

Get to Know Your Fruits and Veggies



Grade Level: Adaptable for K-5
Total Lesson Time: 30-40 minutes

Lesson Overview

This lesson is designed to help build community in the classroom and teach students about the wide variety of fruits and vegetables grown in Wisconsin. It is a great activity to do in spring and fall to celebrate the change of seasons, or the beginning and end of the school year. It can also be done at any other time of year. You may choose to set up “dining tables” for students to sit around. Farmers markets are great places to purchase food for this lesson and talk to farmers about how the food is grown. If possible, invite a farmer in to participate with your class. If you have a school garden, harvest food and have a picnic. If local produce is unavailable other foods can still be used to represent the seasons. In adapting this lesson you may choose to use it as simple celebration or tie it into teaching about plant anatomy and lifecycles.

Objectives

Students will:

1. Understand how food helps build and strengthen communities (Social Studies E.4.2, E.4.3, E.4.4)
2. Discuss the connection between local seasonal cycles and the life cycles of plants (Agricultural Education A.4.3; Science)
3. Identify sources of local fruits and vegetables (Agricultural Education A.4.1, D.4.1; Social Studies A.4.4)

Materials

Food

Local, seasonal varieties of produce

Supplies

Knife

Cutting board

Soap and water for hand washing

Napkins

Tablecloth

Necessary Utensils

Wisconsin Homegrown Lunch is a joint project of:



REAP Food Group:
www.reapfoodgroup.org

UW-Madison Center for Integrated
Agricultural Systems: www.cias.wisc.edu



Preparation

1. Procure a variety of seasonal fruits and/or vegetables. For example, in spring you may want to serve salads with seasonal greens and strawberries. In fall you could serve different varieties of squash. You may choose to use several varieties of one fruit such as tomatoes or apples, or a few different types of seasonal produce.

For suggestions check the Seasonal Chart of Wisconsin Produce at:

<http://www.reapfoodgroup.org/farmentoschool/educators.shtml>

2. Day of activity: Prepare produce by washing, slicing, or cooking if necessary.
3. If choosing to treat it as a 'family' meal, have students help set the table and arrange food.

Procedure

The content of this lesson is somewhat dependent on the specific season or foods that are chosen.

Introduction

Ask students how nutrients get into plants and/or into the food we eat. Talk with students about the current season and what is happening in the plant world at that time of year. This discussion can connect to life cycles of plants and WI DPI academic standards above. You may also choose to read one the suggested books as an introduction.

Discussion

Discuss the foods that will be served and where they come from. If you have information about the farm or farmers that produced the food share with students. Take time to discuss each variety of fruit or vegetable, encouraging students to share personal stories or experiences they have had with each food. Cultural or holiday traditions surrounding food are good topics of discussion.

Talk about which part of the plant their food comes from. What does the plant need to grow and produce the food we eat?

Snack Time

Students should wash hands. Pass out napkins, plates, and utensils.

Ask students to share opinions about the food. Encourage students to use descriptive vocabulary to be specific about what they like or don't like. Ask students to use their senses to describe taste, texture, appearance, and scent.

Enjoy the snack!

Clean up

Have students help with clean up and share any leftover food with others in your school or community.

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Grade Level Adaptations

K-1: Run lesson as written.

2-3: Prior to discussion (Procedure #2) create a KWL Chart on the board, listing the names of the fruits or vegetables down the left side. Ask students to share what they KNOW, what they WANT TO KNOW, and next (following discussion) what they LEARNED about each fruit or veggie from the teacher and their peers. Fill in the chart by soliciting student responses as you go. As an assignment or in class project, ask students to seek answers to any Want to Know questions that are left unanswered.

4-5: Follow procedure above for 2-3, but have students draw their own KWL chart on a piece of paper and fill it in as you would on the board. Any unanswered questions from the Want to Know column could be used as mini-research or inquiry projects.

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