day 3:** Replace the 2" peaches with the 3" ones. As the medium size peaches are added, remind the children that peaches grow larger during the summer on the tree. Talk with the children about the resources needed for the tree to grow peaches (water, sun, soil, and time).



- **Day 4:** Replace the 3" peaches with the 4" ones. As the large size peaches are added, remind the children that after peaches reach their full size, they ripen on the tree. Talk with the children about the resources needed for the tree to grow peaches (water, sun, soil, and time).



- **Day 5:** Continue the lesson by celebrating with a pretend harvest of the 4" peaches from the tree. Talk with the children about the resources needed for the tree to grow peaches (water, sun, soil, and time).





C. Peach Stories and Songs

C1: Cool Puppy Pup's Peach Lunch Party Video

View Cool Puppy Pup's Peach Lunch Party segment with the children. Discuss the peach facts covered in this delightful video and have them try Cool Puppy Pup's favorite way to eat a peach.

Objective

The children will be able to describe how peaches are grown, harvested, and eaten.

Materials Needed

- Cool Puppy Pup DVD
- TV and DVD player
- Fresh peach slices, at least one per child
- Plates and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Cue the DVD to start at the Peach segment.
- Prepare the peach slices.





Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Gather the children and watch the Peach segment of the video.
- After viewing the segment, ask the children to name their favorite parts of the video. Use their responses to lead into a discussion about the video. During the discussion, include the questions below to review Cool Puppy Pup's main points from the video segment.
- In the video, did Cool Puppy Pup say:
 - ▶ A peach was a fruit or a vegetable? (Fruit)
 - ▶ What shape is a peach? (Round like a ball)
 - ▶ What color is the outside? (Yellow, orange, and red)
 - ▶ How does it feel? (Fuzzy and soft)
 - ▶ Cool Puppy Pup said the inside of a peach is what color? (Yellow-orange)
- At Tasty Acres Farm, the farmer talked about how peaches grow.
 - ▶ Do peaches grow above or below the ground? (Above the ground on trees in an orchard)
 - ▶ What did he call the large seed inside a peach? (A pit)
 - ▶ What colors are a peach when it is ripe and picked? (Yellow and red)
 - ▶ Where are peaches shipped after they are picked? (To stores and farmers' markets)
- Have the children name some of the ways that a peach can be eaten. (In shakes, with cottage cheese and lettuce, in a peach pie, or fresh as they are)
- Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet I, Tool Shed Resources, page 43).
- Conclude the activity by telling the children they are going to eat a fresh sliced peach, the way that Cool Puppy Pup likes to eat a peach best of all.
- Serve the peach slices.



Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Peach Garden Stones: Have the children make Peach Garden Stones (see Booklet I, Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 36) and place them at the base of the Pretend Peach Tree (see Activity B2: Make and Grow a Pretend Peach Tree, page 8-9).



C2: Reading Activity

Read story books to the children that are about or include the activities of growing and/or eating fruits and vegetables. Listening to such stories can encourage children to adopt positive behaviors that can last a lifetime, like trying new fruits and vegetables.

Objective

Children will describe the fun and interesting stories about fruits and/or vegetables that were read to them.

Materials Needed

- Books from a library or purchased books
- Space for the children to sit

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Clear a space for the children to sit around you.
- Choose a book from the Harvest of Books list (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 50).
- Select a book you would like to read and either borrow it from a library or purchase it.
- Use books relevant to fruits and vegetables that may already be available to you.





Activity Length:
10 to 20 minutes
depending on the
length of the book

The Activity

- Have the children sit around you as you read them the book.
- Ask the children to listen for the names of fruits and vegetables as the story is read.

Discussion Questions:

- After reading the story, ask the children which fruits and vegetables were named in the story and what happened to them. For example,
 - ▶ Where were the fruits and vegetables grown?
 - ▶ What happened to the fruits and vegetables after they were picked?
 - ▶ Who ate the fruits and vegetables?

Add other questions that relate to the story.





C3: Old MacDonald Had a Farm, Peach Style

The children sing about growing and eating peaches and act out the motions to this familiar tune.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Sing and act out motions to a familiar tune;
- Say that being physically active helps us feel good.



Activity Length:
10 minutes

Materials Needed

- Peach lyrics to tune “Old MacDonald Had a Farm”
- Large space for the children to move about

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Become familiar with the words and motions of the song.

The Activity

- Lead the children in singing these new words to the tune “Old MacDonald Had a Farm” and demonstrate the suggested motions or make up new ones.
- Encourage the children to move about as they are singing.
- Explain that skipping, wiggling, stretching, running, jumping, and playing actively every day helps us to feel good and stay healthy.



Old MacDonald Had a Farm, Peach Style

The children sing about growing and eating peaches and act out motions to this familiar tune.

1st Verse

Old MacDonald had an orchard, EIEIO!
In this orchard he grew some peaches, EIEIO!
With a peach tree here and a peach tree there,
Here a tree, there a tree, everywhere a peach tree!
Old MacDonald had an orchard, EIEIO!

2nd Verse

Old MacDonald had an orchard, EIEIO!
In this orchard he grew some peaches, EIEIO!
With a blossom here and a blossom there,
Here a blossom, there a blossom, everywhere
peach blossoms!
Old MacDonald had an orchard, EIEIO!

3rd Verse

Old MacDonald had an orchard, EIEIO!
In this orchard he grew some peaches, EIEIO!
With a fuzz, fuzz here, and a fuzz, fuzz there,
Here some fuzz, there some fuzz, everywhere
peach fuzz.
Old MacDonald had an orchard, EIEIO!

4th Verse

Old MacDonald had an orchard, EIEIO!
In this orchard he grew some peaches, EIEIO!
With a bite, bite here, and a bite, bite there
Here a bite, there a bite, everywhere a healthy bite.
Old MacDonald had an orchard, EIEIO!

(Skip in place)

(Pretend to carry a basket of peaches)
(Pretend to be trees reaching high
into the air stretching tall)

(Skip in place)

(Skip in place)

(Pretend to carry a basket of peaches)
(Wiggle fingers – blossoms – to the left and
right, moving arms until above head)

(Skip in place)

(Skip in place)

(Pretend to carry a basket of peaches)
(Pretend to climb a tree and pick peaches)
(Pretend to climb a tree and pick peaches)

(Skip in place)

(Skip in place)

(Pretend to carry a basket of peaches)
(Pretend to eat peach)
(Pretend to eat peach)

(Skip in place)





D. Introducing MyPlate Nutrition Education Activities

Materials Needed

- *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster (see Booklet 1)
- Peaches, nectarines and/or apricots, at least two each
- Spoons, plates, and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Review the foods and activities depicted on the poster.
- Display the poster.
- Add a photo or illustration of a cantaloupe to the Fruits group of the poster.
- Slice a peach, nectarine, and/or an apricot in half with the pit intact in one half. Put halves back together to make a whole piece of fruit to use in the activity.
- Prepare bite-size pieces of peach, nectarine, and/or apricot.
- Make copies of *MyPlate* coloring page (new or use copies from a previous D1 activity), one per child.
- Copy *Peach Growing at Home #3*—one set per child.

Peach Growing at Home #3: Send a copy of this resource home with each child at the start of the Section D activities.

D1. Reach for the Peach

Introduce the children to the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster. The children find a peach and other fruits with pits in the Fruits group. They taste the difference between an apricot, a nectarine, and a peach.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Say that peaches are found in the Fruits group.
- Say that eating fruits like peaches help keep us healthy;
- Compare peaches to nectarines and/or apricots (other fruits with a pit or stone);
- Say that being physically active every day helps us feel good and is fun;
- Say that eating foods from the different food groups each day helps us grow and be healthy;
- Identify a food from each of the five food groups.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing and Polite Tasting

- Explain that we always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, *Tool Shed Resources*, page 43, for directions).
- If necessary, remind the children about polite food tasting habits (see Booklet 1, *Tool Shed Resources*, page 44 for details).



Activity Length:
25 minutes; 30 minutes
if optional coloring
activity conducted

The Activity

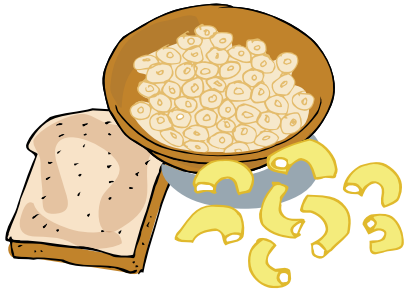
Learning the Food Groups

- Seat the children in a semicircle on the floor in view of the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster.
- Tell the children today they are going to learn about ways to be healthy and have fun every day. Tell the children that the best part is they like to do what helps them be healthy: they like to eat a variety of foods and they like to play.
- Point out the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster to the children. Ask the children to tell you what they see on the poster. Accept all correct answers, such as food, specific foods by name, children playing, and specific activities by name, etc.
- Explain that MyPlate shows the five food groups a person should eat from each day. Each food group has its own color: The Fruit Group is red, the Vegetable Group is green, the Grains Group is orange, the Dairy Group is blue, and the Protein Foods Group is purple. Eating foods from each food group helps us to be healthy and grow.

This activity continues on the following pages.



Grains



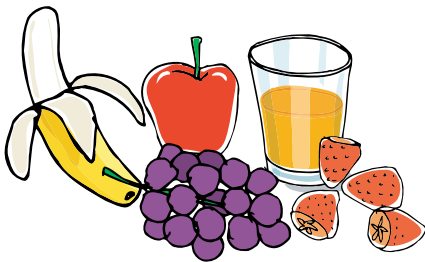
- Point to the orange band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (orange). Tell the children that foods made from grains are in the Grains group represented by the orange color band. Point to the bread and the cereal in the Grains group on the orange band of the poster and state that bread and cereal give us energy to play. Ask two children to come to the poster, point to a food in the orange section, and name the food. After each child names a food, repeat the name of the food, and state that _____ (the food named) and other foods from the Grains group also give us energy to play.
- Children this age may not know what a grain is. Tell them grains come from plants such as wheat, oats, and corn. Grains are used to make foods like cereal, bread, and pasta.

Vegetables



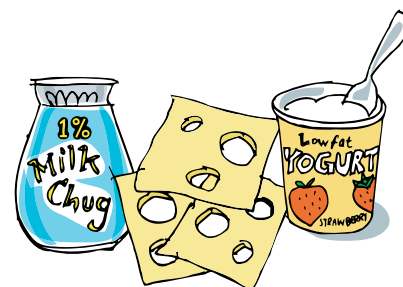
- Point to the green band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (green). Tell the children that foods from plants called vegetables are in the Vegetables group represented by the green color band. Point to the broccoli and the sweet potatoes in the Vegetables group below the green band of the poster and state that vegetables such as sweet potatoes and broccoli help keep us healthy. Ask two children to come to the poster, point to a vegetable below the green section, and name the vegetable. After each child names a vegetable, repeat the name of the vegetable and state that _____ (the vegetable named) and other foods from the Vegetables group also help keep us healthy.

Fruits

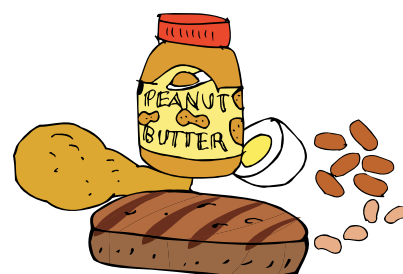


- Point to the red band and ask the children to name the color of the band (red). Tell the children that foods from plants called fruits are in the Fruits group represented by the red color band. Point to the peach and strawberry in the Fruits group below the red band of the poster and state that fruits such as peaches and strawberries help keep us healthy. Ask two children to come to the poster, point to a fruit in the red section, and name the fruit. After each child names a fruit, repeat the name of the fruit, and state that _____ (the fruit named) and other foods from the Fruits group help keep us healthy.

- Point to the blue band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (blue). Tell the children that milk and foods made from milk are in the Dairy group represented by the blue color band. Point to the milk and yogurt in the Dairy group on the blue band and state that milk and yogurt help us build strong bones. Tell the children that it is good to choose low-fat and fat-free milk, yogurt, and cheese when given a choice. Ask two children to come to the poster, point out a food in the blue section, and name the food. After each child names a food, repeat the name of the food, and state that _____ (the food named) and other foods from the Dairy group also help us build strong bones.



- Point to the purple band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (purple). Tell the children that foods from animals and some plants are in the Protein Foods group represented by the purple color band. Point to the meat, fish, egg, beans and peanut butter in the Protein Foods group on the purple band and state that they help our muscles grow. Ask two children to come to the poster, point out a food in the purple section, and name the food. After each child names a food, repeat the name of the food, and state that _____ (the food named) and other foods from the Protein Foods group also help our muscles grow. (Note: if only foods that come from animals are selected, point out a food from plants and name it. If only foods from plants are selected, point out a food that comes from animals and name it.)





Review Activity

- While the children are still seated, point to each food group color band on the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster.
- Ask the children to name the food group each color represents and to name a food from that group.

■ **Orange** – Grains group

■ **Green** – Vegetables group

■ **Red** – Fruits group

■ **Blue** – Dairy group

■ **Purple** – Protein Foods group

Tasting Activity

- Show the children the peach, nectarine, and apricot whole and then remove the half without the pit to reveal the inside of the fruit.
- Tell the children that these fruits with pits are similar to a peach.
- Give the children a napkin, spoon, and a plate with samples of each fruit to taste and compare to a peach. Note all three are similar in color; are juicy, and taste sweet.
- Invite the children to feel and smell the fruit halves with pits intact. Discard the fruit at end of lesson.
- Ask the children to name different ways to eat yellow/orange fruits like peaches, nectarines, and apricots at different meals and snacks. Accept all answers such as on cereal, in fruit salads, plain or with yogurt, etc.

Be Active–Peach Reach Stretch

Note to Caregiver: Active play and movement are important for every child's growth and development. Although they may seem to be active and energetic, most children do not get the amount of physical activity they need for good health. Child care programs should provide opportunities for young children (2 to 6 years of age) to engage in 90 to 120 minutes (1 ½ to 2 hours) of moderate to vigorous physical activity each day.

Several short periods of activity (10-20 minutes each) work well for young children and are easy to plan into the day. Examples of moderate to vigorous physical activity that kids this age enjoy include: playing on outdoor play equipment, dancing to music, taking a nature (or garden) walk, relay races, movement games, hopping, skipping, galloping, and riding a tricycle or bicycle. For additional information on physical activity for young children, refer to the Nutrition and Wellness Tips for Young Children: Provider Handbook for the Child and Adult Care Food Program at <http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/nutritionandwellness.html>."

- Point to the various activities depicted on the “*Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate*” poster. Ask the children to tell you why it is important to be physically active and play every day, i.e., it helps you be strong and healthy, and is fun. Tell the children that today they will learn to be active in a way that reminds them of the peach they just tasted.
- Ask the children to extend their arms out to the side and spread apart from each other so that no child is easily able to touch another child’s fingers. When children are spaced around the room, ask them to lower their arms and listen carefully. Tell the children that stretching is an important way to be active. Ask the children to watch you show them a special stretch that celebrates peaches.
- Tell the children they are going to pretend to harvest peaches while they do the Peach Reach Stretch. Show the children how to reach high above their head with the right arm and pick a peach from the imaginary tree limb above. Repeat the stretch with the left arm. Show the children how to reach high above their heads with both hands and then slowly lower the arms toward the toes, bending forward at the waist. Gently roll the spine up to a standing position. Show how to pretend to extend the left arm from the shoulder to reach for a peach to the left, bring the hand to the center of the body, then pretend to pass the peach to the right, and then extend the right arm from the shoulder to the right side, stretching the arm.
- Ask the children to do the Peach Reach Stretch with you several times. During each stretch, remind the children of the stages of how peaches grow.
- Conclude the activity by telling the children it is fun to eat peaches and be physically active by doing a Peach Reach Stretch.



Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

MyPlate Placemat: Laminate the children’s *MyPlate* coloring page and use this placemat to review that peaches are in the Fruits group and that being physically active every day helps us feel good and is fun (see Booklet 1, Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 29).

Optional Concluding Activity: Have the children sit at tables with coloring supplies. Distribute a copy of the *MyPlate* coloring page (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 83) to each child. Ask the children to color the Fruits group section of Myplate red and draw and color peaches near it or use the Blackline master of a peach (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 79) and have the children color the peach yellow and red. With older children have them copy the dot-to-dot outline of the word “Fruits”. Ask the children to draw a favorite way they like to be physically active on the page. If desired, collect the sheet for use in future fruit and vegetable units in *Grow It, Try It, Like It!*



Materials Needed

- Peach Muffin With Oatmeal Topping Recipe ingredients –see the Child Care Center version of this recipe on page 26
- Napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Prepare the recipe.
- Prepare table(s).

D2: Party With Peaches

The children taste a new peach recipe and talk about different ways to eat peaches.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Taste peaches in a combination food, Peach Muffins With Oatmeal Topping;
- Describe many different ways to eat peaches.

Before the Activity-Hand Washing and Polite Tasting

- Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet I, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).
- If necessary, remind the children about polite food tasting habits (see Booklet I, Tool Shed Resources, page 44 for details).





Activity Length:
10-15 minutes

The Activity

- Seat the children at the table(s).
- Ask the children to share what they remember learning about peaches.
- Encourage responses such as how and where a peach grows, how it looks, feels, smells, and tastes, and other material covered in the unit.
- Tell the children that the unit on peaches ends with a celebration of a new way to eat peaches. Peaches can be combined with other foods and eaten in many different ways.
- Show the children the Peach Muffins With Oatmeal Topping and talk about the foods in the recipe. If making a recipe as part of the activity, make it at this point.
- Serve the children Peach Muffins With Oatmeal Topping.
- As the children are eating, ask:
 - ▶ What peach recipes they have made with their parents?
 - ▶ What different ways have they eaten peaches?
 - ▶ What new ways do they think peaches could be eaten?
- Give suggestions such as peaches in fruit shakes, salads, desserts, cooked in main dishes with chicken or pork, served with cottage cheese, in muffins, or on top of French toast, pancakes, or waffles.

Words to Grow

Peach

Salad

Cottage Cheese

Fruit Shakes

Muffin

Topping



Peach Muffins with Oatmeal Topping

For the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Preparation Time: 15 minutes

Cooking Time: 25-30 minutes

Yield: 24 child-size portions of ½ full-size muffin or 1 mini-muffin

½ full-size muffin provides ½ slice of bread towards CACFP meal pattern

Muffin Batter

- ½ cup quick-cook oatmeal
- ½ cup enriched all-purpose flour
- ½ cup whole-wheat pastry flour
- ¼ tsp salt
- ½ Tbsp baking powder
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp ground nutmeg
- ¾ cup sugar
- 1 cup low-fat or fat-free plain yogurt
- 1 large egg
- 2 Tbsp canola oil
- ½ cup canned peaches (packed in water or juice), drained thoroughly and diced
- nonstick cooking spray

Oatmeal Topping:

- ¼ cup quick-cook oatmeal
- 1 Tbsp all-purpose flour
- 1 Tbsp sugar
- 1 Tbsp canola oil

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Make the topping; combine oatmeal, flour, sugar, and oil in small bowl and mix with fork.
3. Make muffin batter; in large bowl, mix the oatmeal, flour, salt, baking powder, cinnamon, nutmeg, and sugar.
4. In a separate bowl, mix yogurt, egg, and oil until smooth.
5. Add the yogurt mixture to the dry ingredients. Mix only until the ingredients are combined, about 1 minute. The batter will be slightly lumpy.
6. Gently stir in the diced peaches.
7. Spray a 12-muffin pan or 24-mini muffin pan with nonstick cooking spray.
8. Divide the batter evenly in the muffin pan, filling each cup about ¾ full.
9. Sprinkle oatmeal topping evenly over each muffin, about 1 teaspoon per muffin or ½ teaspoon per mini muffin.
10. Place muffin pan on a lower oven rack and bake for 25-30 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center of muffin comes out clean. Mini muffins will take less time; about 10-12 minutes.

Variations: Substitute whole-wheat pastry flour for all the flour (all-purpose and whole-wheat) listed in the recipe. Decrease sugar in batter to ½ cup and substitute 1 cup low-fat or fat-free peach flavored yogurt for plain.

Cooking with Children

Young children can:

- Wash hands first
- Stir dry ingredients with supervision
- Stir wet ingredients with some assistance
- Sprinkle topping on top of muffin batter

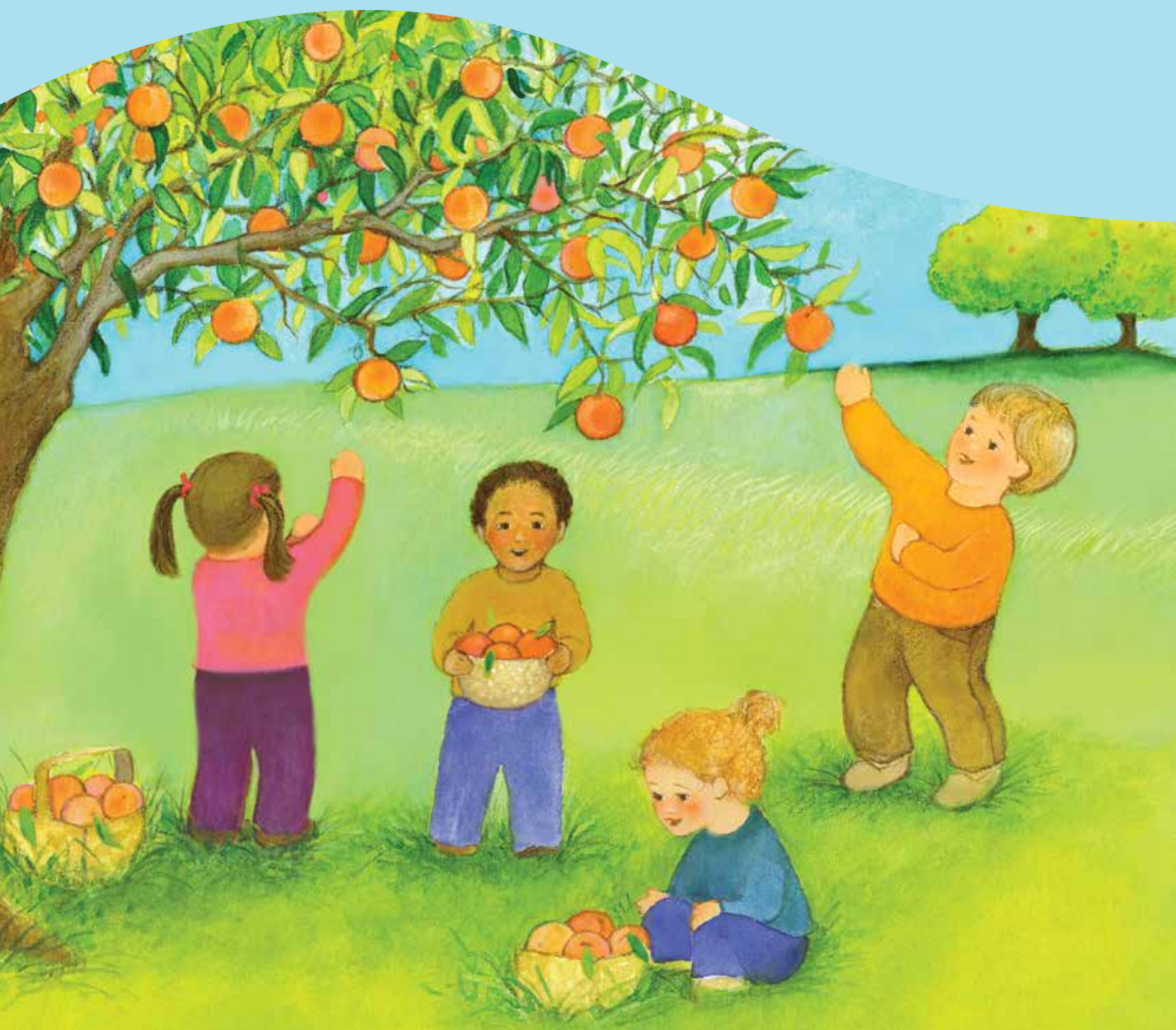
Adults should combine topping, combine dry and wet batter ingredients, prepare muffin tins, and do all steps involving the use of an oven.



Nutrients per 1 child-size portion of ½ full-size muffin: Calories 85, Protein 1.8 g, Carbohydrate 14.9 g, Total Fat 2.3 g, Saturated Fat 0.3 g, Cholesterol 9 mg, Vitamin A 41 IU, Vitamin C 0.3 mg, Iron 0.5 mg, Calcium 37.1 g, Sodium 64 mg, Dietary Fiber 0.8 g

Growing at Home Materials...

for Peach Tree Orchard Lessons



Peaches Ala Mode

Preparation Time: 5 minutes

Serves: 12 child-size portions of 1 half peach and 2 tablespoons yogurt

Serves: 6 adult-size portions of 1 whole peach and 4 tablespoons yogurt

- **6 medium fresh peaches (1½ lb)—washed, pitted, and sliced**
- **1½ cups low-fat or fat-free vanilla or peach yogurt**
- **2 Tbsp cinnamon (optional)**

1. Place slices of one peach in a serving dish for each adult serving. Use ½ sliced peach for each child portion.
2. Spoon 4 tablespoons of yogurt over top of slices for each adult serving. Use 2 tablespoons of yogurt for each child serving.
3. Sprinkle with cinnamon, if desired.
4. Serve immediately.

Variations: Substitute low-fat or fat-free versions of cottage cheese, frozen yogurt, or ice cream for the yogurt. Substitute well drained, canned peach slices (packed in water or juice) or frozen peach slices (thawed) for fresh peach slices.

Cooking with Children

Young children can:

- Wash hands first
- Help wash peaches in a colander
- Scoop yogurt or cottage cheese with a ¼-cup or tablespoon measure
- Sprinkle with cinnamon

Adults should use a sharp knife and cutting board to cut peaches in half, remove pit, and slice peaches.



Nutrients per 1 child-size serving of ½ peach and 2 tablespoons yogurt: Calories 50, Protein 1.8 g, Carbohydrate 10.5 g, Total Fat 0.5 g, Saturated Fat 0.22 g, Cholesterol 1 mg, Vitamin A 171 IU, Vitamin C 3.5 mg, Iron 0.14 mg, Calcium 50 mg, Sodium 18 mg, Dietary Fiber .8 g

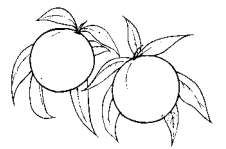
Peachy Picture Frame

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Find out what your child has learned about peaches while he/she makes a “peachy” picture frame. After your child colors the peaches bright yellow and red, cut the picture frame out along the thin dotted

outline. Cut out the box along the dashed line to create the photo opening. Fold the frame in half along the solid line and insert a favorite photo. Use tape or glue to seal the frame closed.

Fold on solid line



Cut along dotted lines for photo opening

Peach Cobbler

Preparation Time: 35 minutes

Cooking Time: 25-30 minutes

Serves: 12 child-size portions of $\frac{1}{12}$ of a 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -quart baking dish

Serves: 6 adult-size portions of $\frac{1}{6}$ of a 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -quart baking dish

- **1 29-ounce can of peach slices (packed in water or juice)**
- **$\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar**
- **$\frac{1}{2}$ cup whole-wheat flour**
- **$\frac{1}{2}$ cup enriched all-purpose flour**
- **$\frac{1}{3}$ cup quick-cook oatmeal**
- **2 tsp baking powder**
- **1 $\frac{1}{2}$ Tbsp canola oil**
- **$\frac{1}{2}$ cup low-fat or fat-free milk**
- **Nonstick cooking spray**

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Drain liquid from peach slices.
3. Spray an ovenproof 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -quart dish with non-stick spray. Add peach slices.
4. In a large mixing bowl, combine the flours, oatmeal, sugar, and baking powder. Mix well with a fork.
5. Add oil and low-fat or fat-free milk to dry ingredients and mix until smooth.
6. Drop the dough on top of peach slices by spoonfuls, covering peaches.
7. Bake in oven for about 30 minutes or until fruit bubbles and the topping is slightly brown.
8. Remove from oven. Let cool before serving. Serve warm and garnish with a small scoop of low-fat or fat-free vanilla frozen yogurt, if desired.

Variations: Use 3 cups of very ripe fresh or frozen (thawed) peach slices. Sprinkle slices with 1 tablespoon of sugar. Substitute whole-wheat pastry flour for all the flour (all-purpose and whole-wheat) in the recipe. Avoid fruits canned in heavy syrup; use fruits canned in water or juice.

Cooking with Children

Young children can:

- Wash hands first
- Help drain peach slices with a colander
- Sprinkle sugar over fresh or frozen peach slices
- Stir dry ingredients with supervision

Older children may be able to help drop spoonfuls of topping on peaches.

Adults should coat dish with non-stick spray, combine dry and wet ingredients, drop spoonfuls of topping, and do all steps involving the use of an oven.



Nutrients (using low-fat milk) per 1 child-size serving of $\frac{1}{12}$ of 1-quart baking dish: Calories 48, Protein 1.1 g, Carbohydrate 9, Total Fat 1.1 g, Saturated Fat .1 g, Cholesterol 0 mg, Vitamin A 120 IU, Vitamin C .7 mg, Iron 0.4 mg, Calcium 32 mg, Sodium 44 mg, Dietary Fiber 0.9g

Peaches Grow on Trees!

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Review what your child has learned about growing peaches. Read aloud the picture captions and help your child number the pictures in order from 1 to 5, showing the stages of growing peaches.

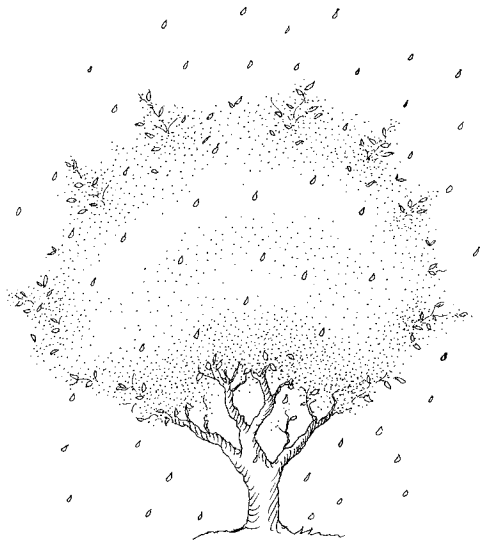
Then, have your child color the pictures. Later, cut the colored pictures apart and help your child glue the pictures on a piece of paper in the correct order.



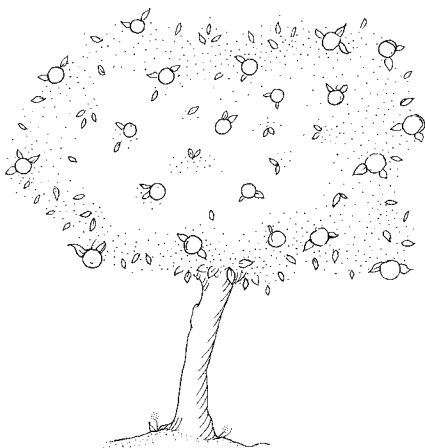
Planting a peach pit _____



Peach tree has blossoms _____



Rain on the peach tree _____



Peaches growing on a tree _____



Picking ripe peaches _____

Answers:

(1) Planting a peach pit; (2) Rain on the peach tree; (3) Peach tree has blossoms; (4) Peaches growing on a tree; (5) Picking ripe peaches

Peach Muffins with Oatmeal Topping

Preparation Time: 15 minutes

Cooking Time: 25-30 minutes

Serves: 24 child-size portions of ½ full-size muffin or 1 mini-muffin
½ full-size muffin provides ½ slice of bread towards CACFP meal pattern

Muffin Batter

- ½ cup quick-cook oatmeal
- ½ cup enriched all-purpose flour
- ½ cup whole-wheat pastry flour
- ¼ tsp salt
- ½ Tbsp baking powder
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp ground nutmeg

- ¾ cup sugar
- 1 cup low-fat or fat-free plain yogurt
- 1 large egg
- 2 Tbsp canola oil
- ½ cup canned peaches (packed in water or juice), drained thoroughly and diced
- Nonstick cooking spray

Oatmeal Topping:

- ¼ cup quick-cook oatmeal
- 1 Tbsp all-purpose flour
- 1 Tbsp sugar
- 1 Tbsp canola oil

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Make the topping; combine oatmeal, flour, sugar, and oil in small bowl and mix with fork.
3. Make muffin batter; in large bowl, mix the oatmeal, flour, salt, baking powder, cinnamon, nutmeg, and sugar.
4. In a separate bowl, mix yogurt, egg, and oil until smooth.
5. Add the yogurt mixture to the dry ingredients. Mix only until the ingredients are combined, about 1 minute. The batter will be slightly lumpy.
6. Gently stir in the diced peaches.
7. Spray a 12-muffin pan or 24-mini muffin pan with nonstick cooking spray.
8. Divide the batter evenly in the muffin pan, filling each cup about ¾ full.
9. Sprinkle oatmeal topping evenly over each muffin, about 1 teaspoon per muffin or ½ teaspoon per mini muffin.
10. Place muffin pan on a lower oven rack and bake for 25-30 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center of muffin comes out clean. Mini muffins will take less time; about 10-12 minutes.

Variations: Substitute whole-wheat pastry flour for all the flour (all-purpose and whole-wheat) listed in the recipe. Decrease sugar in batter to ½ cup and substitute 1 cup low-fat or fat-free peach flavored yogurt for plain.

Cooking with Children

Young children can:

- Wash hands first
- Stir dry ingredients with supervision
- Stir wet ingredients with some assistance
- Sprinkle topping on top of muffin batter

Adults should combine topping, combine dry and wet batter ingredients, prepare muffin tins, and do all steps involving the use of an oven.



Nutrients per 1 child-size portion of ½ full-size muffin: Calories 85, Protein 1.8 g, Carbohydrate 14.9 g, Total Fat 2.3 g, Saturated Fat 0.3 g, Cholesterol 9 mg, Vitamin A 41 IU, Vitamin C 0.3 mg, Iron 0.5 mg, Calcium 37.1 g, Sodium 64 mg, Dietary Fiber 0.8 g

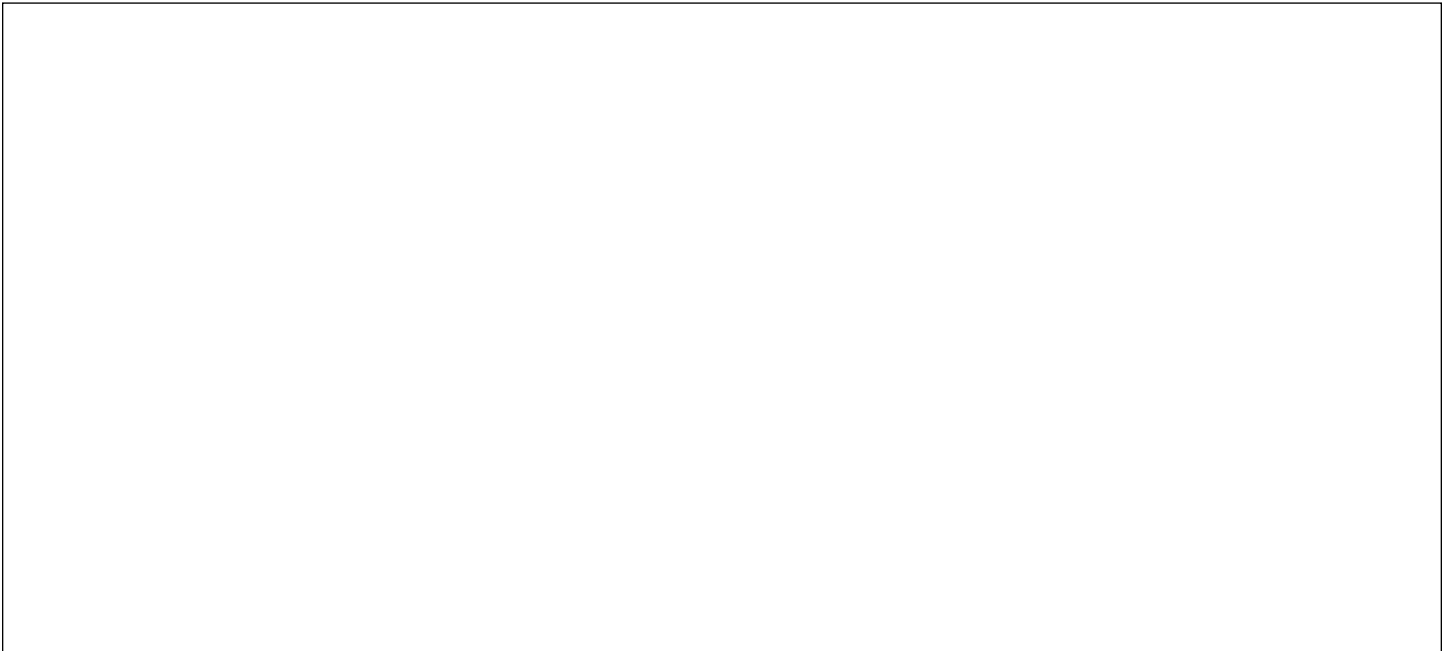
Peaches Taste Good...Any Way You Eat Them!

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Help your child make up a new recipe using peaches. Have your child draw a picture of the recipe in the top box. You can write the recipe name next to the picture. As your child tells you, list all the ingredients

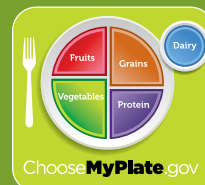
first and the steps next on the lines below. If possible, make the recipe! A cookbook might help you find something similar to try.

Help your child create and draw a picture of the recipe in the box below.



Ingredients _____

How to make _____



United States Department of Agriculture • Food and Nutrition Service
Find more fun resources at these Web sites:

teammnutrition.usda.gov
choosemyplate.gov

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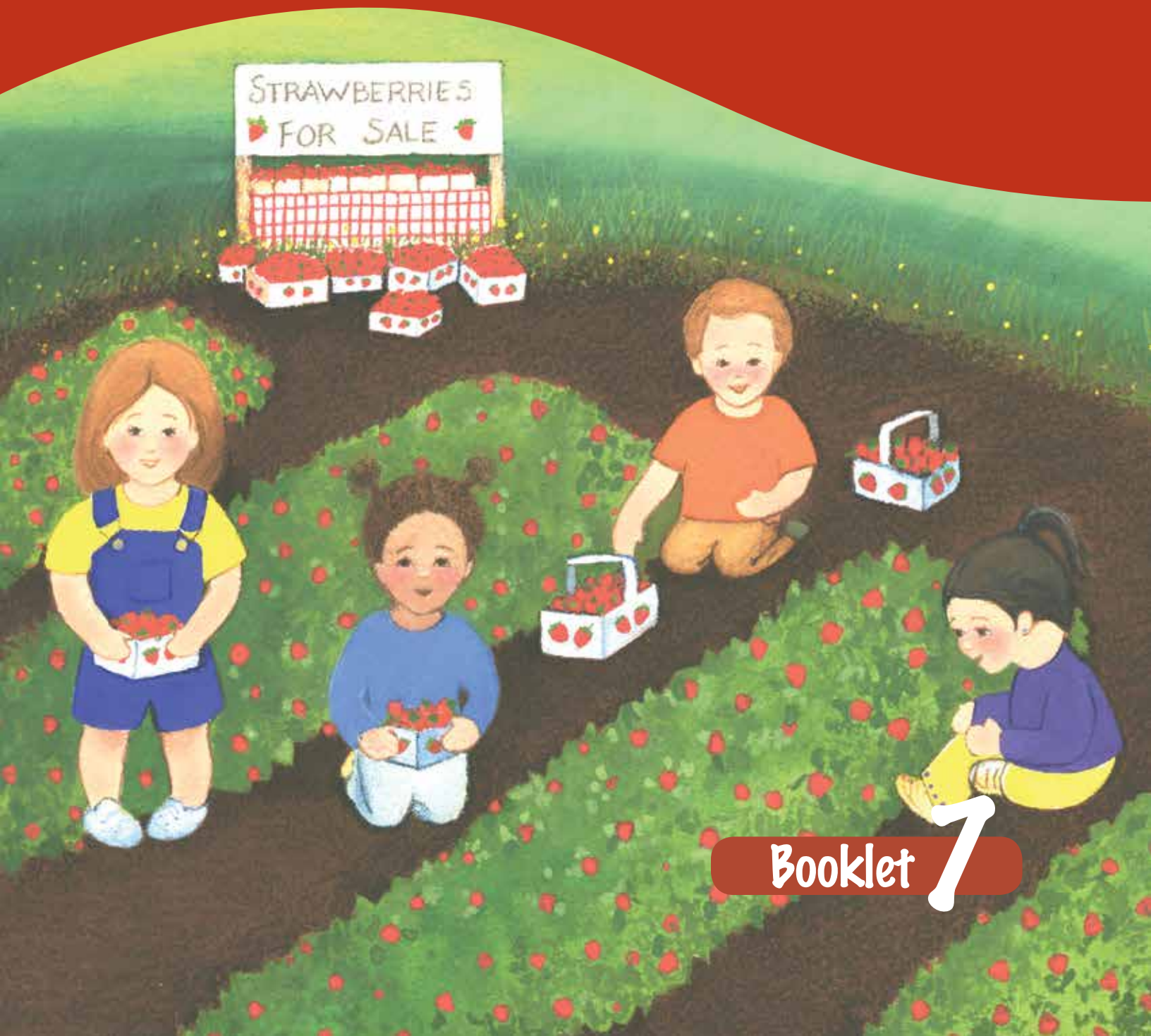
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Grow It, Try It, Like It!

Preschool Fun With Fruits and Vegetables

The Strawberry Patch



Booklet

7

Welcome to...

The Strawberry Patch at Tasty Acres Farm!

Red, ripe, sweet, juicy strawberries are sure to delight young children. Youngsters learn about these flavorful fruits in the Strawberry Patch at Tasty Acres Farm. Children explore and discover for themselves how a strawberry looks, feels, tastes, and smells. After all that, who can resist a taste, or two? Children help with hands-on growing activities. They learn strawberries come from seeds and plants before appearing in baskets at the market. Children taste and enjoy strawberries in many different ways. Trying new foods broadens children's food choices. Growing at Home materials are home activities that sprout from the day's lessons. These recipes and activities extend the lessons for more at-home learning.

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A Plan for Organizing the Strawberry Patch Activities

Check with local farms and farmers' markets to find out when strawberries are in peak season. Strawberries are easy to pick and make a great farm field trip for preschoolers. If a farm is not nearby, have the children visit a produce stand or farmers' market to see fresh strawberries.



Most activities require only 10-15 minutes; pick a few for each day. In this example, all of the activities from the lesson plans are completed, but spaced out over a 5-day period.

The Strawberry Patch lesson plans are designed to be used in their entirety but if your center does not have the time, space, or resources to do all the activities, select those best suited to your center's environment and available resources from Section A: hands-on activities, Section B: planting activities, Section C: strawberry stories and songs, and Section D: nutrition education activities. Be sure that the activities you choose help the children meet the objectives listed at the beginning of each lesson plan section.

Here is one way to arrange the activities in your Strawberry Patch. Most activities require only 10-15 minutes; pick a few for each day. In this example, all of the activities from the lesson plans are completed, but spaced out over a 5-day period. Additionally, two activities from the Garden Art and Crafts Section in Booklet 1 are added. These activities are fun and useful ways to help reinforce the objectives of each activity. On page 19, it gives tips for creating successful projects and ideas for harvesting fun month after month. The Garden Art and Crafts chart connects the art and crafts to the lesson activities.

Planning Chart for Strawberry Patch Activities

Day One	Day Two	Day Three	Day Four	Day Five
A1 What's This? It's "Berry" Mysterious Hands-on Activity 	C1 Cool Puppy Pup Video	B1 Strawberries Start as Seeds Planting Activity 	B2 Make a Pretend Strawberry Patch Planting Activity	D1 Meet Strawberry's Fruity Friends Nutrition Education Activity
A2 Strawberries A Look Inside Hands-on Activity	A3 Strawberry Pizzas Hands-on Activity	B3 Plant a Strawberry Jar Planting Activity 	C3 Old MacDonald Had a Farm Song, Strawberry Style	D2 Serving Up... Strawberries Nutrition Education Activity 
Garden Craft Painted Pots 	Finish Painted Pots or select another Garden Art or Craft	C3 Old MacDonald Had a Farm Song, Strawberry Style	Garden Art Produce Placemat 	Finish Art
Send Home Growing at Home Materials #1	C2 Reading Activity	Send Home Growing at Home Materials #2	C2 Reading Activity 	Send Home Growing at Home Materials #3

Revisit the Farm: Rainy Day Fun All Year Long

When the weather changes your outdoor plans, the activities from Tasty Acres Farm provide a welcome opportunity to revisit and remember all the fun and flavor of *Grow It, Try It, Like It!* Sing the songs, watch the video segments, and use the Garden Art and Crafts Section in Booklet I for ideas. Make a rainy day one to reconnect with these fruits and vegetables.

More Ways To Grow – The Strawberry Patch unit can be included in other areas of the curriculum. Complementary themes include:

Foods – Fruits **Shapes** – Heart **Colors** – Red **Seasons** – Spring, Summer **Body** – Senses **Opposites** – Inside & Outside **Plants** – Berry, Flower, Seed **Alphabet** – S Words



A. Getting to Know...Strawberries

Hands-On Activities

Materials Needed

- Fresh strawberries with green leaves attached
- Napkins
- Mystery Box/Bag
- Paper and Pencil
- Marble

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Wash, dry, and reserve at least one strawberry per child; keep berries out of sight.
- Put a clean strawberry in the Mystery Box/Bag.
- Make copies of Strawberry Growing at Home #1—one set per child.
- Review Make a Mystery Box or Bag. (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 45).

Growing at Home Introduction Letter and Hand Washing and Polite Tasting Guidelines: Send a copy of these resources home before starting the first unit in *Grow It, Try It, Like It!* If you have already sent these resources home, you may omit this step. (See Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, pages 42-44.)

Strawberry Growing at Home #1: Send a copy of this resource home with each child at the start of Section A activities.

A1: “What’s This?” It’s “Berry” Mysterious

Use the Mystery Box/Bag to create interest by having the children feel the outside of a strawberry before revealing the “mystery” item to all.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Understand a strawberry is a lightweight, heart-shaped red fruit with a cap of green leaves;
- Describe the outside appearance and smell of a strawberry.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing and Polite Tasting

- Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).
- If this is the first activity involving food tasting, talk with the children about polite food tasting habits (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 44 for details).



Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Introduce the Mystery Box/Bag, or reintroduce it if you have used it before.
- One at a time, ask each child to come and feel inside without looking. If a child seems afraid, feel inside the box/bag with the child.
- Ask each child to describe quietly to you what he/she feels.
- After everyone has guessed, reveal the strawberry. Give each child a strawberry on a napkin to look at, touch, and smell.
- Note the children's guesses that were close (round, a berry, food) or correct (strawberry).
- Talk about the strawberry. Ask the questions below and any other questions you like.
 - ▶ Is a strawberry a fruit or a vegetable? (Fruit)
 - ▶ What shape is it? (Shaped like a heart)
 - ▶ What color is the cap of leaves? (Green)
 - ▶ How do the seeds on the outside of it feel? (Rough like sand in the sand box)
 - ▶ Does it have a smell? (May have no smell or smell sweet like a flower)
 - ▶ Is it light or heavy? (Light like a marble; let the children feel a marble)
 - ▶ Has anyone ever tasted a strawberry? (Yes or No)

Words To Grow

Fruit	Heart
Light (weight)	Rough
Seeds	Sweet
Strawberry	

Activity Conclusion—Tasting

- Conclude the lesson by inviting the children to taste the prepared strawberries.
- As necessary, remind the children about polite tasting manners.



A2: Strawberries...A Look Inside

Engage all the senses! The children see and feel the inside of a strawberry, then smell and taste it.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Describe the appearance, smell, and taste of a strawberry;
- Tell that all of the strawberry can be eaten except the stem and leaves.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing

- Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).

Materials Needed

- Strawberries, one for each child
- Sharp knife
- Cutting board or surface
- Paper plates and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Wash and gently dry the strawberries.
- Assemble supplies in a central area; keep the knife in a safe place until ready to use.





Activity Length:
10 minutes

The Activity

- Have the children gather around the strawberries and cutting board. Review with the children how to be safe around sharp knives: Only adults use them, children keep their hands away, and do not touch sharp knives.
- Review what was learned about a strawberry in Activity A1. If you didn't do Activity A1, tell the children you have a strawberry to share today.
- Tell the children because strawberries grow on the ground, we wash them well to remove soil and germs before we cut them. Tell the children you have already washed the strawberries.
- Cut a strawberry in half, place on a paper plate, and give to each child. Look at the inside of the strawberry with the children. Ask the questions below and any other questions you like.
 - ▶ What color is the inside of the strawberry? (Red)
 - ▶ What does the inside of the strawberry look like? (Red)
 - ▶ How does the inside feel? (Cool and smooth)
 - ▶ How do the strawberries smell? (Sweet)

Words To Grow

Red	Smooth
Sweet	Cool
Juicy	

Tasting Activity

- After exploring the strawberry, invite the children to taste it.
- Explain that all of the strawberry can be eaten except the stem and leaves.
- Continue the activity, asking:
 - ▶ How does the strawberry feel in their mouth? (Smooth and juicy, seed side may feel rough)
 - ▶ How does the strawberry taste? (Sweet)



Materials Needed

- Graham cracker squares, one for each child
- Strawberry-flavored cream cheese
- Strawberry slices
- Paper plates and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Spread cream cheese on graham cracker squares.
- Wash, remove the green leaves, and slice strawberries.

A3: Strawberry Pizzas

Children make a simple strawberry pizza snack and explore how strawberries feel, smell, and taste.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Make a simple snack with the strawberries;
- Taste a new food featuring strawberries.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing

- Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).





Activity Length:
10 minutes

The Activity

- Have each child seated at the table(s).
- Explain that we always wash strawberries under running water before they are eaten. Tell the children you have already washed the strawberries.
- Give each child a paper plate with a cream cheese topped graham cracker. Let each child select several slices of strawberry with a spoon or fork.
- Show the children how to layer the strawberry slices on the cream cheese to make a pizza.
- As the children eat their strawberry pizzas, have them describe how the strawberry:
 - ▶ Smells (sweet),
 - ▶ Feels in the mouth (cool, smooth and somewhat crunchy because of the seeds), and
 - ▶ Tastes (juicy and sweet).

Words To Grow

Slice	Smooth
Sweet	Cool
Juicy	Crunchy





B. Strawberry... Where Do You Come From? Planting Activities

Strawberry Growing at Home #2: Send a copy of this resource home with each child at the start of Section B activities.

Materials Needed

- A packet of strawberry seeds or one fresh strawberry per child
- Clear plastic cup
- Child-size magnifying glasses
- Ruler
- Drawings of strawberries (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, pages 71-72)
- Strawberry jam and crackers for tasting

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Prepare tasting supplies.
- Assemble materials.
- Make copies of Strawberry Growing at Home #2—one set per child.

B1: Strawberries Start as Seeds

The children see and touch strawberry seeds and learn what seeds need to grow into plants.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Describe how strawberries grow from a seed into a plant that produces strawberries;
- Describe the resources needed to grow strawberries.





Activity Length:
10 minutes

The Activity

- Tell the children that today they will learn about how strawberries grow. Show the children the strawberry seeds on the strawberry or in the packet. If using seeds from a packet, tell the children the seeds are just like the ones from the outside of the strawberry. Pass the seeds around in a clear plastic cup (strawberry seeds are little).
- Let the children touch the seeds and look at them through the magnifying glass.
- Explain how the strawberry seeds grow in the soil. The sun and water help them grow into plants. Strawberry plants are planted at least 12 inches apart—check the back of the seed packet for variations in this spacing. Show this length with the ruler.
- White flowers bloom on the stems of strawberry plants. Where the flowers bloom, strawberries will grow. Show drawings of strawberries on strawberry plants. Check the back of the seed packet for the length of growing time.
- Explain that strawberries are picked when they are plump, shiny, and bright red. Show drawing of ripe strawberries in a field.
- The farmer picks and sends ripe strawberries to a grocery store or a farmers' market. That is where people buy strawberries and take them home to eat. Show drawing of strawberries at a farmers' market.
- Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).
- Serve crackers with a small amount of strawberry jam. While eating, explain that since strawberries all become ripe at the same time of year, people have found ways to keep strawberries for use year around. One of those ways is to make jam from the strawberries. Ask the children how the jam is different from the fresh strawberries they have eaten.

Words To Grow

Seeds	Soil
Sun	Water
Space	Plants
Magnify	



Green Thumb Guide

Read a book about how plants grow before starting the activity. See a Harvest of Books for ideas (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 50).



Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Strawberry Plant Produce

Placemat: Have the children add drawings of their favorite strawberry recipes. Laminate and use this placemat to review how strawberries grow and how we enjoy strawberries (see Booklet 1, Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 29).

Materials Needed

- Brown piece of paper, about 5 by 4 feet in size
- Strawberry Plant Parts Blackline Master (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 82)
- Drawings of strawberries (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, pages 71-72)
- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils (green, yellow, and red)
- Blunt tip scissors
- Glue, glue sticks, or double-stick tape

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Post the brown paper in an easy-to-reach place.
- Make one copy of the Strawberry Plant Parts Blackline Master for each child.
- Organize the supplies at the table(s).
- Plan to serve strawberry sauce (see Strawberry Sauce Recipe, page 34) or strawberries in some form at snack or mealtime (see Ten Terrific Ways...Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 48).

B2: Make a Pretend Strawberry Patch

The children make a pretend strawberry patch and learn the parts of the plant.

Note: If desired, make this a week-long activity. Day One, put up the plants; Day Two, add the blossoms to the plants; Day Three, add the buds to the plants; Day Four, put the small strawberries on the plants; and Day Five put the large ripe strawberries on the plants. Each day have the children notice how the strawberries are growing in size. 'Harvest' the strawberries from the plant at the end of the week.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Describe how strawberries grow from a seed into a plant that produces strawberries;
- Experience making a pretend strawberry patch.

Optional Activity: Visit a local strawberry farm during berry picking season. Pick strawberries with the children.





Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Have each child seated at the table(s), near the supplies.
- Review with the children that strawberries grow from seeds planted in the ground. The seeds need the soil, rain, sun, and time to grow into a strawberry plant.
- When the plant is big enough, flowers called blossoms grow on the plant. The blossoms fall away and buds grow where the flowers were. The strawberry buds grow into strawberries and start to turn from green to red. The strawberries are ripe and ready to pick when they are red and shiny from top to tip. The farmer picks and sends the strawberries to stores or farmers' markets. That is where we buy strawberries to take home to eat.
- Tell the children that each of them is going to make a pretend strawberry plant. Then the class is going to make a pretend strawberry patch with all the plants.
- Show the children drawing of strawberries. Ask the children to color the parts of the strawberry plant on their sheet just like the drawing. The leaves are green, the blossoms are yellow and white, the buds are green, the small unripe berries are red at the tip and white at the stem, and the large ripe strawberries are red. Help any children who need assistance.
- Help the children cut out, or cut for them, the colored strawberry parts. As each part of the strawberry plant is glued or taped to the plant, talk about how the plant grows strawberries. Explain that plants can have each different part at the same time because a plant can make many strawberries.
- Glue or tape the plants on the brown paper to make a strawberry patch.
- Ask the children to wash their hands for snack or mealtime.

Words To Grow

Blossom	Bud
Leaves	Plant
Ripe	Strawberry



Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Garden Row Marker: Have the children create a row marker for strawberry plants. If they don't have a garden they can use it as a yard decoration or give it as a gift to someone who has a garden (see Booklet I, Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 33).

Activity Connection to Snack or Mealtime

While eating strawberry sauce (over pudding, yogurt, pancakes, or waffles) at snack or mealtime, talk about how the strawberries grow.



B3: Plant a Strawberry Jar

The children plant strawberry starts in a container and find out what these small plants need to grow and produce strawberries. (See Booklet 1, Garden Art and Crafts Section, Painted Pots for great container decoration ideas, page 35.)

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Describe the resources needed to grow strawberries;
- Experience planting a strawberry start.

Materials Needed

- A strawberry jar (urn-shaped container with openings or pockets on sides) or
- A container at least 8" deep and 8-10" in diameter
- Ever-bearing strawberry starts (small plants)
- Potting soil
- Garden hose with sprinkler nozzle or watering can

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Check local nurseries for varieties of ever-bearing strawberries suited to your growing zone.
- Assemble the pot, potting soil, and water source outside.
- Determine the best spot to place the pot; large pots filled with soil and plants are heavy to move.
- Plan to serve strawberries in some form at snack or mealtime (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, Ten Terrific Ways..., page 48).





Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Take the children and the strawberry starts outside. Explain that today they will plant small strawberry plants or starts in a soil-filled container.
- Point to the sun. Ask the children how the sunlight feels on their skin. (Warm)
- Explain that the light and warmth of the sun helps strawberry plants grow large enough to produce strawberries.
- Show the children the potting soil. Let them touch the soil. Ask them how the soil feels. (Wet or dry, hard or soft) Explain that strawberry plants grow in soil. Have the children help scoop soil into the container.
- Run some water from a hose or pour some from a container and let the children touch it. Ask how it feels. (Wet) Explain that water helps plants grow. Explain that water for plants usually comes as rain. Juicy foods like strawberry need lots of water so farmers' and gardeners will use sprinklers or watering cans in addition to rain to make sure plants have plenty of water.
- Follow the planting tips for the variety of strawberries purchased.
- **For strawberry jar:**
 - ▶ Layer potting soil level to the first openings of the jar. Gently remove the plants from their pots and ease through the pocket opening. Spread the roots with care and cover with soil. Water enough to moisten soil but not drench. Continue, ending with 3 starts planted in the top center of the pot. Water the plants.
- **For a container:**
 - ▶ Fill the container $\frac{2}{3}$ full of potting soil. Remove the start from its pot and gently loosen roots. Place the start in the center of a single container or 8 inches apart in larger containers. Cover with soil and water to moisten but not drench.
- **Planting Option:**

If space allows, plant strawberry starts in a sunny garden spot.



Green Thumb Guide

(see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, Green Thumb Guide, Container Gardens, page 55) Check with a local nursery for varieties of strawberries that thrive in your area. Ever-bearing strawberries produce berries all spring and summer. Ask for types that grow well in containers. For a strawberry pot, purchase one plant per pocket plus three for the top opening. Purchase one plant for a container 8-10" in diameter. For larger containers, allow 8 inches between plants. Strawberry plants in containers will live for one season. Strawberries planted in garden spots will return the next year. Birds love strawberries too! You may need to cover your plants with special net covers to prevent the birds from eating the berries before you do.

Activity Connection to Snack or Mealtime

Talk about planting the strawberries while eating strawberries at snack or mealtime.



C. Strawberry Stories and Songs

C1: Cool Puppy Pup's Strawberry Lunch Party Video

View Cool Puppy Pup's Strawberry Lunch Party segment with the children. Discuss the strawberry facts covered in this delightful video and have them try Cool Puppy Pup's favorite way to eat a strawberry.

Objective

The children will be able to describe how strawberries are grown, harvested, and eaten.

Materials Needed

- Cool Puppy Pup DVD
- TV and DVD player
- Fresh strawberries, at least one per child
- Plates and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Cue the DVD to start at the Strawberry segment.
- Wash and gently dry strawberries.





Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Gather the children and watch the Strawberry segment of the video.
- After viewing the segment, ask the children to name their favorite parts of the video. Use their responses to lead into a discussion about the video. During the discussion, include the questions below to review Cool Puppy Pup's main points from the video segment.
- In the video, did Cool Puppy Pup say:
 - ▶ Strawberry was a fruit or a vegetable? (Fruit)
 - ▶ What shape is strawberry? (Heart shape)
 - ▶ What color is the leaf cap on top? (Green)
 - ▶ What color is the outside of a strawberry? (Red with seeds)
 - ▶ How do the seeds make it feel? (Rough)
 - ▶ What color is the inside of strawberry? (Red)
 - ▶ What does the inside of the strawberry feel like? (Smooth)
- At Tasty Acres Farm, the farmer talked about how strawberries grow.
 - ▶ Where do strawberries grow? (In the soil, on a farm)
 - ▶ Do strawberries grow on plants above or below the ground? (Above the ground)
 - ▶ Are the plants close to or far from the ground? (Close)
 - ▶ What do strawberries look like when they are ready to pick? (Plump, shiny, and bright red)
 - ▶ Where are strawberries shipped after they are picked? (To stores and farmers' markets)
- Have the children name some of the ways that strawberries can be eaten. (On waffles, in a salad, as a dessert, etc.)
- Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43 for directions).
- Conclude the activity by telling the children they are going to eat fresh strawberries, Cool Puppy Pup's personal favorite way.
- Serve the strawberries.



Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Tasty Acres Mobile: Have the children make a mobile of fruit and vegetable images (see Booklet 1, Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 31).



C2: Reading Activity

Read story books to the children that are about or include the activities of growing and/or eating fruits and vegetables. Listening to such stories can encourage children to adopt positive behaviors that can last a lifetime, like trying new fruits and vegetables.

Objective

Children will describe the fun and interesting stories about fruits and/or vegetables that were read to them.

Materials Needed

- Books from a library or purchased books
- Space for the children to sit

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Clear a space for the children to sit around you.
- Choose a book from the Harvest of Books list (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 50).
- Select a book you would like to read and either borrow it from a library or purchase it.
- Use books relevant to fruits and vegetables that may already be available to you.





Activity Length:
10 to 20 minutes
depending on the
length of the book

The Activity

- Have the children sit around you as you read them the book.
- Ask the children to listen for the names of fruits and vegetables as the story is read.

Discussion Questions:

- After reading the story, ask the children which fruits and vegetables were named in the story and what happened to them. For example,
 - ▶ Where were the fruits and vegetables grown?
 - ▶ What happened to the fruits and vegetables after they were picked?
 - ▶ Who ate the fruits and vegetables?

Add other questions that relate to the story.





C3: Old MacDonald Had a Farm, Strawberry Style

The children sing about growing and eating strawberries and act out motions to this familiar tune.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Sing and act out motions to familiar tune;
- Say that being physically active helps us feel good.



Activity Length:
10 minutes

Materials Needed

- Strawberries lyrics to tune “Old MacDonald Had a Farm”
- Large space for the children to move about

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Become familiar with the words and motions of the song.

The Activity

- Lead the children in singing these new words to the tune “Old MacDonald Had a Farm” and demonstrate the suggested motions or make up new ones.
- Encourage the children to move about as they are singing.
- Explain that skipping, wiggling, stretching, running, jumping, and playing actively every day helps us to feel good and stay healthy.



Old MacDonald Had a Farm, Strawberry Style

The children sing about growing and eating strawberries and act out motions to this familiar tune.

1st Verse

Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!
On this farm he grew some strawberries, EIEIO!
With a plant, plant here and plant, plant there,
Here a plant, there a plant, everywhere
a strawberry plant!
Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!

2nd Verse

Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!
On this farm he grew some strawberries, EIEIO!
With a berry, berry here and a berry, berry there,
Here a berry, there a berry, everywhere a strawberry
Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!

3rd Verse

Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!
On this farm he grew some strawberries, EIEIO!
With a pick, pick here, and a pick, pick there,
Here a pick, there a pick, everywhere a strawberry pick
Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!

4th Verse

Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!
On this farm he grew some strawberries, EIEIO!
With a sweet bite here, and a sweet bite there,
Here a bite, there a bite, everywhere a strawberry bite.
Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!

(Skip in place)

(Pretend to hoe ground around plants
using large, vigorous motions)

(Pretend to hoe ground around plants
using large, vigorous motions)

(Skip in place)

(Skip in place)

(Pretend to carry a flat of strawberries)

(Squat to the ground and pretend to point
at strawberries)

(Skip in place)

(Skip in place)

(Pretend to carry a flat of strawberries)

(Pretend to pick and carry strawberries)

(Skip in place)

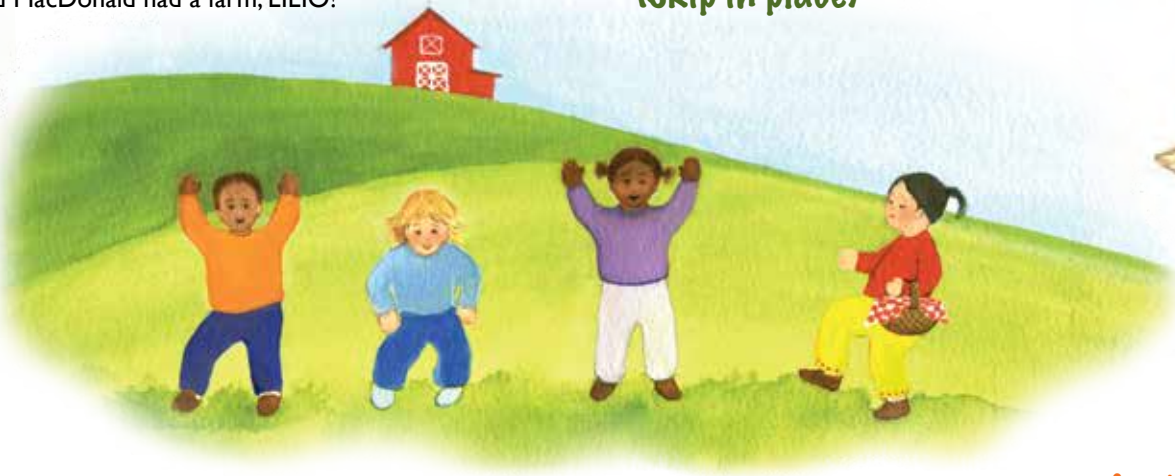
(Skip in place)

(Pretend to carry a flat of strawberries)

(Pretend to eat strawberries)

(Pretend to eat strawberries)

(Skip in place)





D. Introducing MyPlate Nutrition Education Activities

Materials Needed

- *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster (see Booklet 1)
- Strawberries and raspberries (fresh or frozen), one per child
- Small cups and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Review the foods and activities depicted on the poster.
- Display the poster.
- Add a drawing or illustration of raspberries to the Fruits group of the poster.
- Wash and gently dry fresh berries or thaw frozen berries.
- Place a strawberry and a raspberry into a small cup for each child.
- Make copies of *MyPlate* coloring page (new or use copies from previous D1 Activity), one per child.
- Copy *Strawberry Growing at Home #3*—one set per child.

Strawberry Growing at Home #3: Send a copy of this resource home with each child at the start of Section D activities.

D1: Meet Strawberry's Fruity Friends

Introduce the children to the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster. The children find strawberries and other fruit in the Fruits group. They taste the difference between strawberries and raspberries.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Say that strawberries are found in the Fruits group
- Say that eating fruits like strawberries help keep us healthy;
- Compare strawberries to raspberries;
- Say that being physically active every day helps us feel good and is fun;
- Say that eating foods from the different food groups each day helps us grow and be healthy;
- Identify a food from each of the five foods groups.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing and Polite Tasting

- Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).
- If necessary, remind the children about polite food tasting habits (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 44 for details).



Activity Length:
25 minutes; 30 minutes
if optional coloring
activity conducted

The Activity

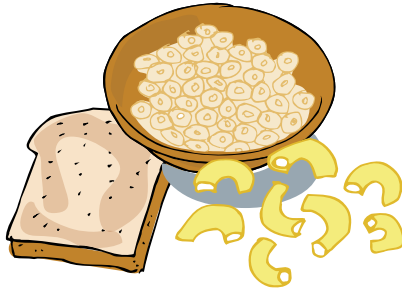
Learning the Food Groups of MyPlate for Preschoolers

- Seat the children in a semicircle on the floor in view of the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster.
- Tell the children today they are going to learn about ways to be healthy and have fun every day. Tell the children that the best part is they like to do what helps them be healthy: they like to eat a variety of foods and they like to play.
- Point out the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster to the children. Ask the children to tell you what they see on the poster. Accept all correct answers, such as food, specific foods by name, children playing, and specific activities by name, etc.
- Explain that MyPlate shows the five food groups a person should eat from each day. Each food group has its own color: The Fruit Group is red, the Vegetable Group is green, the Grains Group is orange, the Dairy Group is blue, and the Protein Foods Group is purple. Eating foods from each food group helps us to be healthy and grow.

This activity continues on the following pages.



Grains



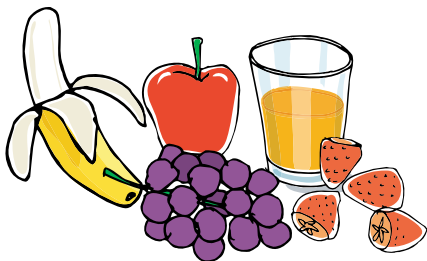
- Point to the orange band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (orange). Tell the children that foods made from grains are in the Grains group represented by the orange color band. Point to the bread and the cereal in the Grains group on the orange band of the poster and state that bread and cereal give us energy to play. Ask two children to come to the poster, point to a food in the orange section, and name the food. After each child names a food, repeat the name of the food, and state that _____ (the food named) and other foods from the Grains group also give us energy to play.
- Children this age may not know what a grain is. Tell them grains come from plants such as wheat, oats, and corn. Grains are used to make foods like cereal, bread, and pasta.

Vegetables



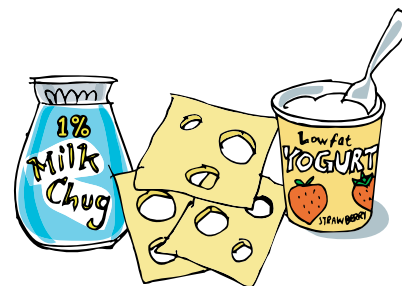
- Point to the green band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (green). Tell the children that foods from plants called vegetables are in the Vegetables group represented by the green color band. Point to the sweet potatoes in the Vegetables group on the green band of the poster and state that vegetables such as sweet potatoes and spinach help keep us healthy. Ask two children to come to the poster, point to a vegetable on the green section, and name the vegetable. After each child names a vegetable, repeat the name of the vegetable and state that _____ (the vegetable named) and other foods from the Vegetables group also help keep us healthy.

Fruits

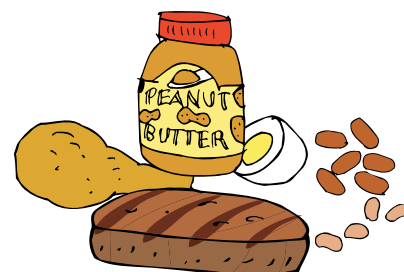


- Point to the red band and ask the children to name the color of the band (red). Tell the children that foods from plants called fruits are in the Fruits group represented by the red color band. Point to the peach and strawberry in the Fruits group on the red band of the poster and state that fruits such as peaches and strawberries help keep us healthy. Ask two children to come to the poster, point to a fruit in the red section, and name the fruit. After each child names a fruit, repeat the name of the fruit, and state that _____ (the fruit named) and other foods from the Fruits group help keep us healthy.

- Point to the blue band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (blue). Tell the children that milk and foods made from milk are in the Dairy group represented by the blue color band. Point to the milk and yogurt in the Dairy group on the blue band and state that milk and yogurt help us build strong bones. Tell the children that it is good to choose low-fat and fat-free milk, yogurt, and cheese when given a choice. Ask two children to come to the poster, point out a food in the blue section, and name the food. After each child names a food, repeat the name of the food, and state that _____ (the food named) and other foods from the Dairy group also help us build strong bones.



- Point to the purple band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (purple). Tell the children that foods from animals and some plants are in the Protein Foods group represented by the purple color band. Point to the meat, fish, egg, beans and peanut butter in the Protein Foods group below the purple band and state that they help our muscles grow. Ask two children to come to the poster, point out a food in the purple section, and name the food. After each child names a food, repeat the name of the food, and state that _____ (the food named) and other foods from the Protein Foods group also help our muscles grow. (Note: if only foods that come from animals are selected, point out a food from plants and name it. If only foods from plants are selected, point out a food that comes from animals and name it.)





Review Activity

- While the children are still seated, point to each food group color band on the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster.
- Ask the children to name the food group each color represents and to name a food from that group.

- **Orange** – Grains group
- **Green** – Vegetables group
- **Red** – Fruits group
- **Blue** – Dairy group
- **Purple** – Protein Foods group

Tasting Activity

- Show the children the fresh (or frozen, thawed) strawberry and raspberry.
- Tell the children that raspberries are similar to strawberries, but different in shape.
- Give each child a cup with samples of each berry to taste. Invite the children to feel and smell the different berries. Note both are juicy and taste sweet.
- Ask the children to name different ways to eat red fruits like strawberries or raspberries at different meals and snacks. Accept all answers such as on cereal, in fruit or vegetable salads, plain or with yogurt, etc.

Be Active–Berry Bounce

Note to Caregiver: Active play and movement are important for every child's growth and development. Although they may seem to be active and energetic, most children do not get the amount of physical activity they need for good health. Child care programs should provide opportunities for young children (2 to 6 years of age) to engage in 90 to 120 minutes (1 ½ to 2 hours) of moderate to vigorous physical activity each day.

Several short periods of activity (10-20 minutes each) work well for young children and are easy to plan into the day. Examples of moderate to vigorous physical activity that kids this age enjoy include: playing on outdoor play equipment, dancing to music, taking a nature (or garden) walk, relay races, movement games, hopping, skipping, galloping, and riding a tricycle or bicycle. For additional information on physical activity for young children, refer to the Nutrition and Wellness Tips for Young Children: Provider Handbook for the Child and Adult Care Food Program at <http://teamnnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/nutritionandwellness.html>.

- Point to the various activities depicted on the *Eat Smart To Play Hard With MyPlate* poster. Ask the children to tell you why it is important to be physically active and play every day, i.e., it helps you to be strong and healthy, and is fun. Tell the children that today they will learn to be physically active in a way that reminds them of the strawberry and raspberry they just tasted.
- Ask the children to extend their arms out to the side and spread apart from each other so that no child is able to easily touch another child's fingers. When children are spaced around the room, ask them to lower their arms and listen carefully. Ask the children to think about the strawberry and raspberry they just tasted. Ask the children to decide silently which berry they liked best today. Tell the children that after you count to 3, they will bounce in place like their favorite berry using one of two motions (demonstrate each motion).
- Strawberry: Place the arms, crossed at the wrists, on the top of the head with the hands extended out like little green leaf caps.
- Raspberry: Place each hand, palm side down, on the top of the opposite shoulder (right hand on left shoulder, left hand on right shoulder) with the arms crossed in front of the chest and elbow pointed out like little bumps on a raspberry.
- Give the children a few seconds to decide upon their favorite berry, then say, "1, 2, 3... bounce!"
- Have the children bounce in place for 1-2 minutes.
- Conclude the activity by telling the children it is fun to eat berries and be physically active by doing a Berry Bounce.

Optional Concluding Activity: Have the children sit at tables with coloring supplies. Distribute a copy of the *MyPlate* coloring page (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 83) to each child. Ask the children to color the Fruits group section of MyPlate red and draw and color a strawberry near it or use the Blackline Master of a strawberry (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 81) and have the children color the strawberry. With older children have them copy the dot-to-dot outline of the word "Fruits". Ask the children to draw a favorite way they like to be physically active on the page. If desired, collect the sheet for use in future fruit and vegetable units in *Grow It, Try It, Like It!*



Materials Needed

- Blender
- Strawberry Smoothie Recipe
—see the Child Care Center version of this recipe on page 28
- Cups and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Prepare the recipe as close to activity time as possible.
- Prepare table(s) to serve recipe.

D2: Serving Up...Strawberries

The children taste a new strawberry recipe and talk about different ways to eat strawberries.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Taste strawberries in a combination food, Strawberry Smoothie;
- Describe many different ways to eat strawberries.

Option: Make the Strawberry Smoothie Recipe as part of the activity.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing and Polite Tasting

- Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).
- If necessary, remind the children about polite food tasting habits (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 44 for details).





Activity Length:
10-15 minutes

The Activity

- Seat the children at the table(s).
- Ask the children to share what they remember learning about strawberries.
- Encourage responses such as how and where strawberries grow; how they look, feel, smell, and taste; and other material covered in the unit.
- Tell the children that the unit on strawberries ends with a celebration of a new way to eat strawberries, as part of a mixture of other foods.
- Show the children the strawberry smoothie and talk about the other foods in the smoothie. If making the recipe as part of the activity, make it at this point.
- Serve the Strawberry Smoothie.
- While the children are enjoying the smoothie, ask:
 - ▶ What strawberry recipes they have made with their parents?
 - ▶ What different ways they have eaten strawberries?
 - ▶ What new ways do they think strawberries could be eaten?
- Give suggestions such as strawberries in salads, smoothies, toppings, desserts, in jams, on pancakes, waffles, and ice cream.

Words To Grow

Smoothie
Salad

Strawberry Sauce
Celebration



Strawberry Smoothie

For the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Preparation Time: 5 minutes

Yield: 8 child-size portions of ½-cup servings

Not able to apply as credit towards the CACFP meal pattern

- **1 ½ cups frozen whole strawberries, unsweetened**
- **1 ½ cups frozen sliced peaches**
- **1 ½ cups low-fat or fat-free milk**
- **8 oz low-fat or fat-free vanilla yogurt**

1. Place all ingredients into blender or food processor.
2. Cover and puree or blend until smooth.
3. Serve immediately.

Variations: Use low-fat or fat-free peach or strawberry flavored yogurt.

Consider adding orange juice to taste. Sugar is optional, sweeten to taste depending on the sweetness of the fruit. Consider adding other fruits such as bananas, pineapple, mango, or blueberries.

Fresh fruit option—freeze chunks of peaches or washed, whole strawberries with green tops removed, on cookie sheets and transfer to plastic freezer bags to store in freezer.

Canned fruit option—freeze drained canned peaches (packed in water or juice), in recipe amounts in plastic freezer bags; cut into smaller pieces if necessary.

Tip: Freeze leftover smoothie in freezer pop molds or in paper cups with wooden sticks or plastic spoons inserted in centers to create frozen treats.

Cooking with Children

Young children can:

- Wash hands first
- Put frozen fruit in blender
- Help pour milk into blender
- Help spoon yogurt into blender
- Measure and add sugar to blender

Adults should operate blender and pour smoothie from blender into glasses.



Nutrients (using low-fat milk) per 1 child-size serving of ½ cup: Calories 102, Protein 3.2 g, Carbohydrate 21.5 g, Total Fat 0.8 g, Saturated Fat 0.5 g, Cholesterol 3 mg, Vitamin A 246 IU, Vitamin C 55.9 mg, Iron 0.4 mg, Calcium 103.4 mg, Sodium 40 mg, Dietary Fiber 1.4 g

Growing at Home Materials...

for The Strawberry Patch Lessons





Strawberry Growing at Home #1

Home Activities From Grow It, Try It, Like It!



Dear Parents and Guardians:

We started a new, exciting unit today! We are learning about colorful fruits and vegetables. Strawberries from the Strawberry Patch are the featured fruit. Each day we will be learning baskets of facts about strawberries. We will share information with your family through Strawberry Growing at Home materials.



Today your child learned how strawberries look, feel, taste, and smell. He/she learned that strawberries:



- Are red and shaped like hearts;
- Have “caps” made of green leaves;
- Feel rough on the outside and smooth on the inside;
- Are covered with small seeds; and
- Taste sweet and are good to eat.



Help your child continue learning at home. Together make the easy recipe for **Chocolate Strawberries** on the following page. Or, you may wish to make a family recipe with your child that includes strawberries.



Enclosed with this note is an activity, **Color the Strawberries**. Your child will enjoy doing this activity with you. Your child will also enjoy trying new foods at home with you! Tasting strawberries at home and at child care helps your child grow healthful eating habits for a healthy future.



Please call if you have questions about this activity or want more information.




Sincerely,

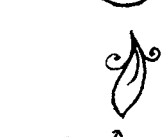


Child Care Center Director



Tip:
 Try freezing chunks of fresh fruit for a refreshing summer snack. Thaw fruit enough to nibble on a piece. Or whirl it in a blender with low-fat or fat-free yogurt for a super smoothie.





Chocolate Strawberries

Preparation Time: 20 minutes

Serves: 14 child-size portions of 1 strawberry

Serves: 7 adult-size portions of 2 strawberries

- **1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips**
 - **1-2 tsp low-fat or fat-free milk, if needed to thin melted chocolate**
 - **1 pint fresh strawberries with leaves (about 14 medium berries)**
1. Wash and gently dry strawberries thoroughly with paper towels. Leave stem and leaves on berries. Do not dip any berries with wet, damaged, or cut surfaces. Berries must be free of moisture or they will cause the chocolate to 'weep.'
 2. In microwave-safe bowl, heat the chocolate chips for 1-2 minutes at medium high heat until just melted; stir every 30 seconds of heating time until smooth. Add low-fat or fat-free milk as necessary to thin chocolate to dipping consistency.
 3. Hold each strawberry by stem; dip one at a time in melted chocolate, about three-quarters of the way to stem. Allow chocolate to drip back into bowl.
 4. Place each strawberry on wax-paper-lined pan. If day is humid, refrigerate strawberries for 10 minutes to harden chocolate, then return to room temperature. Storing dipped berries in refrigerator will cause berries to release moisture when returned to room temperature for serving.

For best quality, serve within a few hours of dipping as chocolate strawberries are very perishable.

Option: Purchase commercial dipping chocolate and follow label instructions.

Variation: Dip dried fruits such as apricots, pears, or pineapple in melted chocolate.

Cooking with Children

Young children can:

- Wash hands first
- Measure chocolate chips
- Help wash and gently dry strawberries
- Dip a berry with adult assistance
- Help arrange hardened chocolate strawberries on serving plate

Adults should check temperature of chocolate to make sure it won't burn child dipping strawberries.

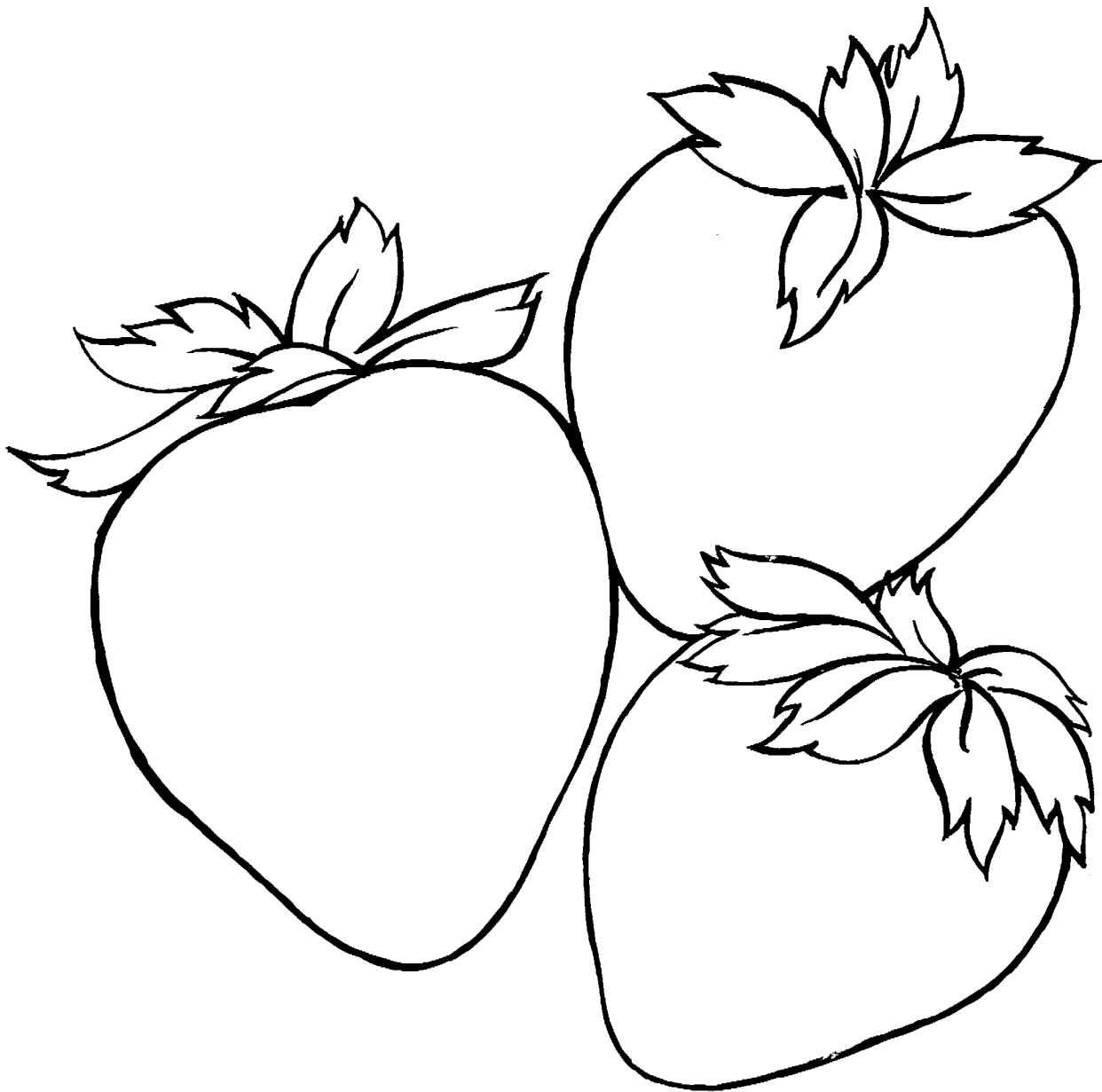


Nutrients (using low-fat milk) per 1 child-size portion of 1 strawberry: Calories 62, Protein 0.7 g, Carbohydrate 8.9 g, Total Fat 3.5 g, Saturated Fat 2 g, Cholesterol 0 mg, Vitamin A 7 IU, Vitamin C 13 mg, Iron 0.44 mg, Calcium 10 mg, Sodium 2 mg, Dietary Fiber 1.1g

Color the Strawberries

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Your child has been learning about how strawberries look and feel. Have your child color the strawberries pictured below with a red crayon, marker, or finger paint. The leaves can be colored with green. Help your child use a black marker, crayon, or paint to make the seeds on the strawberries.



Strawberry Growing at Home #2

Home Activities From Grow It, Try It, Like It!

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Strawberries are very interesting! Strawberry plants are easy to grow in containers or in the garden. Bursting with flavor, what is better than a delicious strawberry? Your child might say the only things better than a strawberry are all the strawberry activities we do throughout the day.

Today your child learned how strawberries are grown and harvested. He/she learned that strawberries:

- Start from strawberry seeds or small strawberry plants;
- Need soil, sun, water, and time to grow;
- Grow on plants above the ground; and
- Are ready to be picked when they are plump, shiny, and bright red.

Your child will be thrilled to help you make **Pancakes with Strawberry Sauce**. The recipe is on the following page. Or, top a favorite family recipe for pudding or waffles with the easy to prepare Strawberry Sauce.

Match the Strawberries is an engaging activity we've enclosed with this note. While you help your child do this activity at home, talk about foods to try with Strawberry Sauce. Your child will enjoy talking about food choices with you. He/she may even surprise you with new ideas to try. Trying favorite foods in new ways helps develop your child's willingness to try new and different foods at child care and at home!

Please call if you have questions about this activity or want more information.

Sincerely,

Child Care Center Director

Tip:

Make a cold soup by blending 3 cups of strawberries or cantaloupe with 1 cup of 100% orange juice and 2 tablespoons sugar in a blender until smooth. Serve like a soup with a dollop of low-fat or fat-free vanilla yogurt and a berry garnish.



Pancakes With Strawberry Sauce

Preparation Time: 8 minutes

Cooking Time: 12 minutes

Serves: 8 child-size portions of 1-4" pancake with 3 tablespoons of strawberry sauce

Serves: 4 adult-size portions of 2-4" pancakes with 6 tablespoons of strawberry sauce

Sauce

Tip: refrigerate overnight to thaw 1-16-oz package frozen sweetened, sliced strawberries, thawed (don't drain)

Pancakes

- **3/4 cup whole-wheat flour**
- **3/4 cup enriched all-purpose flour**
- **2 tsp baking powder**
- **1/2 tsp salt**
- **1 Tbsp granulated sugar**
- **2 large eggs**
- **1 cup low-fat or fat-free milk**
- **2 Tbsp canola oil**
- **Nonstick cooking spray**

1. Combine flour, baking powder, salt, and sugar in large bowl.
2. Combine eggs, low-fat or fat-free milk, and vegetable oil until mixed thoroughly in a small bowl.
3. Add egg mixture to flour mixture. Mix only until ingredients are combined, about 1 minute; batter will be slightly lumpy.
4. Heat skillet or griddle coated with nonstick cooking spray over medium-high heat until a few drops of water sprinkled on surface bounce and splatter.
5. Pour 1/3 cup of batter for each pancake.
6. Cook until surface of the pancake is covered with bubbles, the edges begin to dry, and bottom side is lightly brown, approximately 2 minutes. Turn and cook until lightly brown on other side, approximately 1 minute.
7. Spoon strawberry sauce over warm pancakes and serve.

Variation: Use 1 1/2 cups whole-wheat pastry flour instead of the whole-wheat and all-purpose flours. Try other whole-grain flours such as buckwheat, amaranth, or millet flours mixed with all-purpose flour. Use store-bought pancake or waffle mix, if desired.

Tip: Serve strawberry sauce over homemade or store-bought waffles or French toast; low-fat or fat-free vanilla pudding, yogurt or ice cream; cubes of angel food or plain cake; or over your favorite rice or bread pudding recipe.

Cooking with Children

Young children can:

- Wash hands first
- Help mix the dry ingredients
- Pour sauce over pancakes using scoop or measuring cup

Adults should add the egg mixture to the flour mixture, pour the batter onto the skillet or griddle, and do all steps involving the stove.



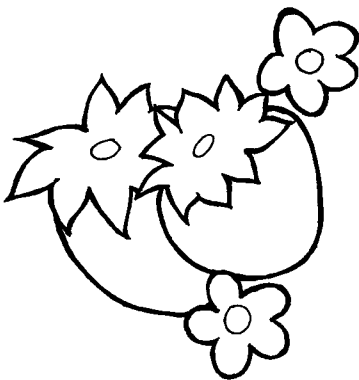
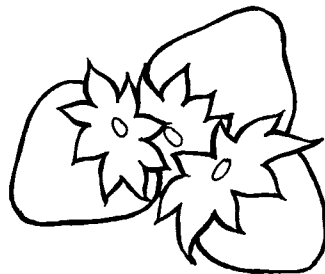
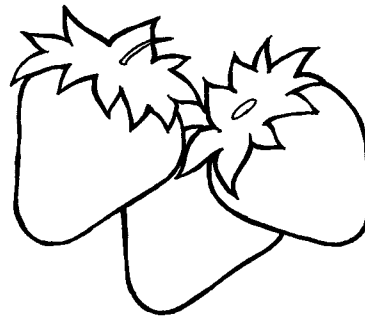
Nutrients (using low-fat milk) per 1 child-size portion of 1 - 4" pancake with 3 tablespoons of strawberry sauce: Calories 188, Protein 6 g, Carbohydrate 35.3 g, Total Fat 3.7 g, Saturated Fat 0.8 g, Cholesterol 54 mg, Vitamin A 155 IU, Vitamin C 23.8 mg, Iron 1.64 mg, Calcium 123mg, Sodium 303 mg, Dietary Fiber 2.8 g

Match the Strawberries

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Your child has been learning what strawberries look like. Ask your child to look closely at the berries on this page. Have your child find the two pictures of strawberries that look alike. Ask your child to put

a circle around the identical strawberries and draw a line from one match to the other. Talk about what makes these two pictures the same. What makes the other pictures of strawberries different?





Strawberry Growing at Home #3

Home Activities From Grow It, Try It, Like It!

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Our unit on strawberries concluded with us celebrating the many ways to prepare and serve this flavorful fruit. Ask your child to tell you some of the ways he/she likes strawberries best. We talked about strawberries:

- Used in smoothies;
- Served in salads;
- Used in desserts and jams; and
- Served on pancakes and waffles.

Make a date with your child to blend up a batch of **Strawberry Smoothie**. The recipe is on the following page. Or, have your child help you choose a family recipe that includes strawberries.

Strawberry Fun Badges (attached) is a home activity to do with your child. Talk with your child about strawberries as he/she does the activity. Remember all the different ways that your family enjoys eating these juicy fruits. Spend time together exploring fruits such as strawberries. Doing so might encourage your child to continue tasting and enjoying new foods.

Please continue to offer strawberries at home. While it is time for our unit to end, sensational strawberries are something to enjoy year round, fresh or frozen!

Sincerely,

Child Care Center Director



Tip:

Can't finish a full blender of smoothie? Make your own smoothie frozen pops by filling small paper cups with the tasty treat. Cover with foil that has a small slit in the center. Insert a plastic spoon or wooden stick into the slit and freeze. When frozen, peel away the foil and paper cup for a yummy fruity treat.



Strawberry Smoothie

Preparation Time: 5 minutes

Serves: 8 child-size portions of ½-cup

- **1 ½ cups frozen whole strawberries, unsweetened**
- **1 ½ cups frozen sliced peaches**
- **1 ½ cups low-fat or fat-free milk**
- **8 oz low-fat or fat-free vanilla yogurt**

1. Place all ingredients into blender or food processor.
2. Cover and puree or blend until smooth.
3. Serve immediately.

Variations: Use low-fat or fat-free peach or strawberry flavored yogurt. Consider adding orange juice to taste. Sugar is optional, sweeten to taste depending on the sweetness of the fruit. Consider adding other fruits such as bananas, pineapple, mango, or blueberries.

Fresh fruit option—freeze chunks of peaches or washed, whole strawberries with green tops removed, on cookie sheets and transfer to plastic freezer bags to store in freezer.

Canned fruit option—freeze drained canned peaches (packed in water or juice), in recipe amounts in plastic freezer bags; cut into smaller pieces if necessary.

Tip: Freeze leftover smoothie in freezer pop molds or in paper cups with wooden sticks or plastic spoons inserted in centers to create frozen treats.

Cooking with Children

Young children can:

- Wash hands first
- Put frozen fruit in blender
- Help pour milk into blender
- Help spoon yogurt into blender
- Measure and add sugar to blender

Adults should operate blender and pour smoothie from blender into glasses.



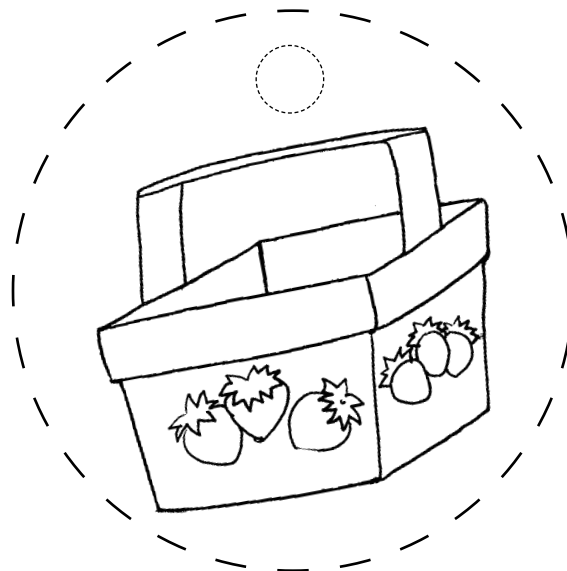
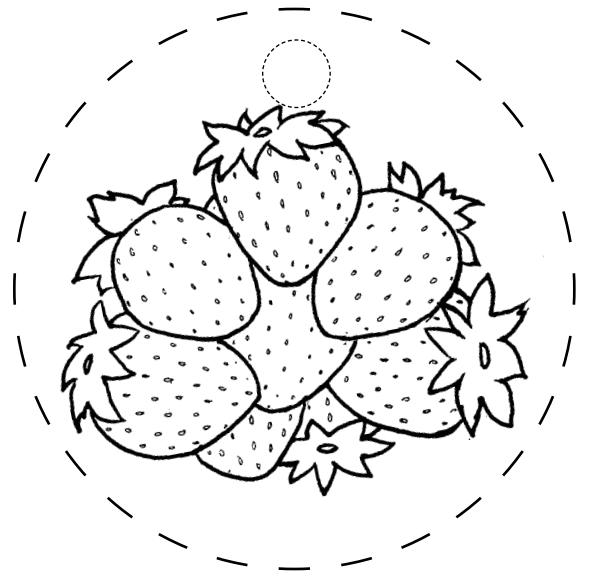
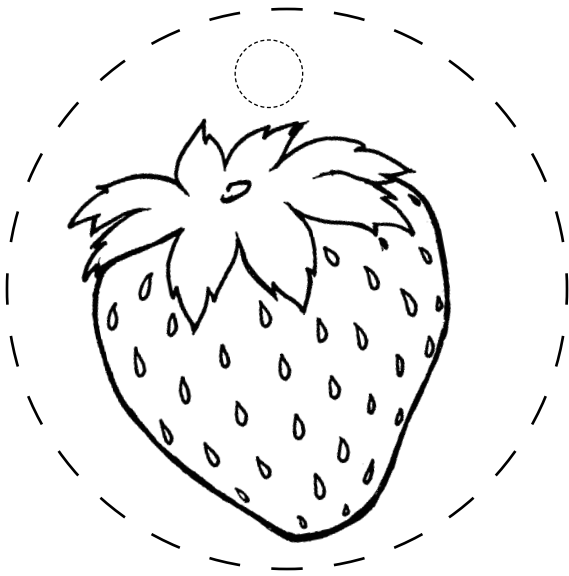
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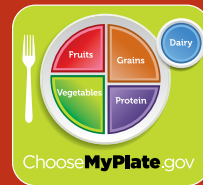
Strawberry Fun Badge

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Help your child make their own 'berry' special badge. Have your child color the badges with crayons, paint, or markers. Help your child glue the pictures to a piece of thin cardboard such as an empty cereal box or file folder. When dry, cut

out each badge and trim the cardboard around the badge. Place a piece of double-stick tape on the back of the badge and attach to clothing. Or punch a hole in the top and thread string or yarn through to make a necklace.





United States Department of Agriculture • Food and Nutrition Service
Find more fun resources at these Web sites:

teammnutrition.usda.gov
choosemyplate.gov

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