

FARM TO PRESCHOOL HARVEST OF THE MONTH ACTIVITY PACKET

Peppers



October 2010 Read Aloud Books and Activities

Week 1 Theme: Growing Vegetable Soup

Week 2 Theme: Rainbow of Peppers

Week 3 Theme: Sweet Peppers

Week 4 Theme: Pepper Patterns



Urban & Environmental
Policy Institute
OCCIDENTAL COLLEGE



HARVEST OF THE MONTH ACTIVITIES

Peppers Week 1

Growing Vegetable Soup

Book: Growing Vegetable Soup by Lois Ehlert

Objectives:

- Students will learn the concept “from seed to table.”
- Students will identify fruits and vegetables as food that can help you be healthy and strong.
- Students will describe ways they can stay strong and be healthy.

Materials:

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Photo cards

Directions:

1. Read the book *Growing Vegetable Soup*. Talk about how we can grow the food we eat at home (“seed to table”). Ask if any students are growing fruits or vegetables at home. Ask if any students have ever panted a seed before and watched it grow.
2. Review the pages in the book which show how a plant grows – from seed, to sprout, and to a full sized plant. Also review from the book what plants need to grow – soil, water, sun, (and air).
3. Show the class real pictures of some of the produce used to make vegetable soup in the book using the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Photo Cards. Some items you can focus on: bell peppers, broccoli, carrots, tomatoes, and zucchini.
4. Tell the class that eating lots of fruits and vegetables makes us healthy and strong since they have lots of vitamins that we need to grow. Ask the children to identify other fruits and vegetables they like to eat that will help them stay strong and be healthy. As they identify them, show the class the photo cards for each fruit and vegetable mentioned. Ask: what else can help us stay healthy? (e.g. exercise, brushing teeth regularly, washing hands, getting a lot of sleep, etc.).

HARVEST OF THE MONTH ACTIVITIES

Peppers Week 2

Rainbow of Peppers

Objectives:

- Students will identify the different kinds and colors of peppers.
- Students will identify different ways we eat peppers.
- Students will learn how peppers grow.
- Students will start a class rainbow of colors chart for fruits.

Materials:

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Photo Cards
Rainbow of Fruits chart

Directions:

1. Show the students the photo cards for green bell peppers, red and yellow bell peppers and chili peppers. Explain that bell peppers are sweet while chili peppers are spicy. Ask them what colors they see (green, red, yellow). Tell the class that peppers can also be purple and orange.
2. Ask the class if they have seen peppers at the store or at a farmers' market. Explain that at farmers' markets, there are usually many more different kinds and colors of peppers than at the store and that they are fresher since they come straight from the farm where they grew.
3. Discuss the different ways that people eat peppers: such as raw for dipping or eating plain, in salsa, stir fry, salad, chili, stuffed, and more.
4. Talk about how peppers can be called either a fruit or a vegetable (fruit because of how it grows from a flower, vegetable because of how it is prepared). Ask the class how they think peppers grow – in a tree like oranges? On a vine like peas? In the ground like carrots? (They grow on small plants).
5. Start a class rainbow of colors chart for fruits. Peppers can be put in each of the columns (green, red, purple, orange, yellow). Ask the class what other fruits are found in each color. This chart can be used over the course of the school year and can be added on to whenever the class talks about fruits.

HARVEST OF THE MONTH ACTIVITIES

Peppers Week 3

Sweet Peppers

Objectives:

- Students will taste a variety of peppers.
- Students will draw their favorite kind of pepper.
- Students will investigate pepper seeds.

Materials:

Food Experience ingredients (have least one whole pepper)
Paper and crayons

Directions:

1. Review with students how peppers grow (grow from seeds planted in the ground which grow into small plants. The peppers start growing where the flowers were).
2. If you are preparing the food experience in class, save seeds from at least one pepper.
3. Pass the seeds around to the class and ask them to describe the seeds (for example, they're white, slimy, small, round, etc.).
4. Have the class taste the food experience with ideally 2-3 different types of sweet peppers. Refer to the handout in your binder **Conducting An In-Class Taste Test** for ideas on how to engage the class. Have students put a sticker on either the "I Like This" or "I Don't Like This" columns of the taste test sheet, or have them write or initial their name if they are able to do so.
5. With paper and crayons, have each student draw their favorite pepper.

HARVEST OF THE MONTH ACTIVITIES

Peppers Week 4

Pepper Patterns

Objectives:*

- Students will create patterns using cut-outs of different colored peppers.
- Students will improve counting skills using colored pepper cut-outs.

Materials:

Pepper pattern sheet (see handout)

Construction paper – green, red, orange, purple, yellow (or white only)

Optional - laminator

Directions:

1. Xerox pepper patterns onto colored construction paper (prior to class), or have students trace patterns onto paper, color, and cut, using the colors of peppers. Make at least 3 peppers per color. You can laminate these for added durability if you have the ability to do so.
2. Have small groups of students place pepper cut-outs in a patterned sequence (such as "red – yellow – red") and have them name the order of the colors.
3. You can also use the cut-outs for counting and adding. For instance, show three green and 2 purple cut-outs and ask how many peppers there are total.
4. Remind students that these are the 5 different colors that peppers come in. Red and green are the most common and found in stores. Other colors like yellow, purple, and orange can be found at farmers' markets this month. Remind the students that farmers' markets are where farmers come to sell their fruits and vegetables that they usually picked that morning from their farm – this is the freshest kind of food that we can buy.

ACTIVITIES TO EXTEND THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Week 1 (optional)

Creative Movement (If possible have at least one adult model the movement)

- Ask the students to crouch down into a ball to become tiny "seeds"
- Pretend to spray them with water
- Have them begin to sprout by slowly stretching their legs
- Tell them to reach their face to the sun to grow strong
- Make their legs and feet firm to make strong roots
- Slowly stretch their arms up with their fist closed
- Slowly open their "flowers" (hands) to create fruits
- The fruit drops its seed
- They plop back down and start the process over
- You can reread parts of Growing Vegetable Soup while doing this exercise and incorporate a slide whistle as they "grow"

WEEK 2 (optional)

Paint a Rainbow of Peppers

- Display the photo cards for green bell peppers, red and yellow bell peppers and chili peppers
- Make available the paints: Green, Red, Yellow, Orange & Purple
- Each student can create their own Pepper painting or the class can make one large painting
- Talk about peppers as they paint, write down any comments they make about peppers next to their drawing.

WEEK 3 (optional)

Comparing Seeds

- Let the Bell Pepper seeds from the taste test dry out a little
- Glue the seeds onto a picture card of a bell pepper (simple drawing is fine)
- Cover the picture and seeds with clear contact paper to make a sturdy picture card
- Use the tomato seeds from last month to make a tomato card
- Make smaller cards that have the seeds without the pictures
- See if the students can match the seed cards to the picture/seed cards
- Add new fruits and create corresponding cards throughout the week: apples, oranges, peas, etc.
- Leave cards in the science area for children to look at and talk about
- Provide Magnifying Glasses so students can see the seeds more clearly

Adapted from Nutritional Activities for Preschoolers

WEEK 4 (optional)

Hot Pepper Game (Hot Potato)

- Make large pepper cutouts of different colors, laminate if possible, you can write the name of the color (Green, Red, Yellow, Orange or Purple) Colored balloons filled with sand can also be used.
- Have the students sit in a large circle
- Play music while one of the peppers is passed around
- When the music is stopped, the student with the pepper tells the class what color the pepper is in her/his hands
- Switch the "pepper" being passed and continue the game until all children have had a turn to name the color

Enhancing the Experience in Your Organic School Garden

October is a great time to start planting:

Artichokes	Asparagus	Beets	Bok Choy	Broccoli
Brussels Sprouts	Cabbage	Carrots	Cauliflower	Chard
Chives	Collards	Fava Beans	Kale	Kohlrabi
Lettuce	Mustard	Onions	Peas	Radishes
Spinach	Turnips			

Food Experience Calendar

Week 3 Sweet Bell Pepper Dippers

Optional Vegetable Quesadillas

Optional Pico de Gallo

FOOD EXPERIENCE RECIPES

Week 3

Sweet Bell Pepper Dippers

Ingredients:

6 bell peppers – ideally 3 of at least two different colors
1 cup store bought hummus or low-fat ranch dressing

Directions:

1. Wash the peppers and remove the seeds.
2. Slice the peppers into sticks.
3. Place 2 (or more, depending on the # of different varieties) pepper sticks on each student's plate with 2 teaspoons of hummus or dressing.

Makes 24 taste tests

Modified from *The Network for a Healthy California*-Orange County Dept of Education

Optional

Pico de Gallo

Ingredients:

3 lbs ripe tomatoes, chopped
4 ½ cups chopped onion
1 cup chopped cilantro
3 small jalapeno peppers, seeded and chopped
6 tablespoons lime juice
6 cloves garlic, minced
¾ teaspoon salt
Baked tortilla chips

Directions:

1. Combine all ingredients (except chips) in a medium sized bowl.
2. Serve about ¼ cup per student with chips.

Makes 36 taste tests

Adapted from *Healthy Latino Recipes, Network for a Healthy California, 2008*

Optional

Vegetable Quesadillas

Ingredients:

Nonstick Cooking Spray
3 cups chopped bell peppers, any color
4 cups frozen corn, thawed or fresh corn
3 cups sliced green onion
3 cups chopped tomato
2/3 cups chopped cilantro
22 flour tortillas
4 cups shredded Low Fat Four Cheese Mexican Style (or similar)

Directions:

1. Coat medium skillet with nonstick cooking spray. Sauté bell pepper and corn over medium heat until softened, about 5 minutes.
2. Add green onion and tomato. Cook until heated. Then stir in cilantro.
3. Heat tortillas in a separate skillet over high heat. Place equal amounts of cheese and sautéed vegetable on each tortilla. Fold in half and continue to cook until cheese is melted. Serve hot.

Makes 44 taste tests

From *The Network for a Healthy California*-Orange County Dept of Education

