












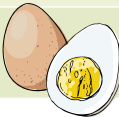



Activity Guides for the Classroom and Cafeteria

Pennsylvania Harvest of the Month (PA HOM) activity guides include a variety of sections. Below are brief descriptions of these sections and suggested ways to use the content in each.

JANUARY	SWEET POTATOES		
FEBRUARY	MUSHROOMS		
MARCH	DAIRY		
APRIL	LEAFY GREENS		
MAY	ASPARAGUS		
JUNE	STRAWBERRIES		
JULY	BEETS		
AUGUST	TOMATOES		
SEPTEMBER	PEPPERS		
OCTOBER	APPLES		
NOVEMBER	WINTER SQUASH		
DECEMBER	CABBAGE		
ALTERNATES	BROCCOLI, EGGS, POTATOES	  	

HOM CALENDAR

TIPS AND SUGGESTIONS

When using these activity guides, please keep the following in mind:

- The guides were developed to be used as a classroom resource for anyone engaging with PA HOM programming. It is recommended to connect with your PA SNAP-Ed provider for support in the implementation of these guides.
- These guides are not formal lesson plans, and the activities suggested in the materials target a wide range of grade levels. It's recommended that you tailor and adapt the activities as you see fit.

- Some additional background research may be needed to more fully develop and present concepts mentioned in the guides.
- When offering food samples to students, it is recommended that any necessary steps be taken to address students who may have allergies or intolerances.
- Specific months do not appear on the guides or other PA HOM materials. This allows for flexibility to use the materials to promote items outside of the month designated on the Harvest of the Month calendar.

Did You Know?

Includes scientific, historical, and/or cultural facts about the featured product. Information is general, applicable to all ages, and can be used to enhance or support any of your planned activities related to the product.

Classroom Recipe

Introduces students to enjoyable ways of incorporating the featured produce into healthy snacks with a food preparation activity. The recipes are easy to make in class, student-friendly, and generally consist of five ingredients or less.



Nutrition Facts

Provides general nutrient information for the featured product. Nutrient reference values (% Daily Values) show how a specific food fits into an overall balanced diet. Labels are created from the [USDA National Nutrient Database](#). Most labels are based on ½ cup serving sizes, but some may vary.

Nutrition Information:
How Much Do I Need?

Provides information about the portion size of the featured product based on the Nutrition Facts label. Also included is a chart with the Recommended Daily Amount of Fruits and Vegetables information based on age, gender, and physical activity level. All forms of the product count toward the daily amount—fresh, frozen, canned, dried and 100% juice. Encourage students to find out how many cups of fruits and vegetables they need and to set goals to meet their daily amount. Visit [myplate.gov](#) to learn more.



Explore Pennsylvania-Grown Produce

Offers students the opportunity to experience the featured product using their senses, which engages them in the learning process and creates increased interest and awareness for the featured product. Activity steps are included to walk students through this experience. Work with school nutrition staff, local growers, or retail outlets to procure products and implement activities.



Reading Nook

Suggests books specific to the featured product and includes recommendations for various grade levels to complement other Harvest of the Month activities. Recommended books are approved by USDA's PA SNAP-Ed program.

Classroom Activity Corner

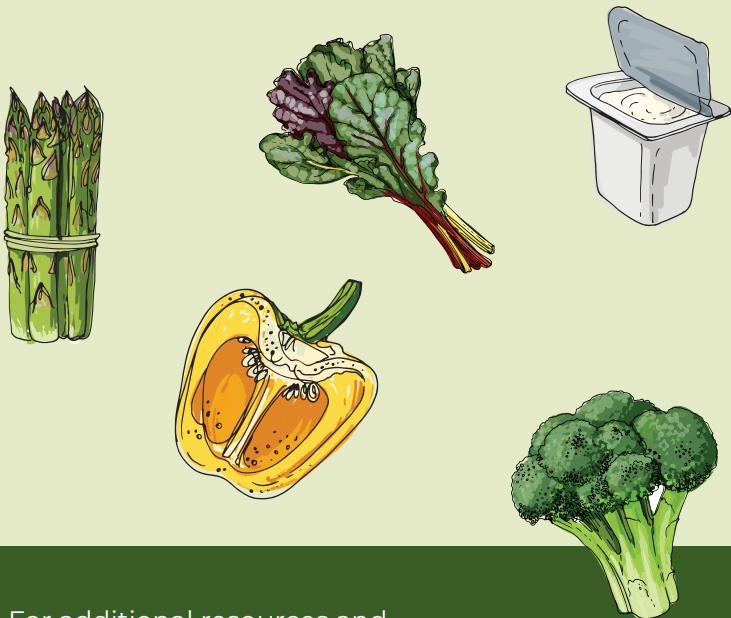
Provides learning opportunities for students to further explore facts about the featured product and utilize research, data collection, and reporting skills. There are at least two nutrition-related questions that can be adapted for different grade levels.

Cafeteria Connection

Features strategies and ideas for teachers and students to partner with school nutrition staff and utilize the cafeteria as a learning laboratory.

Just the Facts

Provides information about the growing region(s) and commercial production of the featured product in Pennsylvania, nutrients found as a good or excellent source in the featured product, and/or scientific and evidence-based information about the nutrients' health benefits. Information is general, applicable to all ages, and can be used to enhance or support any of your planned activities related to the product.



These PA HOM Activity Guides were developed by The Food Trust and the content was adapted from materials developed by the California Department of Public Health's CalFresh Healthy Living program.

For additional resources and information about PA HOM, visit: [paharvestofthemonth.org](#)

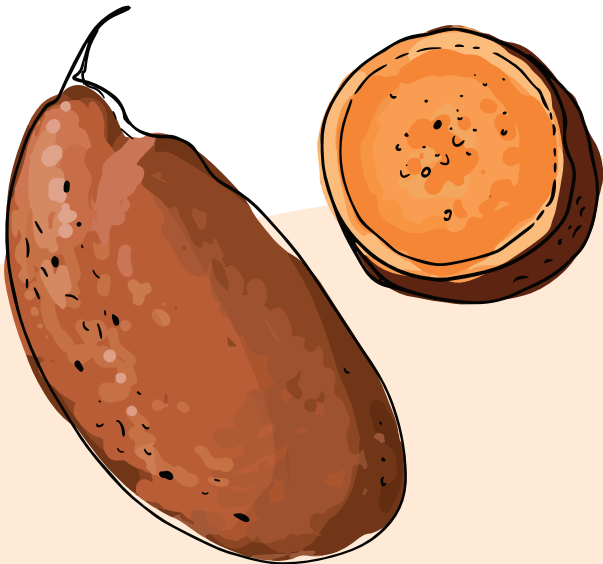


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Sweet Potatoes



Did you know?

This root vegetable has a skin that may vary from dark yellow to dark red with an orange flesh which, as its name suggests, has a natural, sweet flavor. Although sometimes called yams, true yams are starchy edible roots that are white in color with tough skin. Unlike sweet potatoes, yams are native to Africa and are not commercially grown in the United States.

SWEET POTATO

Nutrition Facts

Serving size	1 small, baked
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	60
% Daily Value	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polysaturated Fat 0g	
Monosaturated Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 20mg	1%
Total Carbohydrate 12g	4%
Dietary Fiber 2g	7%
Total Sugars 4g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 2g	4%
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 22.8mg	2%
Iron 0mg	0%
Potassium 285mg	6%

*The Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

CLASSROOM RECIPE

Maple Sweet Potatoes

Ingredients

- 2 sweet potatoes (large)
- 2 tablespoons yogurt, plain or vanilla
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup
- 1 tablespoon orange juice

Directions

1. Prick potato skins with a fork. Microwave on high for 3 to 4 minutes until soft and easily pierced with a knife.
2. Scoop out the pulp into a medium bowl. Mash the pulp and stir in the yogurt, maple syrup, and orange juice. Transfer to a microwave-safe serving bowl and microwave for 1 to 2 minutes to heat through.

NUTRITION INFORMATION

HOW MUCH DO I NEED?

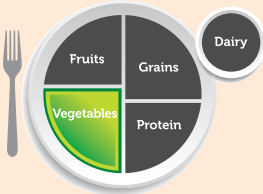
A 1/2 cup of sweet potatoes is about one cupped handful. The amount of fruits and vegetables each person needs depends on age, sex and physical activity level.

Recommended Daily Amounts of Vegetables

	5 – 8 yrs	9 – 13 yrs	13 – 18 yrs
Male	1½ – 2½ cups	2 – 3½ cups	2½ – 4 cups
Female	1½ – 2½ cups	1½ – 3 cups	2½ – 3 cups

Featured Resource

At [choosemyplate.gov](https://www.choosemyplate.gov), kids and adults can take a short quiz to learn more about their current daily nutrition habits and find resources for adjusting those habits to prioritize nutritious food based on federal dietary guidelines.



Explore Pennsylvania's Sweet Potatoes

What You Need

- 2 raw sweet potatoes (one each of “dry flesh” and “moist flesh”), cubed
- 2 baked sweet potatoes (one each of dry flesh and moist flesh)
- 1 can of sweet potatoes
- Nutrition Facts label
- Pencils and paper

Steps

1. Taste raw, dry flesh sweet potato and describe the texture, smell, color and taste.
2. Repeat step 1 with raw, moist flesh sweet potato; then baked and canned sweet potatoes.
3. Compare the Nutrition Facts labels for the different varieties. Which nutrient values are similar and different? Why?
4. Note the the difference in taste between raw, baked and canned sweet potatoes. Which is the students’ favorite?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY CORNER

History Exploration

Ask students to research and write a report on the many medical and industrial uses of sweet potatoes throughout history.

Problem Solving

Use the nutrient content of sweet potatoes in math problems. Example: In order to get the same amount of vitamin A that is contained in one medium sweet potato, a person would have to consume 23 cups of broccoli. How many sweet potatoes would it take to fulfill the same requirements as 100 cups of broccoli? How much vitamin A, vitamin C, and fiber would there be?

CAFETERIA CONNECTION

Suggest that students design sweet potato placemats with holiday designs and games to distribute to nursing homes, families, and friends for holiday meals. Students may also want to include sweet potato nutrition facts, growing information, and recipes on the placemats. Encourage students to hold a placemat contest between classrooms.

Use categories to help create interest, such as Most Creative, Most Festive, and Most Informational. Ask staff and older students to help judge the entries. Have student judges create a cafeteria bulletin board to display the placemats for a week. Consider awarding prizes in each category by grade level.



READING NOOK

Expand your lesson with these selected books about sweet potatoes and other root vegetables!



In the Garden with Dr. Carver

BY SUSAN GRIGSBY
AGES 4–8



Dr. Strong and Sweet Potatoes

BY YORI TAKEDA
AGES 9–12



Oliver’s Vegetables

BY VIVIAN FRENCH
AGES 3–8

Just the Facts

- You can find sweet potatoes in season in Pennsylvania from August through November.
- Sweet potatoes are an excellent source of vitamin A and C.
- Sweet potatoes are good source of fiber, vitamin B6 (pyridoxine) and potassium.

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Sources:
Adapted from the CalFresh Healthy Living program
<https://extension.psu.edu/forage-and-food-crops/vegetables>
<https://www.mypyplate.gov/eat-healthy/what-is-myplate>
<https://www.paharvestofthemonth.org/index.php/downloads>

Mushrooms



Did you know?

Though mushrooms are often categorized as a vegetable, mushrooms are actually part of the kingdom called *fungi*. Despite this, mushrooms have been an important part of the human diet for centuries. Food historians believe that mushrooms were likely eaten by prehistoric peoples because they were easy to forage and incorporate into meals.

Button Mushrooms

Nutrition Facts

Serving size ½ cup, cooked

Amount Per Serving

Calories 20

% Daily Value

Total Fat 0g 0%

Saturated Fat 0g 0%

Trans Fat 0g

Polysaturated Fat 0g

Monosaturated Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg 0%

Sodium 15mg 1%

Total Carbohydrate 3g 1%

Dietary Fiber 1g 4%

Total Sugars 0g

Includes 0g Added Sugars 0%

Protein 3g 6%

Vitamin D 0.2mcg 0%

Calcium 0mg 0%

Iron 0.36mg 2%

Potassium 282mg 6%

*The Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Classroom Recipe

Roasted Wild (and Not So Wild) Mushrooms

Ingredients

- 1 pound assorted mushrooms (e.g. button, white, shiitake, portobello, cremini, oyster mushrooms)
- 1 clove garlic, peeled and minced
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 tablespoon olive oil

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Place mushrooms on the baking sheet and add olive oil, garlic, salt and pepper. Mix well.
3. Roast mushrooms until golden brown, about 20–30 minutes.
4. Serve right away or cover and refrigerate overnight.

Nutrition Information

How Much Do I Need?

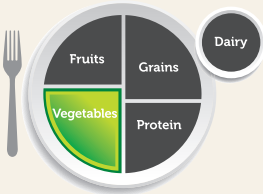
A ½ cup of sliced mushrooms is about 5 medium mushrooms, or the size of a handful. The amount of fruits and vegetables each person needs depends on age, sex and physical activity level.

Recommended Daily Amounts of Vegetables

	5 – 8 yrs	9 – 13 yrs	13 – 18 yrs
Male	1½ – 2½ cups	2 – 3½ cups	2½ – 4 cups
Female	1½ – 2½ cups	1½ – 3 cups	2½ – 3 cups

Featured Resource

At [choosemyplate.gov](https://www.choosemyplate.gov), kids and adults can take a short quiz to learn more about their current daily nutrition habits and find resources for adjusting those habits to prioritize nutritious food based on federal dietary guidelines.



Explore Pennsylvania's Mushrooms

What You Need

- A variety of mushrooms;
1 of each for every 4 students
Cutting boards and knives

Dry erase board and markers
Colored pencils and graph paper

Steps

1. Label 5 columns on board: smell, sound, look, texture and taste.
2. Label rows according to mushroom varieties.
3. Guide students to observe, smell, feel and taste mushrooms. Note students' observations on the board. Discuss similarities and differences among varieties.
4. Graph each student's favorite variety on the board to determine the overall class favorite.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY CORNER

Mushroom Spore Printing

- Cut off the lower portion of a mushroom with a sharp knife, exposing the gills. Place the mushroom gill-side down on the piece of paper.
- Sprinkle the top of the mushroom with a little bit of water (this will encourage the mushroom to produce spores).
- Cover the mushroom with the cardboard box and let it sit overnight.
- Remove the box and the mushroom to see the spore print left behind by the mushroom. If you want to preserve your spore print, you can spray it with hairspray.

CAFETERIA CONNECTION

mushrooms are in season all year long. Coordinate a visit from a local mushroom forager or farmer to talk to students about mushrooms. You can also include a taste test with the presentation. Try highlighting one recipe with mushrooms in the cafeteria after this event to get students excited about mushroom season.



READING NOOK

Expand your lesson with these selected books about mushrooms and other fungi!



Fungi: Mushrooms, Toadstools, Molds, Yeasts and other Fungi

BY JUDY WEARING
AGES 8+



Mushroom in the Rain

BY MIRRA GINSBURG
AGES 3-8



The Mushroom Hunt

BY SIMON FRAZER
AGES 4-8

Just the Facts

- Over 60% of mushrooms cultivated today are grown in PA, mainly in Kennett Square and Bucks County. Over 50 PA farms grow nearly 557 million pounds of mushrooms each year!
- A good source of fiber, mushrooms are one of the few foods with naturally occurring vitamin D.
- Mushrooms are rich in potassium.

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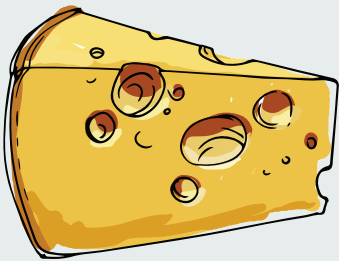


Sources:
Adapted from the CalFresh Healthy Living program
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<https://www.myplate.gov/eat-healthy/what-is-myplate>
<https://www.paharvestofthemonth.org/index.php/downloads>
<https://www.chopchopfamily.org/recipe/roasted-wild-and-not-so-wild-mushrooms>

Dairy

Did you know?

June is National Dairy Month! One of the most popular forms of dairy is cow’s milk. There are several different breeds of dairy cow: Holstein, Jersey, Guernsey, Brown Swiss, Ayrshire and Milking Shorthorn. The average dairy cow produces over 100 glasses of milk per day, about 8 gallons, which are delivered from the farm to your grocery store in as little as 48 hours.



CLASSROOM RECIPE

Blueberry Banana Smoothie

Ingredients

- 1 cup fresh or frozen blueberries
- 1/2 cup water, coconut water or milk
- 1 cup plain yogurt
- 1/2 ripe or overripe banana, frozen, peeled and sliced
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 ice cubes

Directions

- Put all the ingredients in the blender.
- Put the top on tightly. Turn on the blender to medium speed and blend until the mixture is smooth, 30–60 seconds.
- Divide the smoothie equally between the glasses or jars and serve right away.

LOW-FAT MILK

Nutrition Facts

Serving size 1 cup	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 100	
% Daily Value	
Total Fat 2.5g	3%
Saturated Fat 1.5g	8%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polysaturated Fat 0g	
Monosaturated Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 15mg	5%
Sodium 130mg	6%
Total Carbohydrate 12g	4%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 8g	16%
Vitamin D 3mcg	15%
Calcium 325mg	25%
Iron 0mg	0%
Potassium 376mg	8%

*The Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

NUTRITION INFORMATION

HOW MUCH DO I NEED?

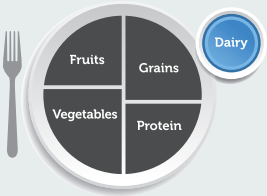
1 cup of milk, yogurt or soy milk is considered 1 cup from the dairy group. The amount of dairy each person needs depends on age, sex and physical activity level.

Recommended Daily Amounts of Dairy

	5 – 8 yrs	9 – 13 yrs	13 – 18 yrs
Male	2½ cups	3 cups	3 cups
Female	2½ cups	3 cups	3 cups

Featured Resource

At [choosemyplate.gov](https://www.choosemyplate.gov), kids and adults can take a short quiz to learn more about their current daily nutrition habits and find resources for adjusting those habits to prioritize nutritious food based on federal dietary guidelines.



Explore Pennsylvania's Dairy

What You Need

- Variety of cheeses (1 each per every 4 students)
- Dry erase board and markers
- Cutting boards and knives
- Graph paper and colored pencils

Steps

1. Label five columns on board: smell, sound, look, texture and taste.
2. Label rows according to cheese varieties.
3. Guide students to observe, smell, feel and taste cheese.
4. Note students' observations on the board.
5. Discuss similarities and differences among varieties.
6. Graph each student's favorite variety on the board to determine the overall class favorite.

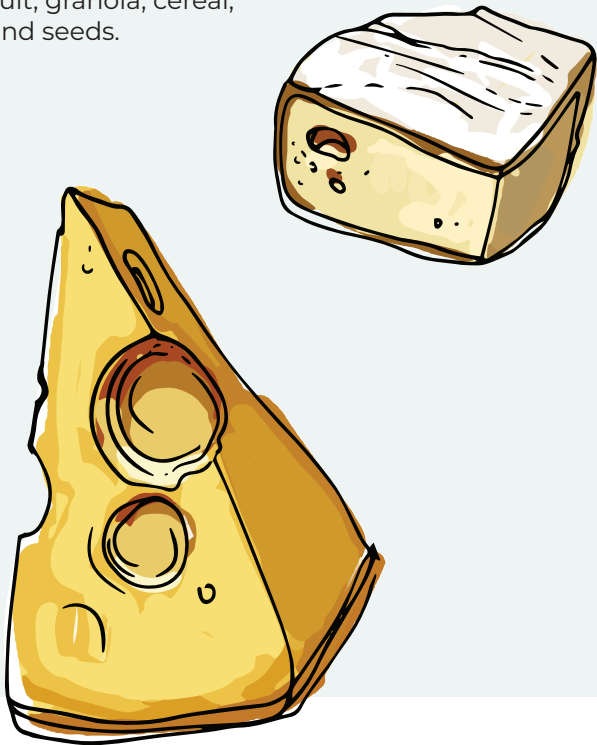
CLASSROOM ACTIVITY CORNER

Magic Milk

- Pour some cow's milk into a small bowl. Pour a small amount of dish soap onto a small plate.
- Grab some food coloring (the more colors the better) and squeeze dots onto the surface of the milk.
- Next, dip the cotton swab in the dish soap. Place the swab on the dots of food coloring and watch the colors jump across the bowl as the dish soap tries to attach itself to the milkfat!

CAFETERIA CONNECTION

Celebrate local dairy by setting up a make-your-own yogurt parfait bar. Provide students with different flavors of yogurt to make their parfaits. Toppings could include a variety of fruit, granola, cereal, crushed graham crackers and seeds.



READING NOOK

Expand your lesson with these selected books about milk and cows!



Kitten's First Full Moon

BY KEVIN HENCKES
AGES 4-8



From Grass to Milk

BY STACY TAUS-BOLSTAD
AGES 4-8



Kiss the Cow

BY PHYLLIS ROOT
AGES 4-8

Just the Facts

- Pennsylvania ranks 7th in the U.S. in total milk production, with 500,000 cows producing more than 10.2 billion pounds of milk annually.
- Dairy is high in calcium and vitamin D to maintain strong bones and teeth, and is rich in potassium, which can promote healthy blood pressure.

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<https://www.paharvestofthemonth.org/index.php/downloads>
<https://thedairyalliance.com/blog/3-fun-milk-science-experiments>
<https://www.chopchopfamily.org/recipe/blueberry-banana-smoothie>

Leafy Greens



Did you know?

Leafy greens can include more delicate greens like lettuce and spinach, or heartier greens like kale and swiss chard. Lovers of cooler weather, they are generally in season in Pennsylvania in the spring and fall. If you have a garden space, greens can be planted as soon as the ground thaws in the spring. Greens prefer full sun, but will tolerate partial shade.

KALE	
Nutrition Facts	
Serving size	1 cup, cooked
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	50
% Daily Value	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polysaturated Fat 0g	
Monosaturated Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 20mg	1%
Total Carbohydrate 1g	0%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Total Sugars 0g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 3g	6%
Vitamin D 0mcg	
Calcium 177mg	
Iron 1mg	
Potassium 170mg	

*The Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

CLASSROOM RECIPE

Spinach Salad with Apples and Raisins

- Ingredients**
- 2/3 package baby spinach or any other greens (10 ounces, washed)
 - 1 1/2 apples (chopped)
 - 1 cup raisins
 - 1/4 cup canola oil
 - 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
 - 1/4 cup sugar
 - 1/16 teaspoon garlic powder (pinch)
- Directions**
- Combine spinach, apples and raisins.
 - Mix remaining ingredients and pour over salad just prior to serving.

NUTRITION INFORMATION

HOW MUCH DO I NEED?

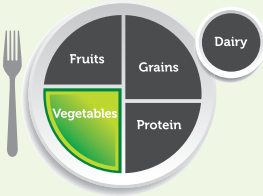
A 1/2 cup of cooked greens is about the same as two cups of raw leafy greens. The amount of fruits and vegetables each person needs depends on age, sex and physical activity level.

Recommended Daily Amounts of Vegetables

	5 – 8 yrs	9 – 13 yrs	13 – 18 yrs
Male	1½ – 2½ cups	2 – 3½ cups	2½ – 4 cups
Female	1½ – 2½ cups	1½ – 3 cups	2½ – 3 cups

Featured Resource

At [choosemyplate.gov](https://www.choosemyplate.gov), kids and adults can take a short quiz to learn more about their current daily nutrition habits and find resources for adjusting those habits to prioritize nutritious food based on federal dietary guidelines.



Explore Pennsylvania's Leafy Greens

What You Need

Leafy greens (e.g., spinach, kale, collards, bok choy)
Graph paper and colored pencils

Steps

1. Make a column on graph paper for each type of leafy green.
2. Observe, touch, smell and taste each leafy green variety.
3. As a class, compare and contrast the leafy green varieties.
4. Describe each leafy green in the appropriate column.
5. Take a poll to determine students' favorite leafy green variety

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY CORNER

Science Investigation

Using printed copies of a leafy green botanical image, paper and colored pencils:

- Define each of the labeled plant parts in the botanical image.
- Describe photosynthesis and its role in plant growth.
- Select one leafy green variety. Research how it grows from root cells to maturity. Make a sketch at each stage of development.

CAFETERIA CONNECTION

- Share results from taste test above with cafeteria staff.
- Encourage school nutrition staff to do weekly taste tests of different cooked greens. Offer to help prepare and serve taste tests.
- Organize a school-wide contest for students to vote for their favorite cooked greens variety.
- Suggest using local growers to supply greens for the salad bar, such as spinach, romaine lettuce and cabbage.



READING NOOK

Expand your lesson with these selected books about spinach!



Plants Feed Me

BY LIZZY ROCKWELL
AGES 3–6



Sylvia's Spinach

BY KATHERINE PRYOR
AGES 4–8



What, No Spinach?

BY EDWARD KNAPP
AGES 7–9

Just the Facts

- In Pennsylvania, leafy greens are harvested from April through November
- Leafy greens, like bok choy, collards, kale and Swiss chard, are an excellent source of vitamin A, C and K.
- Rich in folate, leafy greens are also a good source of iron, potassium and calcium.

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<https://www.myplate.gov/eat-healthy/what-is-myplate>
<https://www.paharvestofthemonth.org/index.php/downloads>

Asparagus



Did you know?

Asparagus is a hardy perennial, which means it grows back every year. It is a member of the lily family, closely related to onions and leeks. Asparagus is one of the first vegetables ready to harvest in the spring. It is native to the Mediterranean and was eaten by ancient Greeks and Romans, who cultivated asparagus over 2,500 years ago.

CLASSROOM RECIPE

Asparagus Appetizer

Ingredients

- 1 pound fresh baby asparagus (washed, trimmed at ends)
- 1 (15-ounce) can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 6 tablespoons balsamic vinaigrette

Directions

1. Cut asparagus into one-inch pieces and place in a large bowl.
2. Add black beans to the bowl.
3. Toss asparagus and beans with the vinaigrette until coated.
4. Place 2 tablespoons on a paper tray. Serve immediately.

ASPARAGUS

Nutrition Facts

Serving size	½ cup, cooked
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	20
% Daily Value	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polysaturated Fat 0g	
Monosaturated Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 15mg	1%
Total Carbohydrate 4g	1%
Dietary Fiber 2g	7%
Total Sugars 1g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 2g	4%
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 19mg	2%
Iron 1mg	6%
Potassium 174mg	4%

*The Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

NUTRITION INFORMATION

HOW MUCH DO I NEED?

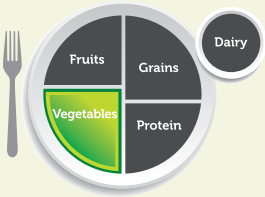
A ½ cup of cooked asparagus is about six asparagus spears. The amount of fruits and vegetables each person needs depends on age, sex and physical activity level.

Recommended Daily Amounts of Vegetables

	5 – 8 yrs	9 – 13 yrs	13 – 18 yrs
Male	1½ – 2½ cups	2 – 3½ cups	2½ – 4 cups
Female	1½ – 2½ cups	1½ – 3 cups	2½ – 3 cups

Featured Resource

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Explore Pennsylvania's Asparagus

What You Need

- 1 cooked spear per student and two raw spears per group*
- 2 cutting boards and 2 knives
- Whiteboard and pens

**Pre-cook asparagus by microwaving, or coordinate with school nutrition staff to cook and bring to the classroom. Use local asparagus, if possible.*

Steps

1. Distribute 2 raw spears to each student group. Have students feel and observe one spear; identify and record the parts of the spear.
2. Have students slice and taste the second spear; record observations.
3. Have students cut the first spear crosswise and lengthwise; identify and record internal structure.
4. Distribute 1 cooked spear to each student. Discuss changes that occur as asparagus cools (e.g., smell, color, texture).
5. When cool, have students slice spears into thirds and taste the tip, center and end; record differences.
6. Poll students to find out if they prefer raw versus cooked asparagus, and if they prefer one section of the spear over another, and why.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY CORNER

Asparagus Growing Experiment

Did you know that asparagus can continue to grow even after it's cut? Conduct an experiment in the classroom to calculate how much growth the asparagus has compared to other plants.

- Measure the length of a few spears of cut asparagus and tulips, daffodils* or any other type of lily, then place them in a clear container. Make sure the bottom third of the stems are always covered with water. After about a week, measure the lengths again. Record the results.

**Asparagus is related to the lily family, which also includes tulips. Daffodils are not a true lily, but they grow in abundance during early spring, so they're a great choice for this experiment.*

CAFETERIA CONNECTION

Conduct an Asparagus Trivia Contest in the school cafeteria. Share this newsletter with school nutrition staff to create sets of trivia information, questions and answers. Here are a few ideas to get started:

- Create table tents with trivia using asparagus facts.
- Place tents on cafeteria tables.
- Create trivia questions and distribute questionnaires to students in the lunch line (or as students enter the cafeteria).
- Students find answers while eating meals (from facts on table tents) and enter their questionnaire into a drawing for prizes.



READING NOOK

Expand your lesson with these selected books about fruits and vegetables!



Alphabet Soup: A Feast of Letters

BY SCOTT GUSTAFSON
AGES 4-8



Inch by Inch: The Garden Song

BY ORA EITAN
AGES 4-8



Night of the Veggie Monster GEORGE MCCLEMENTIS AGES 4-7

Just the Facts

- Asparagus is in season in PA from April through June.
- While PA grows asparagus locally, the largest asparagus-producing states are California, Michigan, New Jersey and Washington.
- Asparagus is an excellent source of folate and vitamin K, and a good source of vitamin C, vitamin A and thiamin.

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Sources:
Adapted from the CalFresh Healthy Living program
<https://extension.psu.edu/forage-and-food-crops/vegetables>
<https://www.mylate.gov/learn/healthy/what-is-mylate>
<https://www.paharvestofthemonth.org/index.php/downloads>
<https://cdn.agclassroom.org/ca/resources/tusd/taste/04asparagus.pdf>

Strawberries



Did you know?

Strawberries have grown wild in North America for thousands of years and are members of the same botanical family as the rose. Those ancient berries, cultivated by Native Americans in the mid 17th century, were small and not as tasty as the larger varieties we have today. In some cultures, strawberries are associated with mythology, medicine and good luck.

STRAWBERRIES

Nutrition Facts

Serving size 1 cup, fresh

Amount Per Serving
Calories 45

	% Daily Value
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polysaturated Fat 0g	
Monosaturated Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 0mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 11g	4%
Dietary Fiber 3g	11%
Total Sugars 7g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 1g	2%
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 20mg	2%
Iron 0.6mg	4%
Potassium 210mg	4%

*The Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

CLASSROOM RECIPE

Fruit Pizza

Ingredients

- 1 whole wheat English muffin
- 2 tablespoons whipped strawberry cream cheese
- 2 strawberries, sliced
- 2 grapes, sliced
- 2 slices mandarin oranges

Directions

1. Toast the English muffin until golden brown.
2. Spread cream cheese on toasted muffin.
3. Arrange sliced strawberries, grapes, and orange slices on top of the cream cheese.

NUTRITION INFORMATION

HOW MUCH DO I NEED?

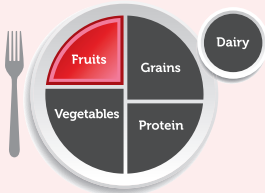
A 1/2 cup of sliced strawberries is about 4 large strawberries or 1 cupped handful. The amount of fruits and vegetables each person needs depends on age, sex and physical activity level.

Recommended Daily Amounts of Fruit

	5 – 8 yrs	9 – 13 yrs	13 – 18 yrs
Male	1 – 2 cups	1½ – 2 cups	1½ – 2 cups
Female	1 – 2 cups	1½ – 2 cups	2 – 2½ cups

Featured Resource

At [choosemyplate.gov](https://www.choosemyplate.gov), kids and adults can take a short quiz to learn more about their current daily nutrition habits and find resources for adjusting those habits to prioritize nutritious food based on federal dietary guidelines.



Explore Pennsylvania's Strawberries

What You Need

- Strawberries: 6 small, 6 large
- Paper
- Nutrition Facts label
- Colored pencils

Steps

1. Make 2 columns on a sheet of paper.
2. Explore and taste the large strawberries. Note in the first column the color, texture, smell and flavor.
3. Repeat with the small berries in the second column.
4. Compare and contrast the large and small strawberries. Which size was sweeter? Discuss what may affect the taste and size (variety, sun, water, etc.).
5. Review the Nutrition Facts label and talk about the health benefits of eating strawberries. Have students write down what they like best about strawberries and their favorite ways to eat them.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY CORNER

Creative Writing

Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of hand and machine harvesting fruits and vegetables.

History Exploration

Trace the history of the cross-pollination of the Virginia and Chilean berries. Research some medicinal uses of strawberries.

Science Investigation

Without cross-pollination, we would not have the strawberry genotypes available today. Explain what a genotype is. Explain the cross-pollination process versus self-pollination.

CAFETERIA CONNECTION

Partner with school nutrition staff to conduct a contest over several days in the cafeteria. Ask questions, such as:

- Why is it important to eat foods containing vitamin C?
- What is the average number of seeds on a strawberry?
- What is the Spanish word for strawberry?
- What is the botanical name for strawberry?

You can also create your own questions. Post questions on the cafeteria bulletin board at the beginning of the week, then the answers on Friday. Draw names of the winners and have a Strawberry Smoothie Party.



READING NOOK

Expand your lesson with these selected books about strawberries!



The First Strawberries

A CHEROKEE STORY RETOLD
BY JOSEPH BRUCHAC
AGES 3–5



The Little Mouse, the Red Ripe Strawberry, and the Big Hungry Bear

BY AUDREY WOOD
AND DON WOOD
AGES 4–7



The Grey Lady and the Strawberry Snatcher

BY MOLLY BANG
AGES 4–8

Just the Facts

- Grown in every state of the U.S., strawberries are the first to ripen in PA and their short growing season is in May and June.
- Strawberries provide an excellent source of vitamin C —more than 80% of the recommended daily value.

paharvestofthemonth.org



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Sources:
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<https://www.myplate.gov/eat-healthy/what-is-myplate>
<https://www.paharvestofthemonth.org/index.php/downloads>

Beets



Did you know?

Beets are globe-shaped root vegetables that most commonly are a deep reddish purple but can range in color from shades of red to white and yellow. The deep red color comes from a natural plant pigment that has disease-fighting properties. When cut transversely, the roots show light and dark rings. The beet leaves, or beet tops, are also edible.

BEETS

Nutrition Facts

Serving size	½ cup
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	45
% Daily Value	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polysaturated Fat 0g	
Monosaturated Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 40mg	2%
Total Carbohydrate 10g	4%
Dietary Fiber 2g	7%
Total Sugars 7g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 1g	2%
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 26mg	2%
Iron 0mg	0%
Potassium 282mg	6%

*The Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

CLASSROOM RECIPE

Mandarin Beet Salad

Ingredients

- 4 cups canned beets, drained
- 2 cups canned mandarin oranges in 100% juice, drained (reserve ¼ cup juice)
- 2 cups of currants or raisins

Directions

- Combine beets, mandarins, currants and ¼ cup of reserved juice in a bowl. Mix well.
- Place ¼-cup scoops on plates. Serve immediately or chill.

NUTRITION INFORMATION

HOW MUCH DO I NEED?

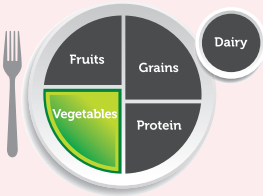
One cup of beets is about the size of two small beets. The amount of fruits and vegetables each person needs depends on age, sex and physical activity level.

Recommended Daily Amounts of Vegetables

	5 – 8 yrs	9 – 13 yrs	13 – 18 yrs
Male	1½ – 2½ cups	2 – 3½ cups	2½ – 4 cups
Female	1½ – 2½ cups	1½ – 3 cups	2½ – 3 cups

Featured Resource

At [choosemyplate.gov](https://www.choosemyplate.gov), kids and adults can take a short quiz to learn more about their current daily nutrition habits and find resources for adjusting those habits to prioritize nutritious food based on federal dietary guidelines.



Explore Pennsylvania's Beets

What You Need

- 1 cup of raw beets, sliced
- 1 cup cooked beets, sliced
- 1 cup of canned beets (no salt added)
- 1 cup of cooked beet greens
- Nutrition Facts labels of beets (both raw and cooked) and beet greens (cooked)

Steps

1. Make a 4" x 5" chart labeling the columns by each of the 4 varieties of beets (raw, cooked, canned, greens). Label rows by the 5 senses.
2. Examine each variety and record observations in the chart. Discuss findings as a class.
3. Make a Venn diagram for raw and cooked beets. Use the Nutrition Facts labels to record the similarities and differences.
4. Draw another Venn diagram and repeat for cooked beets and cooked beet greens.
5. Take a poll of students' favorite variety. Share results with school nutrition staff.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY CORNER

Sprout a Beet

- Gather the following materials: beets, sand, soil, water, knife and bowls or saucers.
- Cut a beet's root so that ½" remains; cut the stems (if still attached) so that ½" remains.
- Press each, root facing down, into bowls filled with sand, soil and water: the sand and soil should be ~½" deep and the water ~¼" deep.
- Place in a window with good light. Soon, leaves will begin to sprout from the tops of the beets.
- Have students observe the growth of the leaves over time.

CAFETERIA CONNECTION

Work with school nutrition staff to help students learn how to read nutrition labels and determine what is a healthy meal or snack.

- Invite school nutrition staff to explain the parts of a Nutrition Facts label.
- Ask school nutrition staff to display Nutrition Facts labels for all produce items in the salad bar.
- Ask students how they would like to support the cafeteria to provide healthier menu options. Encourage students to submit ideas to school nutrition staff.

READING NOOK

Expand your lesson with these selected books, and even a comic, about beets!



The Gigantic Turnip

BY ALEKSEI TOLSTOY,
NIAMH SHARKEY AND
IMELDA STAUNTON
AGES 3–7



The Ugly Vegetables

BY GRACE LIN
AGES 4–8



Oliver's Vegetables

BY VIVIAN FRENCH
AGES 3–18

Just the Facts

- In Pennsylvania, beets are available from June through December.
- Beets are a good source of folate, manganese, potassium and riboflavin.
- Beets are rich in vitamin K, A and C.



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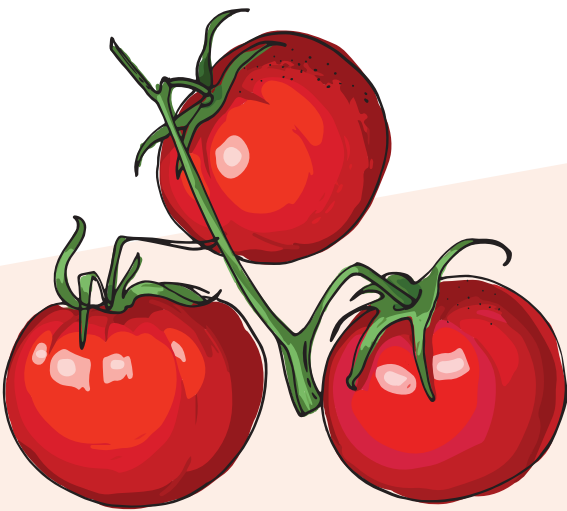
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<https://www.paharvestofthemonth.org/index.php/downloads>
<https://greenmountainfarmtoschool.org/programs/farm-to-school/>

Tomatoes



Did you know?

Tomatoes were first cultivated in the Andes, and are the most commonly grown crop in North American gardens. For centuries, many Americans believed tomatoes were poisonous. Tomatoes are a part of the nightshade family which includes peppers, tomatillos, eggplant and potatoes. There are over 25,000 varieties of tomatoes available.

CHERRY TOMATOES

Nutrition Facts

Serving size1 cup, fresh

Amount Per Serving
Calories30

	% Daily Value
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polysaturated Fat 0g	
Monosaturated Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 10mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 6g	2%
Dietary Fiber 2g	7%
Total Sugars 4g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 1g	2%
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 14.9mg	2%
Iron 0mg	0%
Potassium 353mg	8%

*The Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

CLASSROOM RECIPE

Tomato Salad with Basil and Feta Cheese

Ingredients

- 4 large red tomatoes, cored and diced
- ½ cup crumbled feta cheese
- ¼ cup chopped basil
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ¼ teaspoon salt

Directions

- Put the tomatoes, feta and basil in the bowl.
- Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with salt.
- Serve right away or cover and refrigerate up to overnight.

NUTRITION INFORMATION

HOW MUCH DO I NEED?

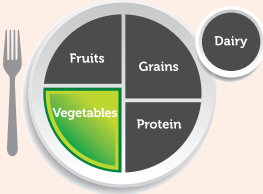
A ½ cup of sliced tomatoes is about one cupped handful, or one small tomato. The amount of fruits and vegetables each person needs depends on age, sex and physical activity level.

Recommended Daily Amounts of Vegetables

	5 – 8 yrs	9 – 13 yrs	13 – 18 yrs
Male	1½ – 2½ cups	2 – 3½ cups	2½ – 4 cups
Female	1½ – 2½ cups	1½ – 3 cups	2½ – 3 cups

Featured Resource

At [choosemyplate.gov](https://www.choosemyplate.gov), kids and adults can take a short quiz to learn more about their current daily nutrition habits and find resources for adjusting those habits to prioritize nutritious food based on federal dietary guidelines.



Explore Pennsylvania's Tomatoes

What You Need

- 3–5 varieties of tomatoes (1 tomato of each variety per every 4 students)
- Cutting boards and knives
- Dry erase board and markers

Steps

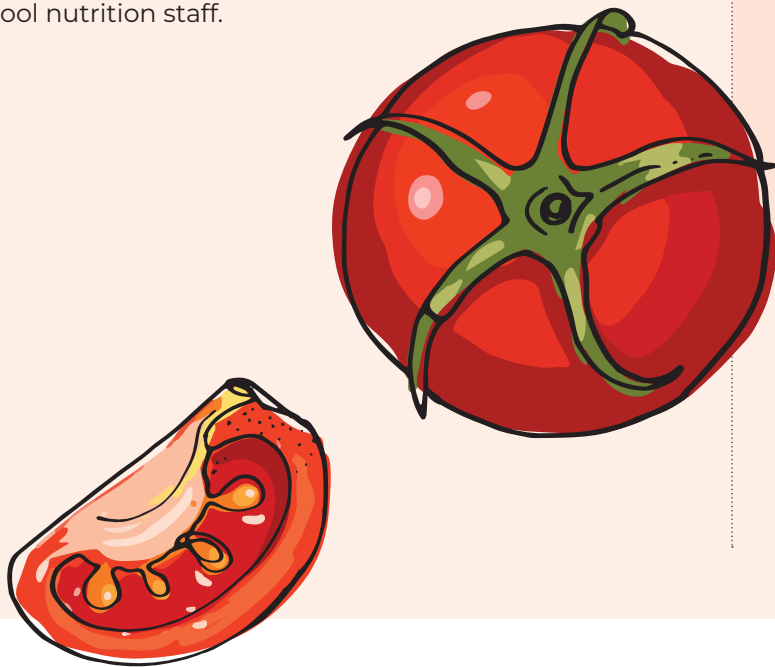
1. Label 5 columns on board: smell, sound, look, texture and taste.
2. Label rows according to tomato varieties.
3. Guide students to observe, smell, feel and taste tomatoes.
4. Note students' observations on board.
5. Discuss similarities and differences among varieties.
6. Graph each student's favorite variety on board to determine overall class favorite.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY CORNER

Many factors affect agricultural production. Techniques like selective breeding, genetic engineering and more efficient farming practices have allowed growers to produce crops that are more plentiful, safer for the environment, more nutritious and better tasting. Research how tomato production has evolved with advancing technology.

CAFETERIA CONNECTION

- Ask school nutrition staff to offer different salsas when serving tacos, taco salad or burritos. Suggest including salsa in the baked potato and garden bar.
- Conduct a survey during the lunch hour asking students about their favorite ways to eat tomatoes.
- Select a team of Student Advocates to help identify local tomato growers or distributors who can sell tomatoes to the school/district.
- Share list with school nutrition staff.



READING NOOK

Expand your lesson with these selected books about tomatoes!



Bear and Bunny Grow Tomatoes
BY BRUCE KOSCIELNIAK
AGES 2–4



Blue Potatoes Orange Tomatoes
BY ROSALIND CREASY
AGES 7–11



Tomatoes Grow on a Vine
BY MARI SCHUH
AGES 4–8

Just the Facts

- Tomato varieties that grow best in PA: Mister Stripy, Brandywine Red, Sunbeam and Gold Nugget.
- Tomatoes are in season in PA from early June to late October.
- Tomatoes are a good source of vitamins A, C, K and potassium.

paharvestofthemonth.org

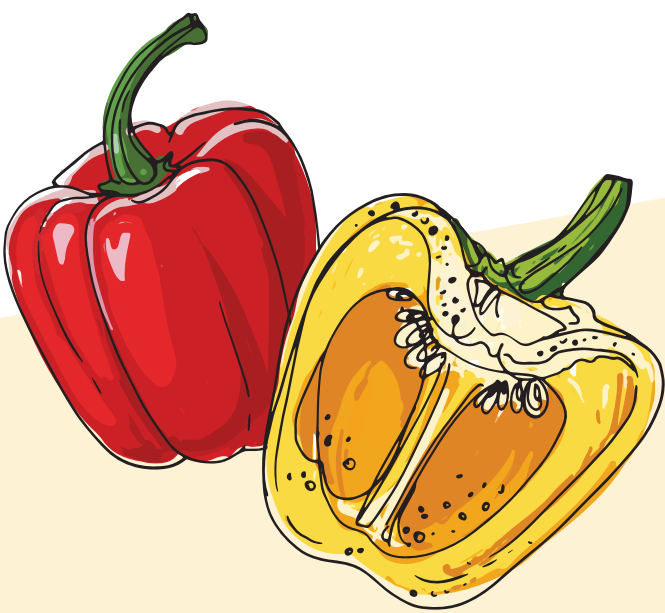


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Peppers



Did you know?

Peppers come in a variety of shapes, sizes, and colors, and range in taste. With their many interesting shapes, peppers are ideal for container gardens or edible landscaping. Peppers thrive in full sun and warm weather, but can be a challenge to grow in cooler summers. Peppers can generally be classified into two groups: mild or sweet, and hot or pungent.

RED BELL PEPPER

Nutrition Facts

Serving size	1 cup, raw
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	30
% Daily Value	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polysaturated Fat 0g	
Monosaturated Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 0mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 6g	2%
Dietary Fiber 2g	7%
Total Sugars 4g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 1g	2%
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 6mg	0%
Iron 0mg	0%
Potassium 213mg	4%

*The Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

CLASSROOM RECIPE

Rainbow Wraps

Ingredients

- 4 whole wheat tortillas
- 8 tablespoons ranch dressing
- 1 tomato, sliced
- 1 yellow bell pepper, sliced
- ¼ cup shredded carrot
- 2 cups spinach leaves
- 1 cup shredded red cabbage

Directions

1. Spread 2 tablespoons of ranch onto the inside of each tortilla.
2. Place ¼ of each vegetable into the tortilla.
3. Gently fold in the bottom and roll up your tortilla to make the wrap.
4. Cut in half to reveal the rainbow and serve. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

NUTRITION INFORMATION

HOW MUCH DO I NEED?

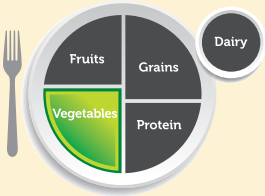
A 1/2 cup of chopped peppers is about one small pepper. The amount of fruits and vegetables each person needs depends on age, sex and physical activity level.

Recommended Daily Amounts of Vegetables

	5 – 8 yrs	9 – 13 yrs	13 – 18 yrs
Male	1½ – 2½ cups	2 – 3½ cups	2½ – 4 cups
Female	1½ – 2½ cups	1½ – 3 cups	2½ – 3 cups

Featured Resource

At [choosemyplate.gov](https://www.choosemyplate.gov), kids and adults can take a short quiz to learn more about their current daily nutrition habits and find resources for adjusting those habits to prioritize nutritious food based on federal dietary guidelines.



Explore Pennsylvania's Peppers

What You Need

3 bell peppers (1 each: green, yellow/orange, red)
Graph paper and colored pencils

Paring knives and cutting boards
Printed botanical image of a bell pepper

Steps

1. Make predictions if the 3 colors of peppers will smell and taste different.
2. Explore the look, feel, and smell of each. Record observations.
3. Cut open the peppers. Record observations of color, smell and texture of the interiors.
4. Draw a cross-section diagram and compare to botanical image. Label parts.
5. Taste each bell pepper and record observations.
6. Discuss predictions and observations. Take a vote of students' favorite.

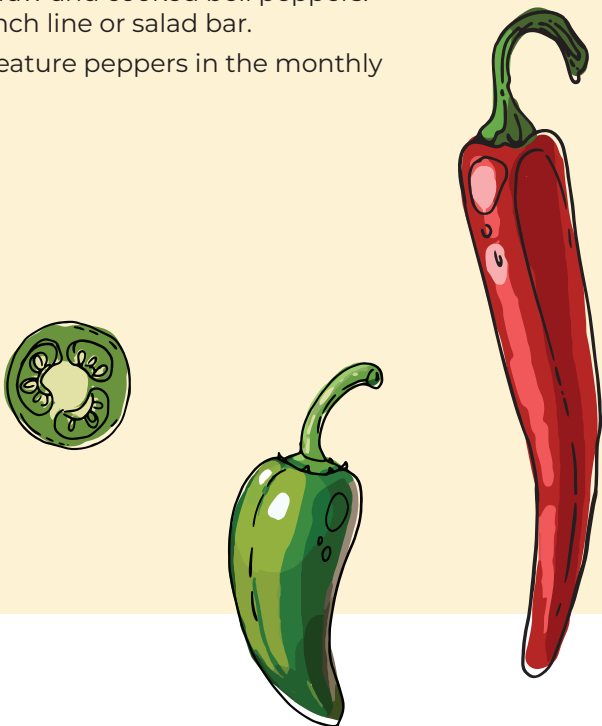
CLASSROOM ACTIVITY CORNER

Botanical Investigation

- Cut a bell pepper, eggplant and tomato in half.
- Draw a cross-section diagram for each and label the parts. (Download a botanical image for assistance at: harvestofthemonth.com)
- Compare and contrast the differences.
- Use a microscope or magnifying glass to compare the flesh and seeds.
- Share findings as a class and discuss how the seeds differ from other plants that are not a part of the nightshade family (e.g., green beans and squash).

CAFETERIA CONNECTION

- Work with your school nutrition staff to feature peppers.
- Dry hot peppers by stringing them on a "ristra."
- Conduct a taste test of raw and cooked bell peppers. Offer samples in the lunch line or salad bar.
- Print menu slicks and feature peppers in the monthly school menu.



READING NOOK

Expand your lesson with these selected books about peppers and other vegetables!



The Vegetables We Eat

BY GALE GIBBONS
AGES 2-5



A Very Purple Pepper

BY PEGGY SISSEL PHELAN
AGES 3-8



*Cool as a Cucumber,
Hot as a Pepper:
Fruits and Vegetables*

BY MEREDITH
SAYLES HUGHES
AGES 9-13

Just the Facts

- PA has the largest number of bell pepper growers in the U.S., with 1,038 of 4,338 vegetable growers producing them.
- Peppers are harvested in PA from July through October.
- Peppers are an excellent source of vitamin C, and a good source of vitamins A, K and B6.

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<https://www.paharvestofthemonth.org/index.php/downloads>
<https://foodbankcny.org/nutrition-information/recipes/rainbow-wraps>

Apples

Did you know?

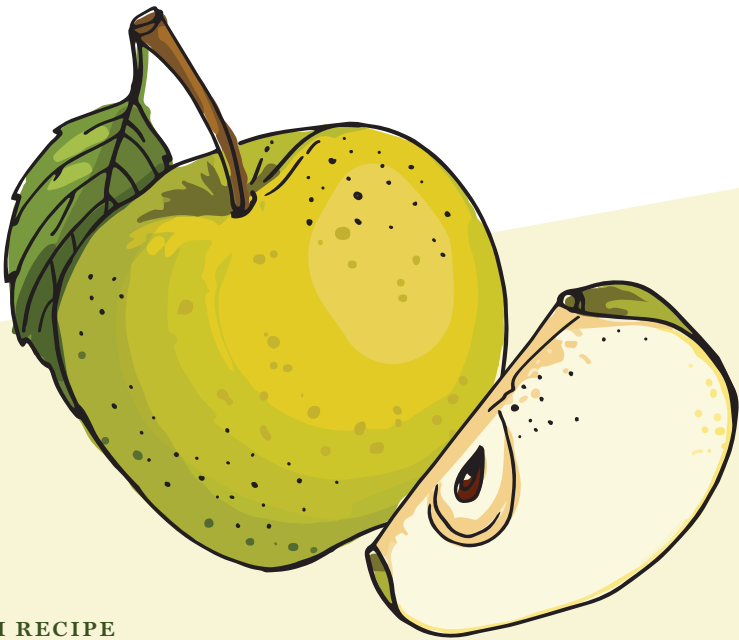
Apples have grown in the wild since ancient times, although those early apples are closer to what we know as a crab apple, which is small and very sour. Now, there are about 7,500 apple varieties grown throughout the world. Apples can be large or small, sweet or tart, and come in a variety of colors—some are even pink on the inside!

FUJI APPLE

Nutrition Facts

Serving size	1 small
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	90
	% Daily Value
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polysaturated Fat 0g	
Monosaturated Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 0mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 23g	8%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 17g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 1g	2%
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 13mg	0%
Iron 0mg	0%
Potassium 188mg	4%

*The Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.



CLASSROOM RECIPE

Apple Sandwiches

Ingredients

- 1 medium apple
- 2 tablespoons peanut butter
- 1 tablespoon raisins

Prep time: 10 minutes

Servings: 2

Directions

1. Cut the apple in half from the stem down and lay each half, cut-side down, on a cutting board. Slice each half into 6 half-round slices and cut out the core.
2. Spread ½ teaspoon peanut butter on one side of each apple slice.
3. Put 4 to 6 raisins on top of the peanut butter on one apple slice. Top with another apple slice, peanut-butter side down. Squeeze gently.
4. Continue with remaining apple slices. Vary your apple “sandwich” using different nut butters and dried fruits.

NUTRITION INFORMATION

HOW MUCH DO I NEED?

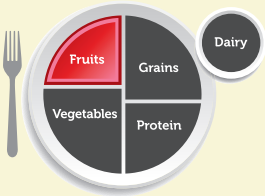
1 small apple, about the size of a tennis ball, is about 1 cup of fruit. The amount of fruits and vegetables each person needs depends on age, sex and physical activity level.

Recommended Daily Amounts of Fruit

	5 – 8 yrs	9 – 13 yrs	13 – 18 yrs
Male	1 – 2 cups	1½ – 2 cups	1½ – 2 cups
Female	1 – 2 cups	1½ – 2 cups	2 – 2½ cups

Featured Resource

At [choosemyplate.gov](https://www.choosemyplate.gov), kids and adults can take a short quiz to learn more about their current daily nutrition habits and find resources for adjusting those habits to prioritize nutritious food based on federal dietary guidelines.



Explore Pennsylvania's Apples

What You Need

3–5 sliced apples of a different variety (each)
Graph paper and colored pencils

Steps

1. Observe, touch, smell and taste each apple variety.
2. Develop a color graph using appearance, texture, smell, flavor and sound.
3. Compare and contrast the varieties.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY CORNER

Creative Writing

Have students interview and document their parents' favorite apple stories, memories and recipes.

Science Investigation

Oxidation is the browning reaction that occurs when the atoms in an apple come in contact with air and lose electrons.

- Cut two apples in half.
- Pour one tablespoon of lemon juice over the first half.
- Pour one tablespoon of water over the second half.
- Pour one tablespoon of apple juice over the third half.
- Do not pour anything over the fourth half.
- Leave all four halves in a visible spot in the classroom.
- After one hour, have students note the differences in the browning to see which method works best and why.

CAFETERIA CONNECTION

- Suggest that students investigate which types of apples are used in the cafeteria.
- Talk with the school nutrition staff to find out why these varieties are selected.
- Then, write letters to the school nutrition staff promoting the benefits of locally grown apples (cost, flavor, etc.).
- Have other staff encourage participation by awarding extra points to students caught eating fruits or vegetables (in school meals or as healthy snacks).



READING NOOK

Expand your lesson with these selected books about fruits and vegetables!



Alphabet Soup: A Feast of Letters

BY SCOTT GUSTAFSON
AGES 4–8



Inch by Inch: The Garden Song

BY ORA EITAN
AGES 4–8



Up Down and Around

BY KATHERINE AYRES
AND NADINE
BERNARD WESCOTT
AGES 2–5

Just the Facts

- About 400–500 million pounds of apples are produced in PA every year.
- The majority of PA apple production is centered in the south-central region of the state.
- One-third of PA's apple crop is sold fresh; the remainder is processed for apple cider, applesauce, pies and juice.
- Apples are packed with nutrients and are an excellent source of dietary fiber.

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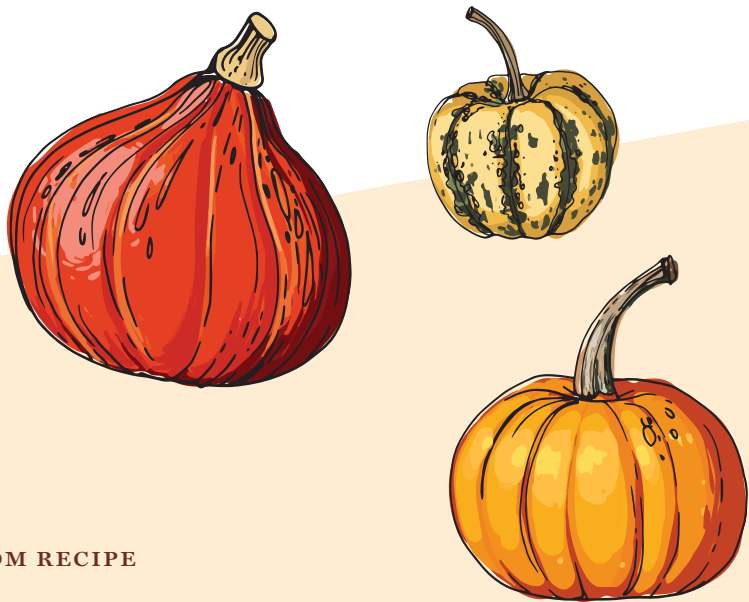
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SNAP-Ed
Pennsylvania

Healthy Food.
Healthy Moves.
Healthy YOU.

Sources:
Adapted from the CalFresh Healthy Living program
<https://extension.psu.edu/forage-and-food-crops/vegetables>
<https://www.myplate.gov/eat-healthy/what-is-myplate>
<https://www.paharvestofthemonth.org/index.php/downloads>

Winter Squash



Did you know?

Winter squashes were first cultivated in a region of present-day Mexico over 9,000 years ago, where their shells were often used for food and drink containers. The word *squash* comes from *askutasquash*, the Narragansett word for “the things that may be eaten raw.” Winter squash varieties include acorn, pumpkin, delicata and spaghetti.

PUMPKIN	
Nutrition Facts	
Serving size	½ cup
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	30
% Daily Value	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polysaturated Fat 0g	
Monosaturated Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 0mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 7g	3%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Total Sugars 2g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 1g	2%
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 24mg	2%
Iron 1mg	6%
Potassium 298mg	6%

*The Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

CLASSROOM RECIPE

Pumpkin Pudding

Ingredients

- 1 (15-ounce) can pumpkin or
2 cups cooked mashed squash
(such as Hubbard)
2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
(or 1 teaspoon cinnamon, ½
teaspoon ginger, ¼ teaspoon
nutmeg and ¼ teaspoon cloves)
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
1½ cups milk
1 (4-serving) package instant
vanilla pudding mix

Directions

1. In a large bowl, mix pumpkin, pumpkin pie spice and salt together.
2. Slowly stir in milk and mix well.
3. Add instant pudding mix and stir for 2 minutes until it thickens.
4. Refrigerate until serving time. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

NUTRITION INFORMATION

HOW MUCH DO I NEED?

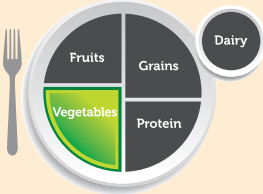
A ½ cup winter squash is about one cupped handful. The amount of fruits and vegetables each person needs depends on age, sex and physical activity level.

Recommended Daily Amounts of Vegetables

	5 – 8 yrs	9 – 13 yrs	13 – 18 yrs
Male	1½ – 2½ cups	2 – 3½ cups	2½ – 4 cups
Female	1½ – 2½ cups	1½ – 3 cups	2½ – 3 cups

Featured Resource

At [choosemyplate.gov](https://www.choosemyplate.gov), kids and adults can take a short quiz to learn more about their current daily nutrition habits and find resources for adjusting those habits to prioritize nutritious food based on federal dietary guidelines.



Explore Pennsylvania's Winter Squash

What You Need

3–5 different winter squash varieties (1 each variety per every four students), whole and sliced

Nutrition Facts labels for each variety
Dry erase board and markers

Steps

1. Examine squash noting color (skin and flesh), texture, sound and smell.
2. Chart observations on board.
3. Analyze nutrition information. Chart the 3 highest nutrient levels.
4. Compare and contrast varieties.
5. Discuss differences in nutrient levels and how they may be related to characteristics like flesh color.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY CORNER

Celebrate National School Lunch Week by having students write journal entries every day of what they ate for lunch. Have students write journal entries every day for a week of what they ate for lunch. Have students monitor how they feel (e.g. tired, energetic, etc.). Use the [NutritionData® Data Entry tool](#) to complete a nutrient analysis of their lunches. Compare journal entries between school lunches and lunches from home.

CAFETERIA CONNECTION

Winter squash are available in many varieties. Butternut, acorn and spaghetti are most common, but students may not be as familiar with others like banana and kabocha. Help students taste and learn about different varieties.

- Work with your school nutrition staff to set up a “Winter Squash” display in the cafeteria. Label each variety and provide the nutrition information.
- Invite school nutrition staff to help with the Explore Pennsylvania’s Winter Squash activity (above).
- Organize a “Squash Naming” contest. Display a number of winter squash and post the variety names above in scrambled order. Ask students to match the name with the correct variety.



READING NOOK

Expand your lesson with these selected books about different squashes!



Carlos and the Squash Plant

BY JAN ROMERO STEVENS
AGES 4–8



Mrs. McNosh and the Great Big Squash

BY SARAH WEEKS
AGES 3–7



Pumpkin Circle: The Story of a Garden

BY GEORGE LEVENSON
AGES 3–8

Just the Facts

- Winter squash is one of the oldest-known crops in PA, and is in season July to December.
- To make pie, pilgrims hollowed out a pumpkin, filled it with apples, sugar, spices and milk, then put the stem back on to bake.
- Squash provides an excellent source of vitamin A.

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Sources:
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<https://www.mypate.gov/eat-healthy/what-is-mypate>
<https://www.paharvestofthemonth.org/index.php/downloads>
<https://www.foodhero.org/recipes/pumpkin-pudding>

Cabbage

Did you know?

The word cabbage comes from the Old French word *caboche*, which means *head*. This is probably why we often use the phrase *a head of cabbage*. The cabbage we recognize today was cultivated 2,000 years ago in the Mediterranean region, but its wild ancestor was likely used for medicinal purposes. Today cabbage is a staple in many cuisines worldwide.



CLASSROOM RECIPE

Kiwi Pineapple Slaw

Ingredients

- 1 cup pineapple, drained (reserve 3 tablespoons of juice)
- 3 cups finely shredded cabbage (about ½ head)
- 1½ cups peeled and chopped kiwi (about 3 medium kiwi)
- ½ cup chopped celery (about 1 stalk)
- ¼ cup raisins
- ¼ cup mayonnaise or Greek yogurt

Directions

- Cut pineapple into bite-size pieces. Combine with cabbage, kiwi, celery and raisins in a large bowl.
- Stir pineapple juice into mayonnaise until smooth. Add to cabbage mixture, tossing gently. Serve.

NAPA CABBAGE

Nutrition Facts

Serving size	1 cup, cooked
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	10
	% Daily Value
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polysaturated Fat 0g	
Monosaturated Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 60mg	3%
Total Carbohydrate 2g	1%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Total Sugars 1g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 1g	2%
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 96mg	8%
Iron 1mg	6%
Potassium 229mg	4%

*The Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

NUTRITION INFORMATION

HOW MUCH DO I NEED?

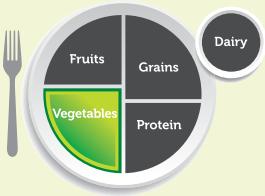
A ½ cup of cabbage is about one cupped handful. The amount of fruits and vegetables each person needs depends on age, sex and physical activity level.

Recommended Daily Amounts of Vegetables

	5 – 8 yrs	9 – 13 yrs	13 – 18 yrs
Male	1½ – 2½ cups	2 – 3½ cups	2½ – 4 cups
Female	1½ – 2½ cups	1½ – 3 cups	2½ – 3 cups

Featured Resource

At [choosemyplate.gov](https://www.choosemyplate.gov), kids and adults can take a short quiz to learn more about their current daily nutrition habits and find resources for adjusting those habits to prioritize nutritious food based on federal dietary guidelines.



Explore Pennsylvania's Cabbage

What You Need

Green, red (or purple), savoy and Chinese cabbage varieties; 2 heads of each variety for entire class
Small sample cups (4 cups each per group)

Nutrition Facts labels for each cabbage variety
Whiteboard and markers
Cutting board and knife
Optional: Paper and pencils

Steps

1. Wash and drain 1 head of each cabbage variety. Chop and fill sample cups, keeping varieties separate. Label cups, cover and set aside.
2. Display 4 remaining cabbage heads in front of room. Compare different types of cabbages' nutrient values using the labels.
3. Distribute sample cups to groups, one variety at a time. Observe tastes, colors and textures. Record student observations on board.
4. Discuss similarities and differences between cabbage varieties.
5. Vote on a class favorite.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY CORNER

Science Investigation

Use cabbage juice to determine whether a substance is an acid or base.

- Open a can of cabbage and drain cabbage juice into a bowl.
- Put 2 tablespoons of juice each into 3 glass jars.
- Add 1 tablespoon of vinegar to first jar. Record color of juice.
- Add 1 tablespoon of baking soda to second jar. Record juice color.
- Add 1 tablespoon of distilled water to third jar. Record juice color.
- Discuss results.

CAFETERIA CONNECTION

Promote students' health by incorporating more cabbage into school meals. Gradually replace items that typically use shredded lettuce or lettuce pieces with shredded cabbage. Start with one-quarter of the cabbage mixture and work up to one-half.



READING NOOK

Expand your lesson with these selected books about cabbage and other vegetables!



The Cabbage Soup Solution

BY ERIKA OLLER
AGES 4–8



A Green, Green Garden

BY MERCER MAYER
AGES 4–8



The Vegetables We Eat

BY GAIL GIBSON
AGES 2–5

Just the Facts

- Cabbage is in season in PA from June through December.
- Cabbage is grown on about 1,200 acres of land in PA, ranking the state 13th in cabbage production in the nation.
- There are nearly 360 cabbage farms in PA.
- Cabbage is an excellent source of vitamins C and K.

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<https://www.myplate.gov/eat-healthy/what-is-myplate>
<https://www.paharvestofthemonth.org/index.php/downloads>
<https://www.foodhero.org/recipes/kiwi-pineapple-slaw>

Broccoli

Did you know?

This tree-like dark green vegetable is a member of the mustard family and is closely related to cauliflower and cabbage. Broccoli is native to the Mediterranean and was cultivated in ancient Rome. Although first commercially grown in the United States in the early 1920s, it did not become popular until after World War II.



CLASSROOM RECIPE

Fruity Broccoli Slaw

Ingredients

- 1 (12-ounce) bag broccoli slaw

½ cup shredded or diced cheddar cheese

¼ cup dried fruit (raisins, etc.)

1 teaspoon mustard

1 tablespoon + 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice or vinegar

½ teaspoon salt

Pinch black pepper

¼ cup toasted nuts (any kind), chopped

Directions

1.

Put all the ingredients in the bowl except the nuts and mix well. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour.
2.

Add the nuts and mix well. Taste the salad. Add more lemon juice, pepper or a pinch of salt, if needed. Serve right away.

BROCCOLI

Nutrition Facts

Serving size	½ cup, cooked
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	15
	% Daily Value
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polysaturated Fat 0g	
Monosaturated Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 0mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 4g	1%
Dietary Fiber 2g	7%
Total Sugars 2g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 1g	2%
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 17mg	2%
Iron 0mg	0%
Potassium 115mg	2%

*The Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

NUTRITION INFORMATION

HOW MUCH DO I NEED?

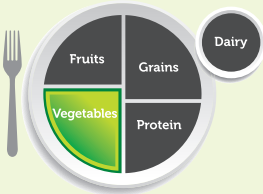
A ½ cup of broccoli is about one cupped handful. The amount of fruits and vegetables each person needs depends on age, sex and physical activity level.

Recommended Daily Amounts of Vegetables

	5 – 8 yrs	9 – 13 yrs	13 – 18 yrs
Male	1½ – 2½ cups	2 – 3½ cups	2½ – 4 cups
Female	1½ – 2½ cups	1½ – 3 cups	2½ – 3 cups

Featured Resource

At [choosemyplate.gov](https://www.choosemyplate.gov), kids and adults can take a short quiz to learn more about their current daily nutrition habits and find resources for adjusting those habits to prioritize nutritious food based on federal dietary guidelines.



Explore Pennsylvania's Broccoli

What You Need

¾ cup each of broccoli prepared in a minimum of three ways (e.g., raw/fresh, microwave from fresh, microwave from frozen)

Nutrition Facts label
Paper and colored pencils

Steps

1. Try each kind of broccoli noting differences in taste, smell, color and texture.
2. Compare the Nutrition Facts labels for the different broccoli preparations. Discuss which forms are more nutritious and why.
3. Rate the prepared broccoli varieties from least to most favorite, using a numeric scale (e.g., 1 to 5).
4. Survey other students and develop a pie chart depicting the different broccoli preferences .

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY CORNER

Field Trip

To generate awareness of the variety of fruit and vegetable products available at the grocery store, take students on a tour of the produce department. Contact the produce manager to help facilitate the tour and have students write down three questions in advance for a Q&A session.

Nutrition Analysis

- Ask students to track for 5 days how many servings they eat from each food group. Have them make a pie chart depicting the percentages of each food group. (Example: 20 percent fruits, 25 percent vegetables, 10 percent dairy, etc.)
- Ask students to create another pie chart breaking down just the vegetables they ate during the five days. (Example: 10 percent broccoli, 20 percent potatoes, etc.)
- What was the percentage of broccoli consumed across all food groups? requirements as 100 cups of broccoli? How much vitamin A, vitamin C, and fiber would there be?

CAFETERIA CONNECTION

Coordinate a schoolwide Fruit and Vegetable Challenge. After lunch, students can record the number of fruits and vegetables they ate at breakfast and lunch, and as snacks, using their classroom's Challenge Chart. Use the cafeteria bulletin board to track the progress of each participating classroom. Have other staff encourage participation by awarding extra points to students caught eating fruits or vegetables (in school meals or as healthy snacks).

READING NOOK

Expand your lesson with these selected books about broccoli!



Broccoli Bob and the Organic Outlaws

BY KARYN DRUM
AGES 8–12



Eat Your Broccoli

BY KARI YATES
AGES 4–8



Monsters Don't Eat Broccoli

BY BARBARA JEAN HICKS
AGES 2–4

Just the Facts

- Broccoli is in season in PA from May through November.
- While PA produces broccoli, the leading broccoli-producing states are California, Arizona, Texas and Oregon.
- Broccoli is an excellent source of vitamins A, C and K and folate, as well as a good source of fiber.



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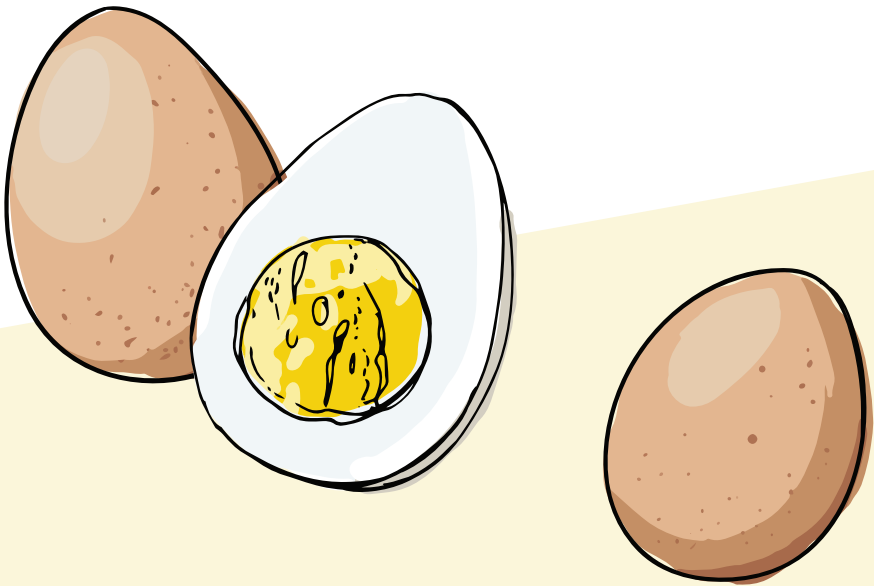


Sources:
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<https://www.paharvestofthemonth.org/index.php/downloads>

Eggs

Did you know?

About 75 billion eggs are produced in the U.S. every year—about 10% of all eggs produced in the world! The color of an egg’s shell is a reflection of the breed of hen. If a chicken has white earlobes, they will lay white eggs, whereas if they have greenish blue lobes, they will lay greenish blue eggs. The hen’s diet determines the color and flavor of the egg yolk.



CLASSROOM ACTIVITY CORNER

Dragon Eggs

Supplies

- Hard-boiled eggs
- Boiling water
- White vinegar
- Food coloring

Instructions

1. Make a dye solution by mixing ½ cup of boiling water, 1 teaspoon of vinegar, and 10–20 drops of food coloring in a cup.
2. Have each student lightly tap one hard-boiled egg on a hard, flat surface. The shell should lightly crack on all sides but not come off.
3. Using a spoon, have the students dip their eggs in the cups of dye and let them sit for 5 minutes.
4. After 5 minutes, remove the eggs from the dye and allow them to dry on a paper towel or in the carton.
5. Once dry, have the students remove the shells and reveal their dragon-like egg designs!

EGG

Nutrition Facts

Serving size1 large

Amount Per Serving
Calories70

	% Daily Value
Total Fat 5g	6%
Saturated Fat 1.5g	8%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polysaturated Fat 0g	
Monosaturated Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 185mg	62%
Sodium 70mg	3%
Total Carbohydrate 0g	0%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Total Sugars 0g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 6g	12%
Vitamin D 1.2mcg	6%
Calcium 26mg	2%
Iron 1.08mg	6%
Potassium 94mg	2%

*The Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

NUTRITION INFORMATION

HOW MUCH DO I NEED?

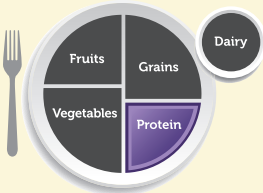
1 egg is considered one ounce equivalent of protein. The amount of protein each person needs depends on age, sex and physical activity level.

Recommended Daily Amounts of Protein

	5 – 8 yrs	9 – 13 yrs	13 – 18 yrs
Male	2 – 5 ounces	4 – 6 ounces	5 – 6½ ounces
Female	2 – 5½ ounces	5 – 6½ ounces	5½ –7 ounces

Featured Resource

At [choosemyplate.gov](https://www.choosemyplate.gov), kids and adults can take a short quiz to learn more about their current daily nutrition habits and find resources for adjusting those habits to prioritize nutritious food based on federal dietary guidelines.



Explore Pennsylvania's Eggs

What You Need

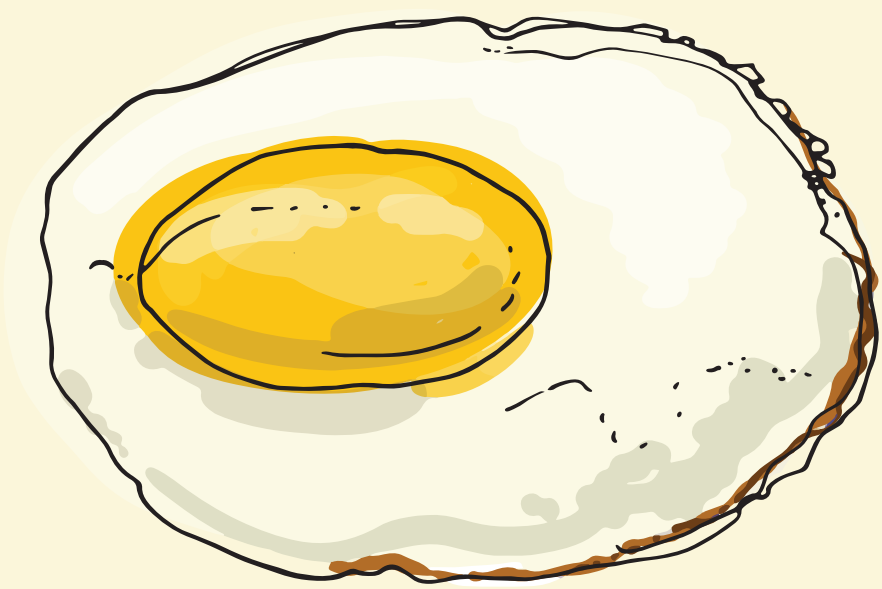
- Eggs
- White vinegar
- 1 clear container
- Slotted spoon

Steps

1. Place the eggs in the clear container and cover with white vinegar.
2. Right away, bubbles will begin to form around the egg. Explain that this is because the vinegar is an acid and the egg shells are made of calcium carbonate, which is a base.
3. The acid is reacting with the base, causing the egg shell to break down and release carbon dioxide, which can be seen in the bubbles.
4. After watching the reaction for a few minutes, place the eggs in the refrigerator for 24 hours.

CAFETERIA CONNECTION

Eggs are freshly laid at the highest volume during spring months but are available throughout the year. Coordinate a farm field trip or have a local farmer visit to share more about hens, eggs, and other processes involved at the farm and beyond. Include a tasting of local hard-boiled eggs. One idea is to serve three different colors of egg, and compare and contrast the end result of what's inside the shell.



READING NOOK

Expand your lesson with these selected books about eggs!



Black Beans and Lamb, Poached Eggs and Ham

BY BRIAN P. CLEARY
AGES 5-9



Eggbert the Slightly Cracked Egg

BY TOM ROSS
AGES 2-6



Green Eggs and Ham

BY DR. SEUSS
AGES 2-6

Just the Facts

- Pennsylvania is among the top five egg-producing states in the U.S.
- Eggs are high in vitamin A, which promotes eye health and immune function.
- A great source of protein, eggs are also a good source of vitamin D, which promotes calcium absorption for strong bones.

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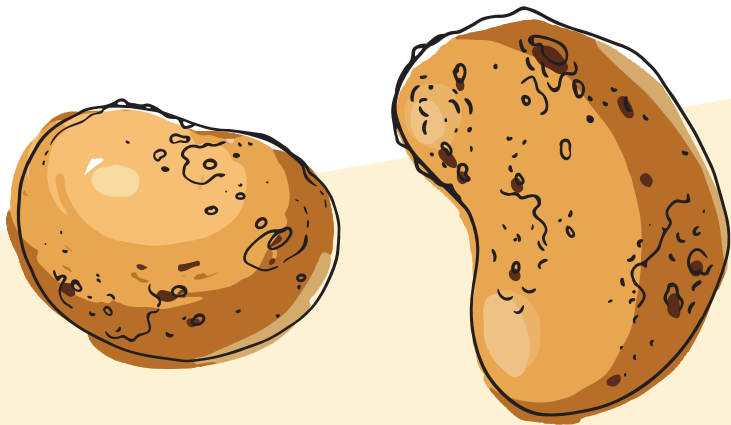
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<https://www.paharvestofthemonth.org/index.php/downloads>

Potatoes



Did you know?

Potatoes originated in the Andes and were first brought to Spain around 1576. They were introduced to the United States in 1719 and first grown in New Hampshire. Now, nearly 3,000 potato varieties are grown in the United States, though only 100 are grown regularly. Most potatoes have white flesh, but they are also available with purple and pink flesh.

POTATO

Nutrition Facts

Serving size 1 medium, baked

Amount Per Serving
Calories 160

	% Daily Value
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polysaturated Fat 0g	
Monosaturated Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 15mg	1%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 5g	18%
Total Sugars 1g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 4g	8%
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 0mg	0%
Iron 1.62mg	8%
Potassium 1175mg	25%

*The Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

CLASSROOM RECIPE

Herb Roasted Potatoes

Ingredients

- 4 pounds potatoes
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 small bunch rosemary or thyme
- 1½ teaspoons salt

Directions

- Preheat oven to 450° F. Remove rosemary or thyme from stems.
- Rinse potatoes and cut into quarters or smaller.
- In a large bowl, toss potatoes with oil, herbs and salt. Place in baking dish and cover.
- Bake for 30 to 40 minutes or until done. Serve warm.

NUTRITION INFORMATION

HOW MUCH DO I NEED?

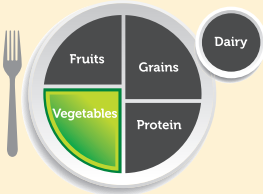
A ½ cup of potatoes is about one cupped handful. The amount of fruits and vegetables each person needs depends on age, sex and physical activity level.

Recommended Daily Amounts of Vegetables

	5 – 8 yrs	9 – 13 yrs	13 – 18 yrs
Male	1½ – 2½ cups	2 – 3½ cups	2½ – 4 cups
Female	1½ – 2½ cups	1½ – 3 cups	2½ – 3 cups

Featured Resource

At [choosemyplate.gov](https://www.choosemyplate.gov), kids and adults can take a short quiz to learn more about their current daily nutrition habits and find resources for adjusting those habits to prioritize nutritious food based on federal dietary guidelines.



Explore Pennsylvania's Potatoes

What You Need

- 1 potato each of 3 different varieties, raw
- Knife and cutting board
- Plastic gloves (1 pair per student)
- Hot plate and pans (or microwave)
- Plates and serving spoons

Steps

1. Divide class into groups; distribute 1 potato variety to each group.
2. Observe the look, feel and smell of raw potato. Record observations. Repeat with other varieties.
3. Cut potatoes into cubes. Boil in water or microwave. Place cubes on a plate at head table.
4. Sample varieties. Record and share taste differences and similarities.
5. Find a healthy recipe featuring the students' favorite variety and share with students' families.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY CORNER

History Exploration

- Research the history, uses and folklore associated with the potato in Ireland and Russia.
- Compare and contrast Irish potato history with Russian potato history. Discuss the significance and influence of the potato crop in these countries (e.g., culture, nutrition, economics, migration).
- Have students research the history of other crops that are or have been the primary food source of a nation's majority population.

CAFETERIA CONNECTION

Have students work with school nutrition staff to create a bulletin board illustrating the nutritional differences between fresh and processed potato products.

- Make large-size Nutrition Facts labels of potato products (cooked potatoes, chips, French fries, mashed) and have students evaluate the nutrient differences.
- Make a chart of health benefits and risks for each product.
- Conduct taste testing sessions during lunch.
- Showcase the many healthy ways potatoes can be eaten.



READING NOOK

Expand your lesson with these selected books about potatoes and other vegetables!



Jamie O'Rourke and the Big Potato

BY TOMIE DEPAOLA
AGES 5-7



The Vegetables We Eat

BY GAIL GIBBONS
AGES 4-6



Up, Down and Around

BY KATHERINE AYERS
AGES 4-6

Just the Facts

- Pennsylvania processes some of the most potatoes in the country. This output is almost entirely in the form of potato chips.
- Potatoes are in season in PA for most of the year.
- Potatoes are a good source of vitamin C, carbohydrates and fiber.

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