

# Spring Fruits and Vegetables

*Grade Level: Adaptable for 2-5*  
*Total Lesson Time: 45 minutes*



## Lesson Overview

Seasonality is a strong theme in these lessons. Knowing the seasons that certain foods are grown and harvested in your area provides a strong link to natural cycles and the key to knowing what is at the peak of freshness and flavor. Eating seasonally also makes for a stronger connection to your local community of farmers and producers. This lesson is intended to familiarize students with Wisconsin-grown fruits and vegetables that are generally available in the spring. Students play a “What Am I?” game in which they are given clues to figure out which spring fruit or vegetable they have been assigned. Then they participate in a comparative tasting of spring foods.

## Objectives

Students will:

1. Participate effectively in class discussion (Language Arts C.4.3)
2. Comprehend and follow step-by-step instructions for planting seeds (Language Arts C.4.2)
3. Communicate their knowledge and understanding of plant development and conditions in which they grow (Science F.4.1, F.4.2, F.4.3, F.4.4, Environmental Education A.4.4)

## Preparation

1. Collect materials.
2. For a list of spring fruits and vegetables, check the Seasonal Chart of Wisconsin Produce at :  
[www.reapfoodgroup.org/farmtoschool/educators.shtml](http://www.reapfoodgroup.org/farmtoschool/educators.shtml)
3. Make tags with fruit and veggie pictures and names and a string attached like a necklace.
4. Wash and prep snack foods if needed.

## Materials

### Food

Spring greens:

Mizuna and mustard greens  
or arugula and spinach

Asparagus

Radishes

For other possibilities, check the Seasonal Chart of Wisconsin Produce link in the “Preparation” section below

### Supplies

Cards with pictures and names of spring fruits and vegetables. For a list of spring fruits and veggies, check the Seasonal Chart of Wisconsin Produce  
String or yarn to attach to cards for hanging around students necks  
Napkins for snack

Wisconsin Homegrown Lunch is a joint project of:



REAP Food Group:  
[www.reapfoodgroup.org](http://www.reapfoodgroup.org)

UW-Madison Center for Integrated  
Agricultural Systems: [www.cias.wisc.edu](http://www.cias.wisc.edu)



## Procedure

### Introductory Discussion

Ask students to review the four things that plants need to live and grow: Sun, soil, water, air, and if it is an indoor or garden plant it also needs some love and care. These are the most important things that plants need, however there are other conditions that some plants need to grow into the fruits and vegetables we eat. What other conditions affect plants? Temperature and weather can have a big impact on plants. For instance:

- Some plants like hot and sunny weather, like tomatoes (they also need a decent amount of water, but not too much).
- Some plants like colder weather, like winter rye or winter oats.
- Some plants like a lot of water, or even grow in the water, like seaweed and watercress.
- Some plants need very little water and like it very hot, like cacti.
- Some plants like it a little cool, a little warm and want a good bit of water. Those are the plants that grow best in spring in Wisconsin, like radishes, peas, arugula, spinach, other salad greens, and peas.

### “What am I?” Game

Students play a fun guessing game that helps them learn which locally grown fruits and vegetables are available in spring in Wisconsin.

#### **Instructions for students:**

- Everyone gets a card with a picture and a name of a fruit or vegetable.
- Each card has a string that you will put around your neck, like a necklace...however, you will not wear it front, we will put it on you with the card on your back so you don't know what it is.
- The goal will be to figure out which fruit or vegetable you are.
- You will figure this out by:
  - o Asking only yes or no questions of other students. Give students an example of a yes or no question.
  - o Appropriate questions might be:
    - Am I a fruit? A vegetable?
    - Am I a root? A stem? A leaf? A flower? A fruit? A seed?
    - Am I red? Green? White?
    - Am I sweet? Sour? Spicy? Crunchy? Juicy? Soft?
    - Am I round? Oval shaped? Thin? Thick? Big? Small?
- You can ask each person up to 3 questions before moving on to someone else.
- If you guess correctly and someone else confirms it, turn your card to the front and continue answering questions for others.

\*\*We also played this game as a whole class when we had more time. One student at a time gets assigned a fruit or veggie and can ask yes or no questions of the whole class until they figure out what they are. This was a fun way to play the game and serves as an excellent community building activity.

\*\*”Yes or no” questions are challenging, so you may loosen the rules and allow questions pertaining to color, shape, flavor, smell, and feel. (Ex. What color am I? Am I spicy?)

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## Procedure

### Spring Fruit and Veggie Tasting

Students should wash their hands.

Serve four different spring fruits and veggies (see list in the Materials section above) one at a time. For younger students you may want to put a list of possible describing words on the board. Ask them to taste the food and offer up descriptions of what they are experiencing. Remind them to try to use all of their senses. List descriptors that students come up with.

As a Language Arts extension, you may have students write a short poem or paragraph about the spring fruits and veggies they tasted.

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