

# HARVEST OF THE MONTH

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CELEBRATING LOCAL EATING AT YOUR MARKET, STORE, OR MEAL SITE



GREEN MOUNTAIN FARM-TO-SCHOOL

Green Mountain Farm-to-School (GMFTS) is a non-profit organization in Newport, VT that strengthens local food systems by promoting positive economic and educational relationships between schools, farms, and communities. GMFTS supplies fresh, local food to schools and institutions and gives students of all ages the knowledge and skills they need to make healthy food choice through school gardens, farm-to-school programs, a regional food hub, and mobile learning kitchen. For more information, visit [www.GreenMountainFarmtoSchool.org](http://www.GreenMountainFarmtoSchool.org).

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction 1

Food Tasting Guidelines 2

Assessing Food Demos 3

How to Market and Promote your Tastings 4

Food Preparation Tips 5

Lessons:

Fall

Apples 6

Broccoli 10

Kale 13

Winter

Winter Squash 16

Whole Grains 20

Cabbage 26

Spring

Beets 31

Herbs 34

Summer

Mixed Greens 38

Berries 44

Tomatoes 46

# INTRODUCTION

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## WELCOME TO THE VERMONT HARVEST OF THE MONTH TASTING GUIDE!

This resource was developed as a tool to be used at public events including farmers markets, food retailers, and summer meal sites. Inside, you will find resources to assist you in promoting and educating an audience around eleven Vermont-grown crops. For each featured food item, you will find an introduction with history and interesting facts, a lesson plan, handouts or educational materials, and suggested recipes.

The crops highlighted in this guide have all been featured by the Vermont Harvest of the Month program, a statewide campaign to promote local, seasonal foods. Additional recipes and resources around Vermont-grown fruits and vegetables can be found at our website, [www.vermontharvestofthemoth.org](http://www.vermontharvestofthemoth.org).

This tasting guide is a collaboration between Green Mountain Farm to School, Food Connects, and Rutland Area Farm and Food Link.

# FOOD TASTING GUIDELINES

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A food tasting educates an audience about a local food through a brief interaction. This interaction includes the sampling of the food in a prepared recipe, the opportunity to learn a few facts about the food and the ability to take the recipe and information home.

## GOALS

- Increase attendees' exposure to and knowledge about the food
- Motivate attendees to purchase the food locally
- Encourage attendees to prepare the food at home

## RUNNING A FOOD TASTING

1. Schedule the tasting. Coordinate with the site to set a date and time. This should be done at least two weeks in advance in order to give you time to plan, prepare and promote.
2. Choose the food to highlight. Each tasting should include one local and in season food to highlight. Since the goal is to increase the purchase of this local food, it should be something that attendees can purchase at the same time as your tasting and while it is fresh on their minds.
3. Find and/or develop a recipe. The recipe should be something appropriate to the skill level of your attendees. Avoid excessive steps, ingredients and equipment. It should also be able to fit on your recipe card. If you're simply copying a recipe from another source, be sure to give credit. If you're using a recipe you've never prepared before, you should plan on testing it out in advance or making yourself comfortable with the process in order to avoid any last minute difficulties.
4. Determine your educational component. What are you going to convey to your attendees? Maybe you want them to leave being able to identify different kinds of winter squash. Or maybe it's the scent of different herbs. It should be related or directly connected to the food you're highlighting and something that is quickly accomplished. Obtain a copy of a lesson plan or use the template to create one of your own.
5. Create and print your promotional materials. Depending on your organization's approach, this may include items such as emails, flyers and social media announcements. Determine how to go about getting the word out. Be sure to be in communication with your site.
6. Shop for ingredients. Take the ingredient list from your recipe and go shopping. If possible, purchase your ingredients locally. Remember to stay within your budget and to save your receipts for reimbursement. Don't forget to purchase an extra of the highlighted food to have on display at the tasting.
7. Gather your supplies. Check the supplies list on your lesson plan, but also determine what other basic supplies you might need. This may include everything from a table and tablecloth to forks and plates. Don't forget recipe cards and be sure to bring your voting jars.
8. Prepare the recipe. Do this in an appropriate amount of time in advance of your tasting. This will depend on the food and recipe. Be sure to allocate enough time for clean up. When prepared, pack the food in easily transportable containers. Always employ food safety practices.
9. Set up. Arrive 30 minutes in advance of the scheduled tasting whenever possible. You never know what difficulties may arise. You want your space to be clean, presentable and attractive. There should be clear signage about your food, recipe, and the organization you are representing. Samples and recipe cards should be ready to go and easily accessible as attendees approach the table. The educational aspect should be easy to see, read, and/or touch and everyone should have access to the voting jars.
10. Engage your attendees. Be ready to hand out/dish out samples and recipe cards. At the same time, make sure to smile, greet attendees and explain the food, dish and educational piece. Encourage everyone to vote.
11. Collect participant votes and feedback. At the end of your tasting, fill out the tracking sheet. Count the number of recipe cards you gave out and the number of votes in each jar. Read more on the voting process below.
12. Clean up. Pack up everything you brought with you and leave the space the way you found it. If necessary, thank someone on site before leaving. Be sure to file or send your tracking sheet to the necessary person.

# ASSESSING FOOD DEMOS

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Tracking the number of food samples and recipe cards given out is an important part of a food tasting. Assessing food demos can help gauge engagement and growth of your program. There are two simple ways to do this:

1. Number your plates. Before the tasting, write a small number on the bottom of your sample plates. At the end of the tasting, check and see how many were taken.
2. Count your recipe cards. Record how many cards you print. At the end of the tasting, see how many you have left. Alternatively, like the plates, you could number the recipe cards.

Tracking attendees' reactions to the tasting is also important. Do this with a jar and different colored plastic chips or beans. Each color corresponds to a different response. When setting up your table, make your voting jar and chips visible and with a label explaining the responses.

#### Responses:

- I liked it.
- I would buy this local food.
- I would cook this food at home.
- I learned something new.

#### Other options:

- I liked it,
- It was OK,
- I didn't care for it
- Placed in a green, yellow, or red jar with a smiley face, straight lips, or frown.

# HOW TO MARKET & PROMOTE TASTINGS

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## BEFORE TASTING:

Print and prepare signage to draw visitors to your tasting table!  
The Vermont Harvest of the Month website provides many free, downloadable materials.

Consider:

Harvest of the Month crop poster

Recipe cards

Educational resources, including storage and handling tips

General signage ("Free taste test and cooking demo!")

Use existing channels of communication to promote the event. Post on Facebook and Front Porch Forum, and include the date, time, and location of the tasting in your newsletter.

## DAY OF TASTING:

Be sure to check your packing list (see below) to ensure that you have all the materials to facilitate a fun and successful tasting!

Clear signage about what you are doing, as well as a welcoming set-up, will help draw visitors to your table.

## PACKING LIST

Copy of lesson plan

Recipe cards

Taste test survey form or voting materials

Ingredients/ dish to be sampled

Individual serving containers

Hand out/ flyers with crop information and preparation ideas

Posters/ signage for tasting station

Tablecloth

Example of crop being highlighted (for example: head of cabbage)

# FOOD PREPERATION TIPS

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- Keep hot foods at 135°F or more and cold foods at 41°F or less at all times.
- Keep all foods in a tightly covered container during transportation.
- Perishable food should not be left out more than 2 hours at room temperature--1 hour when the temperature is above 90 °F.
- Always wash hands before and after handling food.
- Avoid cross-contamination: Wash your cutting boards, dishes, utensils, and counter tops with hot soapy water after preparing each food item and before you go on to the next food.
- Replace and wash dish towels and sponges frequently to prevent the spread of bacteria, or use paper towels.
- Used cooked food within 4 days.
- Some crops are noted for producing ethylene, a gas which accelerates ripening. It's good to know which fruits and vegetables are sensitive to this gas, and which are producers of it to make sure these items are stored separately.

## Ethylene Producing Foods

Apples  
Bananas  
Blueberries  
Cranberries  
Green onions  
Pears  
Potatoes  
Tomatoes

## Ethylene Sensitive Foods

Blackberries  
Broccoli  
Brussels sprouts  
Cabbage  
Carrots  
Cauliflower  
Cucumbers  
Kale, lettuce, and leafy greens  
Onions  
Peppers  
Squash  
Strawberries



# APPLES

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## STORAGE AND SELECTION TIPS:

1. Choose apples that are firm and unbruised.
2. If you're planning on using apples for applesauce or baking, "apple seconds", or less than perfect apples, are excellent candidates.
3. Apples will keep on the counter for about a week.
4. Depending on the variety, apples can store in the refrigerator for a few weeks to a month; if you have a "crisper drawer", store them there.
5. For long-term storage, place in a dark, cool, and humid space.

## HISTORY:

Did you know that apple trees are not indigenous to North America? We have become so accustomed to them being a part of our landscape that many have assumed they were always here. Apple trees originally came from a small country near Russia called Kazakhstan. From there apples went to China, then to Europe, and then when Europeans came to North America in the 1600's, they brought apples with them. Later on, a man named John Chapman, known to many as Johnny Appleseed (yes, he was real!), brought hundreds of apple seeds west. He was responsible for starting several different tree nurseries, and sold apple trees to other white settlers who were heading west.

## SOME INTERESTING FACTS:

There once were 14,000 different kinds of apples growing in the United States according to a 400 page book published in 1905 by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Now there are a lot fewer kinds of apples because fewer people are farmers, and growers favor sweet varieties for eating, rather than some older more tart varieties for cider.

- If kept at a cool temperature with the right amount of moisture, apples can keep for a long time! You can find Vermont & New Hampshire apples at some grocery stores all year long! If your grocery store doesn't have local apples all year, you can make apples into applesauce, can it, and eat local apples all year!
- Some people think red delicious apples are one of the least yummy kinds of apples. Granted they look beautiful and delicious; but one of the reasons they are so popular amongst commercial growers, however, is because they are very hard so they aren't easily bruised while traveling across the country in trucks to grocery stores.
- Remember the old saying, "An apple a day keeps the doctor away?" It's true apples are very healthy, because they have lots of Vitamin C, and lots of fiber, which helps your digestive system do its job, as well as some phosphorous and some potassium which are both important nutrients. But other fruits have more types of vitamins and nutrients, and a higher amount per serving. The saying "An apple a day keeps the doctor away" was invented by apple growers in the early 1900s because they wanted people to buy more apples.

# ALL KINDS OF APPLES

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## MATERIALS:

3-5 varieties of apple (enough for tastings + 1 for display)

3-5 small bowls

Cutting board

Knife

## Handouts:

1. Apple Tasting Passport
2. Popular Pickings: Visual Guide to Apples
3. Local Orchards Bookmarks

Supplies, as needed, from the General Supplies Checklist

## DIRECTIONS:

This lesson will expose attendees to several varieties of apples and encourage them to flex their tasting muscles. By paying attention to subtle differences in taste and texture, attendees will increase their understanding of one of the benefits of local eating – less homogeneity! Attendees will also be encouraged to apply the results of their tasting by considering where certain apples would be more desirable. If time and resources allow, this point may be expanded upon by preparing either apple crisp or apple sauce with all of the chosen apple varieties.

## OBJECTIVES:

1. Attendees will taste several varieties of apple.
2. Attendees will observe nuances in flavor.

## PROCEDURE:

1. Slice and sort apples into small bowls. Label bowls by displaying them with respective apples.
2. Have attendees try several kinds of apple. Encourage them to note their responses on the apple tasting passport.
3. Discuss occasions in which certain kinds of apples would be more desirable (ie, for baking vs for eating vs for applesauce, etc).
4. If preparing crisp or applesauce, have attendees record their responses in voting jars.

## ASSESSMENT: *(To be tracked on the reporting sheet.)*

1. The number of people that try the food.
2. The number of recipes taken by attendees.
3. The number of response in the voting jars.

## LESSON TWO

# BETTER WITH APPLE BUTTER

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### MATERIALS:

- 1 qt jar
- 6.5 lb apples, divided into bowls with roughly 0.75, 3, and 2.75 lb each.
- Crackers, sliced baguette, or hard cheese

### Recipe:

Apple butter

### Handouts:

- Apple preservation cheat sheet
- Recipe cards
- Supplies, as needed, from the General Supplies Checklist

### DIRECTIONS:

This lesson will connect attendees to food preservation techniques by exposing them to different ways in which apples may be preserved. Putting up food is an important component of eating locally, particularly in a state with such a short growing season. In addition to tasting apple butter, attendees will receive information about other ways to preserve apples.

### OBJECTIVES:

1. Attendees will learn about the benefits and possibilities of food preservation.
2. Attendees will experience the benefits and possibilities of food preservation through tasting apple butter.

### PROCEDURE:

1. Set out bowls of apples to demonstrate the amounts needed to produce 1 qt of apple pie filling, sauce, and butter respectively.
2. Have attendees sample apple butter, served with either crackers, bread, or hard cheese, or out of small cups. Ask attendees to record responses in voting jars.
3. Be prepared to answer attendees' questions about canning. Offer information about other preservation techniques, including freezing and drying. Hand out preservation cheat sheets and recipe cards.
4. At the end of the session, clean up the table, remove trash, pack up supplies, and complete the reporting sheet.

### ASSESSMENT: *(To be tracked on the reporting sheet.)*

1. The number of people that try the food.
2. The number of recipe cards taken by attendees.
3. The response in the voting jars.

# APPLE BUTTER

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Serves: 1.5 pint  
Tastings: 50  
Time 6-8 hr (45 min hands on)

## SUPPLIES:

cutting board  
knife  
slow cooker  
measuring cup  
measuring spoon  
large jar  
food mill or fine sieve

## INGREDIENTS:

2 lb apples  
0.5 c apple cider vinegar  
1 c water  
1.5 c sugar  
dash of salt  
1 tsp cinnamon  
0.25 tsp cloves  
0.25 tsp allspice  
juice and zest of 1 lemon

## DIRECTIONS:

1. Without peeling or coring, quarter apples.
2. Place all ingredients in the slow cooker and stir.
3. Cover and cook on high for 1 hr.
4. Reduce heat to low and cook for 4-6 hr, stirring occasionally, until thickened and dark brown.
5. Run through food mill or press through sieve to achieve a smooth consistency.

## NOTES:

The cider vinegar and lemon juice are included in part to ensure high enough acidity to can. Since you will not be preserving the apple butter for the cooking demonstration, the cider vinegar can be replaced with water or apple juice. Adapted from: <http://www.canningacrossamerica.com/recipes/apple-butter/>

# APPLESAUCE

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Serves: 4 cups  
Tastings: 30-40  
Time: 45 min (30 min hands on)

## SUPPLIES:

cutting board  
knife  
food processor (optional)  
heavy-bottomed pot  
measuring spoons  
wooden spoon

## INGREDIENTS:

3-5 lb apples  
1 tsp salt  
maple syrup, to taste  
1 tsp cinnamon  
¼ tsp allspice  
¼ tsp nutmeg

## DIRECTIONS:

1. Core and quarter (but do not peel) apples.
2. Puree apples in batches in the food processor. If not using a food processor, chop them finely or use a coarse grater.
3. Simmer apple puree and salt in heavy-bottom pan for 10-15 min, stirring frequently.
4. Sweeten with maple syrup and spices, to taste.

## NOTES:

Leaving the skins on adds a lovely pink hue to this simple applesauce recipe! Adapted from: [www.rutland-farmandfood.org/everydaychef\\_blog/divas-easy-pink-applesauce/](http://www.rutland-farmandfood.org/everydaychef_blog/divas-easy-pink-applesauce/)

# BROCCOLI

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## STORAGE AND SELECTION TIPS:

1. Choose broccoli and cauliflower that has a firm, compact, evenly colored head that doesn't have open flowers. Fresh broccoli and cauliflower will have leaves that are not wilted and firm stalks.
2. Store in the refrigerator in a perforated plastic bag for 5-10 days. Do not wash before storing and make sure the heads are dry.
3. To freeze: blanch and place in a labeled and dated freezer-grade bag. Frozen broccoli and cauliflower will keep for about a year.

## HISTORY:

Broccoli is a member of the family Brassicaceae, also known as the cabbage family, along with Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, kale and radishes. We eat the flower buds of the plant, before they bloom; the stalks are also edible, but have a tougher texture. The plant's primitive ancestor is native to Asia Minor, but a significant amount of its development occurred in southern Italy.

## FUN FACTS:

- Broccoli was developed from the flower of wild cabbage.
- Broccoli and cauliflower are referred to as inflorescent (arrangement of flowers on a stem) vegetables, along with artichokes.
- White cauliflower heads lack color because they have undeveloped chlorophyll.

# BROCCOLI, STEMS AND ALL

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## MATERIALS:

- Broccoli Brochure
- Did You Know? Flyer
- Cooking with Stems Flyer
- Extra broccoli for display on table
- Supplies, as needed, from the General Supply Checklist

## SUMMARY:

This lesson will demonstrate different methods for cooking broccoli and emphasize using both the florets and the stem for cooking. Through discussion and handouts the attendees will understand how to properly select and store broccoli, as well as directions for various cooking methods. The broccoli coleslaw can be made in advance and is easily prepared on-site. Included are other kid-friendly broccoli recipes that can be tested if facilities allow you to make them fresh. In addition to the coleslaw, attendees will sample the cooked broccoli stem.

## OBJECTIVES:

1. Attendees will be presented with different methods for selecting, storing, and cooking broccoli.
2. Attendees will taste test the stem of the broccoli plant and learn how to incorporate this part of the plant into recipes.
3. Attendees will taste test and rate a recipe featuring broccoli.

## PROCEDURE:

1. Organize table to display broccoli, handouts, and taste test.
2. Show the full broccoli plant with stem and ask the attendees: How do you usually select broccoli when shopping at the grocery store? How do you usually prepare broccoli at home? Discuss methods for selecting the freshest broccoli, as well as ideas for storing methods that maximize the freshness. Explain different methods of preparing and cooking broccoli.
3. Ask attendees: What part of the broccoli plant do you usually eat? When you buy it at the store does it usually come with the stem attached or removed? Have attendees sample a piece of cooked broccoli stem and discuss different methods for preparing and incorporating this part of the plant into recipes.
4. Serve the broccoli coleslaw taste test and collect votes after they have tasted.

## ASSESSMENT: *(To be tracked on the reporting sheet.)*

1. The number of people that try the food.
2. The number of recipe cards taken by attendees.
3. The response in the voting jars.

# BROCCOLI SLAW WITH HONEY BALSAMIC DRESSING

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## INGREDIENTS

### Slaw

2 large heads broccoli  
1/2 cup sunflower seeds  
1/2 cup dried cranberries or raisins  
2 cloves garlic  
salt and pepper, to taste

\*You could substitute cauliflower  
or cabbage for all or half of the  
broccoli

### Honey Balsamic Dressing

1/2 cup oil (olive if possible)  
2 Tbsp. balsamic vinegar  
2 Tbsp. honey  
1/4 tsp. salt and pepper

## DIRECTIONS

1. Trim broccoli, then slice into small pieces.
2. Toss broccoli with seeds and cranberries or raisins.
3. Finely chop garlic and mix in.
4. Whisk together dressing ingredients and pour over the slaw and mix.
5. Add salt and pepper, to taste.

# KALE

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## STORAGE AND SELECTION TIPS:

1. Choose leaves that are not wilted and have firm stems
2. Store in the refrigerator in a perforated plastic bag for 5-10 days
3. To freeze: Blanch for 2-3 minutes or until the leaves are soft, then place in a labeled and dated freezer-grade bag

## HISTORY:

Kale is a member of the Brassicaceae family, also known as the cabbage family, along with broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower and kohlrabi. It originated in the Mediterranean region and was brought to the United States from England in the 17th century. Kale is a very hardy plant; it can withstand frosts and snowfall, making it an excellent staple food in the winter months. Kale plants range in color from white-green and yellow green to blue-green and violet. Some varieties have been developed specifically for ornamental purposes.

## FUN FACTS:

- Out of the quite large cabbage family, kale is the closest relative to wild cabbage.
- Kale and collards are very similar; the difference is that kale has uneven leaf edges (serrated, lobed) and is less heat-tolerant.



# KALE, SUPER FOODS TO THE RESCUE

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## MATERIALS:

Extra kale for display on table  
Did You Know? Kale Flyer  
Kale Recipe Cards  
Supplies, as needed, from the  
General Supply Check List

## SUMMARY:

This lesson will demonstrate to attendees how to prepare raw kale in salads through massaging the leaves. Participants will taste test a salad made with raw kale and view a demonstration on how to massage kale. Through discussion and flyers the attendees will understand how versatile kale is in recipes and also the various health benefits of kale. The kale salad can be made in advance and is easily prepared on-site. Included are other kid-friendly kale recipes that can be tested if facilities allow you to make them fresh.

## OBJECTIVES:

1. Attendees will learn techniques for preparing raw kale in salads.
2. Attendees will taste test a salad recipe featuring kale.

## PROCEDURE:

1. Organize table to display kale, flyers, and taste test.
2. Ask attendees: Do you buy kale at home? How do you prepare kale? Discuss the versatility of kale (i.e. in smoothies, kale chips, raw in salads, with pasta, etc.) Also explain the various health benefits of kale. Show attendees Did You Know? Flyer for quick health facts.
3. Ask attendees: Do you ever prepare kale raw in a salad? Explain and demonstrate how massaging kale can take tough leaves and make them softer and more palatable.
4. Serve the kale salad taste test and collect votes after they have tasted.

## ASSESSMENT: *(To be tracked on the reporting sheet.)*

1. The number of people that try the food.
2. The number of recipe cards taken by attendees.
3. The response in the voting jars.

## LESSON TWO

# KALE TRUE OR FALSE

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### MATERIALS:

Extra kale for display on table  
Did You Know? Kale Flyer  
Kale Recipe Cards  
Supplies, as needed, from the  
General Supply Check List

### DIRECTIONS:

This lesson will provide some interesting fun facts regarding kale which include nutritional information and more. Consider doing a comparison of raw vs. steamed kale, or kale chips for a taste test. See the Vermont Harvest of the Month resources for more recipe ideas, or for a cooking activity to do with attendees; see our “Massaged Kale Salad ” recipe.

### OBJECTIVES:

1. Attendees will learn interesting facts about kale.
2. Attendees will also learn some nutritional information about kale.
3. Attendees will taste test kale recipes.

### PROCEDURE:

When a statement is true, students will stand up.  
When they believe a statement is false, they will sit down.

1. Kale is related to the cabbage plant. True: Kale is in the same plant family as cabbage, broccoli, and cauliflower.
2. There are up to 12 different kinds of kale. False: There are more than 50 varieties, and they come in different shapes and textures from purple to green. Names include dinosaur Kale, and Russian Kale, and cow kale.
3. You may not have heard of Kale because it is a new vegetable and it is only now getting popular. False: Kale is more and more popular and found on more menus and in more homes these days, but it is not a new food! Kale has been cultivated (grown) for over 2000 years and was a popular dish in ancient Rome, and was eaten in a more wild form for much longer.
4. Kale is high in Vitamin K, which helps our blood and our bones. True: It should be easy to remember because Kale starts with K!
5. Kale can be harvested in December in New England. True: Kale is a hardy plant, and the waxy layer on the outside of the leaves called the epidermis allows it to grow into the colder months of fall and winter. With a greenhouse or cold frame, kale can be grown even longer!

### ASSESSMENT: *(To be tracked on the reporting sheet.)*

1. The number of attendees that try the food.
2. The number of recipe cards taken by attendees.
3. The response in the voting jars.

# WINTER SQUASH

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## STORAGE AND SELECTION TIPS:

1. To select a fully-ripe squash at the peak of its flavor, look for firm, dull-colored skin. A fully-ripe squash will be heavy for its size. If the squash is too young, the skin will be shiny and the flesh less flavorful; if it is too old, the skin will be crinkled and the flesh fibrous.
2. Store out of the sunlight, between 50-60 °F, with good ventilation.
3. Depending on the variety, winter squash can be stored between 1-6 months.
4. Refrigerate winter squash only if it has been cut or cooked.

## HISTORY:

Humans have consumed squash for over 10,000 years. Squash are native to Central America, between Mexico and Guatemala. Originally, squashes were cultivated for the consumption of their seeds only, as they had minimal, bitter-tasting flesh; over time, fleshier, fruitier varieties were developed. In Aztec, Incan, Mayan and Native American cultures, squashes were grown in companionship with corn and beans. Squashes are a member of the Cucurbitaceae family, also known as the gourd family, along with cucumbers, summer squash (pattypan, zucchini), and watermelon.

## FUN FACTS:

- Winter squash has a water content of 81%; summer squash has a water content of 98%.
- Gourds, a type of winter squash, are widely grown for ornamental purposes: as decoration during holidays, for carving, and for making bird feeders!

# DIVERSITY OF WINTER SQUASH

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## MATERIALS:

- 3 varieties of unique winter squash, for display
- 3 dishes of corresponding roasted squash cubes
- Signs for identifying the squash
- Plates, napkins, forks, and serving utensils
- Voting sheets
- Supplies, as needed, from the General Supply Check List

## ATTACHMENTS & RESOURCES:

- Guide to Running a Food Tasting
- General Supply Check List
- Roasted Squash Recipe
- Reporting Sheet

## SUMMARY:

This lesson will show attendees that there are many delicious kinds of winter squash that our local farmers grow. Everyone will have a chance to see what three winter squashes look like, what they taste like and rate which they like the best. The goal is for attendees to leave feeling excited about purchasing and cooking new kinds of winter squash at home this fall and winter.

## OBJECTIVES:

1. Attendees will identify three different winter squash by sight.
2. Attendees will sample three different roasted winter squashes.
3. Attendees will rate their response to the squashes

## PROCEDURE:

1. Arrange the three types of squash on the table, with a sign and corresponding dish of roasted squash next to each kind.
2. As people arrive, give them a small sample of each kind of roasted squash and share the simple roasting recipe.
3. Encourage attendees to vote for their favorite.

## ASSESSMENT: *(To be tracked on the reporting sheet.)*

1. The number of people that try the food.
2. The number of recipe cards taken by attendees.
3. The response in the voting jars.

## LESSON TWO

# WINTER SQUASH TRUE OR FALSE

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### MATERIALS:

- 3 varieties of unique winter squash, for display
- 3 dishes of corresponding roasted squash cubes
- Signs for identifying the squash
- Plates, napkins, forks, and serving utensils
- Voting sheets
- Supplies, as needed, from the General Supply Check List

### ATTACHMENTS & RESOURCES:

- Guide to Running a Food Tasting
- General Supply Check List
- Roasted Squash Recipe
- Reporting Sheet

### SUMMARY:

This lesson will expose students to some fun and interesting facts about winter squash. Students will taste test recipe made of winter squash.

### OBJECTIVES:

1. Students will learn some nutritional information about winter squash.
2. Students will about the versatility of winter squash.
3. Students will rate their response to a winter squash recipe.

### PROCEDURE:

1. Ask these focusing questions throughout the lesson:

What is the part of the plant that we eat?

What color is it?

How does it help our body?

Where does it originate?

Begin with a fun interactive true or false activity. When a statement is true, students will stand up. When they believe a statement is false, they will sit down.

1. Squash, like most orange veggies, has tons of Vitamin A, which is good for your eyes and your skin. True!
2. There aren't very many ways to cook squash. False: You can roast it, make soup with it, make cake with it, make bread or biscuits with it, fill ravioli with it, make salads, put it in eggs, etc. Today we will try it (insert taste-test of the day).
3. Squash has lots of Vitamin A, but not very many other vitamins. False: It also has lots of Vitamin C and potassium, which prevents muscle cramps.
4. Winter squash is called winter squash because it can be stored in your cellar during the winter for months, or in any cool, dry place. No refrigeration required! True!

### ASSESSMENT: *(To be tracked on the reporting sheet.)*

1. The number of people that try the food.
2. The number of recipe cards taken by attendees.
3. The response in the voting jars.

# ROASTED WINTER SQUASH

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## INGREDIENTS

- 3 pounds winter squash, peeled, seeded and cubed (about 1 large squash/8 cups once cubed)
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup
- ½ teaspoon chipotle powder
- 2 tablespoons orange juice
- 1 sprig rosemary leaves, chopped

Prep Time: 20 to 25 min.

Total Time: 65 to 70 min.

Yield: 6 to 8 servings

## DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 400 F.
2. Prep the squash and spread out in a single layer onto two baking sheets. Mix the remaining ingredients together in a small bowl.
3. Pour the dressing over the squash and toss to coat.
4. Roast in the oven for 25 minutes, toss and roast another 20 minutes, checking occasionally to avoid burning.

## NOTES:

You can roast just about any winter squash and season as you like. This recipe is a combination of sweet and spicy flavors and demonstrates the versatility to which winter squash lends itself.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, STORAGE:

Roasted squash can last in the fridge for up to a week. Or freeze in plastic bags for up to a year.

## TRY:

- Using roasted squash as an addition to salads, on pizza, in sandwiches, mashed into a veggie burger, in soup and much more.
- Save the squash seeds and roast separately for a healthy, crunchy snack.
- Swap out the chipotle powder for another smoky/spicy spice, such as cayenne, chili powder, or paprika. Try using thyme instead of rosemary.

# WHOLE GRAINS

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## STORAGE AND SELECTION TIPS:

1. Avoid air, heat and moisture: store in airtight containers on a cool, dry shelf.
2. Intact grains, stored properly, have a longer shelf life: 6 months on the shelf and up to a year in the freezer.
3. Flours and meals, stored properly, have a shorter shelf life: 1-3 months on the shelf and 2-6 months in the freezer.

## HISTORY:

The following are members of the true grass family called Poaceae:

Wheat Berry remains of the original wheat species (*Triticum monococcum*), from which our present varieties arose, were found in Mesopotamia and southwestern Asia. It is possible that humans have consumed wheat for over 12,000 years. Part of wheat's success around the globe is its exceptional adaptability. There are varieties that thrive in long hot summers and varieties that are frost resistant. In recent human history, varieties have been developed, allowing them to be grown successfully in northern, colder regions like Vermont!

Oats are native to Asia. Present day varieties derive from the wild red oat. Records date its first use at the beginning of the Common Era. Oats thrive in cool, moist climates and can survive in poor soil conditions, where most other cereals would not survive.

Corn kernels originate in the Mexico-Central America region. Corn was the staple food of pre-Columbian civilizations: Aztec, Incan, Mayan, where it was used in religious ceremonies, to make jewelry, and as a fuel and construction material.

Note: Buckwheat (*Polygonaceae*) and quinoa (*Amaranthaceae*) are pseudo grains, meaning they are not in the true grass family, Poaceae. However, they are often treated like whole grains in the culinary community.

Sources: VT Food Bank, *The Visual Food Encyclopedia*, <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/grains.html> and <http://wholegrainscouncil.org/>.

## FUN FACTS:

- Wall paintings in tombs located in the Nile valley of Egypt, dating to 5000 B.C., depict images of wheat. Egyptians were the first society to produce leavened bread, which requires the addition of an agent to dough, such as yeast. Yeast ferments carbohydrates in the flour, creating gas—this helps give bread a light, airy texture.
- Before oats became a staple food crop, they were primarily used for medicinal purposes.
- Corn is the most widely grown grain crop in the Americas; nearly 40% of it is used for corn ethanol.

# HISTORY & IDENTIFYING WHOLE GRAINS

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## MATERIALS:

Plastic bags (enough for each student to have two)

Samples of whole grains: i.e. barley, brown rice, buckwheat, millet, oats, quinoa, corn, wheat berries, rye berries

Recipe cards

Reporting sheet

## DIRECTIONS:

In this lesson, students will learn about the history of whole grains as well as some fun facts. Students will also learn about and identify different whole grains and have an opportunity to discuss them and taste test them. Students will taste test a delicious recipe and record their results.

## OBJECTIVES:

1. Students will learn the history of whole grains.
2. Students will learn some interesting facts about whole grains.
3. Students will identify many different whole grains.
4. Students will taste test a recipe with whole grains and record their responses.

## ACTIVITY:

1. Pass out bags (2 of each) containing: barley, brown rice, buckwheat, corn kernel, millet, oats, quinoa, rye berries, sorghum and wheat berries.
2. Have students walk around the room and visually find their match.
3. Once everyone has found their match, have students sit in a circle. Now identify the grains by name as a class. See UVFTS supplement for a list of whole grain descriptions.
4. For older students, you can make this activity more challenging by: a) Adding processed whole grains: cornmeal, oatmeal, popcorn, brown rice cakes, whole wheat flour. b) Asking them to differentiate between whole grains and refined grains.

*Source: GMFTS.*

## ASSESSMENT: *(To be tracked on the reporting sheet.)*

1. The number of students that try the food.
2. The number of recipe cards taken by the students.
3. The response in the voting jars.



## LESSON TWO

# IDENTIFYING WHOLE GRAINS FROM REFINED GRAINS

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### MATERIALS:

Plastic bags (enough for each student to have two)

Samples of whole grains: i.e. barley, brown rice, buckwheat, millet, oats, quinoa, corn, wheat berries, rye berries

Recipe cards

Reporting sheet

### DIRECTIONS:

In this lesson, attendees will learn how to identify different whole grains and compare them with refined grains. Attendees will learn what happens to a whole grain when it is refined. Attendees will learn about the nutritional differences between whole grains and refined grains. Attendees will also have an opportunity to discuss these differences, taste test an example of a whole grain recipe vs. a recipe with refined grains and record their results.

### OBJECTIVES:

1. Attendees will learn to identify whole grains from refined grains.
2. Attendees will learn the nutritional and health benefits of whole grains vs. refined grains.
3. Attendees will taste test recipes with whole grains vs. refined grains and record their responses.

### ACTIVITY:

1. Pass out bags (2 of each) containing: barley, brown rice, buckwheat, corn kernel, millet, oats, quinoa, rye berries, sorghum and wheat berries.
2. Have students walk around the room and visually find their match.
3. Once everyone has found their match, have students sit in a circle. Now identify the grains by name as a class. See UVFTS supplement for a list of whole grain descriptions.
4. For older students, you can make this activity more challenging by: a) Adding processed whole grains: cornmeal, oatmeal, popcorn, brown rice cakes, whole wheat flour. b) Asking them to differentiate between whole grains and refined grains.

*Source: GMFTS.*

### ASSESSMENT: *(To be tracked on the reporting sheet.)*

1. The number of students that try the food.
2. The number of recipe cards taken by the students.
3. The response in the voting jars.

1. Show diagram of a whole grain (such as a wheat kernel) identifying the parts of the kernel that are removed when processed.
2. Have attendees note the visual differences between whole and refined grains. Which looks more healthy?
3. Have attendees taste test recipes.

## PROCEDURE:

“Grains are divided into two subgroups; whole grains and refined grains. Whole grains contain the entire grain kernel – the bran, germ, and endosperm. Examples of whole grains include whole-wheat flour, bulgur (cracked wheat), oatmeal, whole cornmeal, and brown rice. Refined grains have been milled, a process that removes the bran and germ. This is done to give grains a finer texture and improve their shelf life, but it also removes dietary fiber, iron, and many B vitamins. Some examples of refined grain products are white flour, degermed cornmeal, white bread, and white rice.”\*

“Most refined grains are enriched. This means certain B vitamins (thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, folic acid) and iron are added back after processing. Fiber is not added back to enriched grains. Check the ingredient list on refined grain products to make sure that the word “enriched” is included in the grain name. Some food products are made from mixtures of whole grains and refined grains.”\*

“Grains are important sources of many nutrients, including dietary fiber, several B vitamins (thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, and folate), and minerals (iron, magnesium, and selenium).”

- Dietary fiber from whole grains or other foods, may help reduce blood cholesterol levels and may lower risk of heart disease, obesity, and type 2 diabetes. Fiber is important for proper bowel function. It helps reduce constipation and diverticulosis. Fiber-containing foods such as whole grains help provide a feeling of fullness with fewer calories.
- The B vitamins thiamin, riboflavin, and niacin play a key role in metabolism – they help the body release energy from protein, fat, and carbohydrates. B vitamins are also essential for a healthy nervous system. Many refined grains are enriched with these B vitamins.
- Folate (folic acid), another B vitamin, helps the body form red blood cells. Women of childbearing age who may become pregnant should consume adequate folate from foods, and in addition 400 mcg of synthetic folic acid from fortified foods or supplements. This reduces the risk of neural tube defects, spina bifida, and anencephaly during fetal development.
- Iron is used to carry oxygen in the blood. Many teenage girls and women in their childbearing years have iron-deficiency anemia. They should eat foods high in heme-iron (meats) or eat other iron containing foods along with foods rich in vitamin C, which can improve absorption of non-heme iron. Whole and enriched refined grain products are major sources of non-heme iron in American diets.
- Whole grains are sources of magnesium and selenium. Magnesium is a mineral used in building bones and releasing energy from muscles. Selenium protects cells from oxidation. It is also important for a healthy immune system.”\*

\*<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/grains.html>

- Wheat is consumed both as a whole grain (whole wheat flour) and as a refined grain (white flour). Whole grain maintains all of the critical parts and naturally occurring nutrients of the entire grain seed. By consuming whole grains, no nutritional value is lost. In contrast, when you consume white flour, only the endosperm of the grain seed is used, thus eliminating the nutrients contained within the bran and germ.

# MAPLE GRANOLA

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## HOME VERSION

Yield: 5 Cups  
Total Time: 35 min. (20 min.  
baking time)

## INGREDIENTS

4 1/2 cups old fashioned oats  
or oat groats  
1/4 cup raisins  
1/4 cup dried apple slices  
2 Tbsp. flaxseed  
2 tsp. ground cinnamon  
1/2 cup vegetable oil  
1/2 cup maple syrup  
serve with yogurt (optional)

## DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 °F.
2. Combine all dry ingredients, except dried fruit, and stir until everything is well distributed. Add oil first and then liquid sweetener; and stir well until combined.
3. Pour out onto a large rimmed cookie sheet and place in oven. Bake for a total of about 20 minutes, stirring every five minutes. Try it on the cautious side to see how your oven behaves. You don't want to burn it!
4. Granola is done when it is browned and crispy. Remove from the oven. Mix in dried fruit.

## LARGE VERSION

Yield: 20 cups, 80 1/4 cup servings; ~27 cups yogurt,  
80 1/3 cup servings (optional)  
Total Time: 35 min. (20 min. baking time)

## INGREDIENTS:

18 cups old fashioned oats or oat groats  
1 cup raisins  
1 cup dried apple slices  
2 1/2 Tbsp. ground cinnamon  
2 cups vegetable oil  
2 cups maple syrup  
7 32 oz. containers yogurt (optional)

# WHOLE WHEAT APPLE MUFFINS

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## HOME VERSION

Yield: 1 Dozen Muffins

Total Time: Total Time: Approx 50 min. (20 min. baking time)

### INGREDIENTS

3/4 cup all-purpose flour  
3/4 cup whole wheat flour  
1/2 cup honey or sugar  
1/2 tsp. salt  
2 tsp. baking powder  
2 cups apples (sub berries, when in-season)  
1/2 cup applesauce  
1 egg  
1/3 cup milk  
1 tsp. vanilla extract  
1/3 cup vegetable oil

### DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 400 °F and grease muffin cups or line with paper liners.
2. Whisk together flour, sugar, salt and baking powder.
3. In a separate bowl, mix together 2 Tbsp. of the dry mixture with the apples, coating them, so they don't settle to the bottom of your muffins as they bake.
4. Whisk applesauce, egg, milk, vanilla and oil together in a separate bowl, until smooth.
5. Stir the wet ingredients into the flour mixture. Add the coated apples.
6. Spoon the batter into the prepared muffin cups, filling them 2/3 full.
7. Bake muffins in the oven until they rise and are golden brown, ~20 minutes.

## LARGE VERSION

Yield: 60 Muffins

### INGREDIENTS:

3 3/4 cups all-purpose flour  
3 3/4 cups whole wheat flour  
2 1/2 cups honey or sugar  
2 1/2 tsp. salt  
3 Tbsp. baking powder + 1 tsp.  
10 cups apples (sub berries, when in-season)  
2 1/2 cups applesauce  
5 eggs  
1 2/3 cups milk  
2 Tbsp. vanilla extract  
1 2/3 cups vegetable oil

# CABBAGE

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## STORAGE AND SELECTION TIPS:

1. The cabbage head should be compact, with crisp outer leaves that are free of insect damage and bruises. Take note that a perfectly edible cabbage may be below a few damaged outer leaves
2. Cabbage will keep for about two weeks, if kept in the vegetable drawer of a refrigerator. Once cabbage is cut, wrap tightly in plastic for storage
3. Cabbage can be frozen after being blanched— 1 minute for shredded and 2 minutes for wedges.
4. For long-term storage, you can also make large batches of sauerkraut.

## HISTORY:

Cabbage is a member of the Brassicaceae family, which also includes broccoli, brussels sprouts, cauliflower, and kale. Cabbage is believed to originate from the Asia Minor region. Its ability to tolerate cold temperatures led to the spread of its cultivation across Europe; cabbage was introduced to the United States by early European settlers. Cabbages vary in color from yellow-green, to red-purple and come in wrinkly-leaved (savoyed) varieties. It has been bred to form tighter heads, but was originally much leafier. Cabbage is a wonderfully neutral vegetable, so can be used in a wide array of dishes raw, cooked, or fermented.

## FUN FACTS:

- Sauerkraut is a popular dish made from fermented cabbage, known for its delicious sour taste and long shelf life.
- The word cabbage is derived from the French word caboche meaning “head.”
- Cabbage’s ability to store well made it a staple food item in Europeans’ diets during the Middle Ages.
- Its juice was commonly used as a cough remedy and to heal wounds.

## CABBAGE TRUE OR FALSE

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### MATERIALS:

Examples of steamed, sauteed, pickled or raw cabbage.

Did you know? Cabbage flyer

Cabbage Preparation Ideas handouts and/or flyer

Cabbage recipe cards

### DIRECTIONS:

This lesson will expose attendees to some and fun and interesting facts about cabbage. Attendees will compare cabbage prepared in different ways; raw, pickled, steamed, or sauteed. Attendees will also try an additional prepared recipe and record their responses.

### OBJECTIVES:

1. Attendees will learn interesting facts about cabbage.
2. Attendees will taste test different preparations of cabbage recording their responses.
3. Attendees will try a delicious recipe and record their responses.

### ACTIVITY:

1. Pass out bags (2 of each) containing: barley, brown rice, buckwheat, corn kernel, millet, oats, quinoa, rye berries, sorghum and wheat berries.
2. Have students walk around the room and visually find their match.
3. Once everyone has found their match, have students sit in a circle. Now identify the grains by name as a class. See UVFTS supplement for a list of whole grain descriptions.
4. For older students, you can make this activity more challenging by: a) Adding processed whole grains: commeal, oatmeal, popcorn, brown rice cakes, whole wheat flour. b) Asking them to differentiate between whole grains and refined grains.

Source: GMFTS.

### ASSESSMENT: *(To be tracked on the reporting sheet.)*

1. The number of attendees that try the recipes.
2. The number of recipes that are taken.
3. The response in voting jars.

## PROCEDURE:

Begin with a fun interactive true or false activity to hook students' interest. When a statement is true, students will stand up. When they believe a statement is false, they will sit down. After all students have guessed, reveal the answer.

1. The heaviest cabbage ever grown weighed over 125 pounds!  
True: In places that have extra long days in the summer, like Alaska, cabbages can grow to be HUGE!
2. Cabbages grow underground like carrots.  
False: Cabbages grow above the ground. Cabbage heads are clusters of leaves that grow tightly together. Leaves need sunlight so they couldn't grow underground. Although cabbages are not roots like carrots, they can be stored in a root cellar over the winter, just like carrots.
3. The word cabbage comes from the french word for head.  
True: The word cabbage comes from the french word "caboche," which is one word for head.
4. Cabbage is in the same plant family as potatoes.  
False: Although lots of people like to eat cabbage and potatoes together, cabbages are in a different family from potatoes. Cabbages are related to broccoli, cauliflower, brussel sprouts and kale. All these veggies are in the Brassica family.
5. If you eat cabbage, you are less likely to get cancer.  
True: Cabbage has been proven to help prevent cancer. Cabbage also has lots of Vitamin C (about 50% of the Vitamin C you need in a day per cup of raw cabbage)
6. Before band-aids, cabbage was used to cover and protect wounds.  
True: Cabbage has antibacterial qualities and was used on wounds like a Band-Aid.

Ask these focusing questions throughout the lesson:

- Why is cabbage healthy?
- How do cabbages vary?
- Where do cabbages come from?

## CABBAGE, COOKED AND RAW

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### MATERIALS:

- Ingredients for Seasoned Cabbage Rolls
- Did you know? Cabbage flyer
- Cabbage Preparation Ideas handouts and/or flyer
- Cabbage recipe cards
- A cabbage to display, if possible
- An electric burner and pan, if available and facilities and time allow
- Supplies, as needed, from the General Supply Checklist

### DIRECTIONS:

This lesson will demonstrate the uses of cabbage cooked and raw by providing taste tests of Seasoned Cabbage Rolls and how to finish preparing them (or completely prepare them if facilities and time allow). Through discussion and flyer/handouts attendees will also be introduced to other ways to use cabbage and basic nutrition facts and storage tips. The whole recipe for the taste test can be made in advance or rolls can easily be assembled on-site. If facilities and time allow some ingredients can be chopped up ahead of time in order to cook on-site, or rolls can be completely prepared on-site.

### OBJECTIVES:

1. Attendees will become familiar with ideas and techniques for incorporating cabbage into meals.
2. Attendees will become familiar with basic storage and nutrition information of cabbage.
3. Attendees will taste test Seasoned Cabbage Rolls.

### PROCEDURE:

1. Set up table to display cabbage, recipe cards, flyer, handouts and taste test.
2. Begin or finish preparing taste test (if applicable).
3. Ask attendees: Have they prepared cabbage before and if so, how? How do they store it? Discuss different methods for preparation (raw and cooked) and storage. Discuss nutrition benefits.
4. Serve the Seasoned Cabbage Rolls taste test and collect votes.

### ASSESSMENT: *(To be tracked on the reporting sheet.)*

1. The number of people that try the food.
2. The number of recipe cards taken by attendees.
3. The response in the voting jars.



# SEASONED CABBAGE ROLLS

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## HOME VERSION

Total Time: 30 mins.

Yield: 10 to 12 rolls

Tastings: About 47 2 Tbsp. servings (slices of rolls)

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 head of green cabbage  
or 1.5 lbs of any type
- 1 large clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 5 Tbsp. soy sauce, or more to taste
- 4 Tbsp. ketchup, or more to taste
- 2 cups of other ingredient such as:  
Chopped zucchini, chopped tofu,  
rice, beans, or corn
- Oil for pan
- Optional: hot sauce, to taste

## DIRECTIONS

1. Cut off 1-inch from base of cabbage and remove 10-12 leaves, wash, and steam/boil until flexible (about 5 mins.).
2. Finely chop remaining cabbage.
3. Heat pan with oil to medium heat and add garlic and onion, stirring for 1-2 minutes.
4. Add chopped cabbage, soy sauce, ketchup, and other ingredient and stir.
5. Cook for 7 minutes, stirring regularly.
6. Fill each leaf with about 1/3 cup cooked mixture and roll them up, securing with a toothpick, if necessary.

# BEETS

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## STORAGE AND SELECTION TIPS:

1. Choose beets that are firm and free of bruises.
2. Select similar-sized roots to ensure even cooking.
3. De-stemmed beets will keep for 2-4 weeks in the refrigerator.
4. Buried in sand and/or placed in a cellar, they'll keep for months.

## HISTORY:

Wild beets are native to the shores of North Africa, Europe and the Middle East; they were first cultivated by the ancient Romans. In the 19th century, when it was found that beets could be converted into sugar, the crop's commercial value significantly grew. Beets are a member of the Amaranthaceae family, along with chard, quinoa and spinach. This root vegetable comes in an array of colors, including: deep red, red and white striped, orange, golden yellow and purple.

## FUN FACTS:

- Betanin is the pigment that gives beets their deep purple-red color; it is known for its cancer-fighting properties.
- Beets can serve as a substitute for coffee: finely slice, dry, roast and grind into a powder!
- Beet leaves are an excellent source of potassium; good source of vitamin B9 (folic acid) and magnesium.
- Beet roots are an excellent source of vitamin A and the mineral potassium; good source of vitamin C, B2 (riboflavin) and the mineral magnesium.

# LESSON ONE

## BEETS, TOP TO BOTTOM

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### MATERIALS:

One full beet with greens,  
for display

A few trimmed beet roots and  
beet greens, for display

Pre-blanching beet roots, for  
peeling activity/demonstration

#### Handouts:

Beet Peeling Tip Sheet  
Whole Beet Diagram

#### Recipe:

Beet Greens Salad

Supplies, as needed, from the  
General Supplies Checklist

### DIRECTIONS:

This lesson will demonstrate ways to cook all parts of a beet, starting with a whole, raw beet and showing how to prepare it for cooking. Attendees will be able to observe or practice simple ways to peel and chop a beet root and sauté beet greens, and be able to taste a salad that incorporates all parts of beets. The Beet Green Salad recipe can be made in advance and is easily prepared on-site. Included are other kid-friendly beet recipes that can be tested, if facilities allow you to make them fresh.

### OBJECTIVES:

1. Attendees will learn how to prepare both the tops and bottoms of beets.
2. Attendees will practice a technique for peeling beet roots.
3. Attendees will taste a recipe using both beet greens and beet roots.

### PROCEDURE:

1. Set-up table sequentially to display beet parts, demonstrate peeling, and serve taste test.
2. Show a full beet, with greens attached, and then trimmed beet greens and roots. Ask attendees: What part of the beet do you usually eat? What do beets look like when you buy them from the store? Compare the prices of a beet with greens to beet roots and beet greens bought separately.
3. Have attendees try peeling pre-boiled beets with their hands. In a bowl of cool water, attendees can rub the skins off pre-boiled beets with their fingers. Warn them that their hands may be stained purple! This can easily be a demonstration instead of an activity.
4. Explain cooking methods for the beet after it has been peeled, such as roasting, boiling, marinating, and provide recipe cards for each.
5. Serve taste test of Beet Green Salad & collect votes!

# BEET GREEN SALAD

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Serves: 4-8

Tastings: 20

Time: 4 hr (1 hr hands on/3 hr cooling)

## INGREDIENTS

1 lb. beets with greens  
1 lb. spinach  
goat cheese (optional)

Marinade:

2 Tbs balsamic vinegar  
1 tsp Dijon mustard  
½ tsp dried thyme or  
1 tsp fresh thyme  
¼ c diced chives  
¼ c olive oil  
salt & pepper, to taste

## DIRECTIONS

1. Separate beet greens from beet roots. Set greens aside.
2. Boil and peel beet roots. Let cool.
3. Combine marinade ingredients. Stir well. Add salt and pepper to taste.
4. Slice beets to desired size and shape. Combine with marinade in large bowl. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours or overnight if possible.
5. Toss beet greens with spinach. Serve greens topped with marinated beets and goat cheese.

# HERBS

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## HISTORY:

**BASIL** — Basil is native to India, Africa and Asia. The history and its uses can be traced back more than 4000 years; so, it had a lot of time in history to develop some mixed reviews. The second half basil's scientific name is derived from a medieval Latin form of a Greek word meaning "King" or "Kingly." This royal reference stems from basil being considered a sacred herb in one of its native countries, India. In Romania, it was customary if a boy accepted a sprig of basil from a girl, it would mean he was to marry her. During medieval times, it represented poverty, hate and misfortune. Because it wouldn't grow around rue, a plant which they thought to be "an enemy of poisons," basil was believed to be poisonous. It was even thought by physicians in the 1500's that smelling basil would make you grow scorpions in your brain!

**Medicinal benefits:** Basil is used as a digestive aid, a sedative and a treatment for headaches.

**Vitamins and minerals:** Highest in vitamin K but also a good source of Vitamin A, iron and calcium.

**DILL** — Greek and Roman soldiers burned dill seeds and then placed them on their wounds to promote healing. In Europe dill was made into love potions. Carrying a bag of dried dill over your head was thought to protect you against hexes. European kings put dill on banquet tables to help ease the digestion of their guests. The word dill originates from the Nordic word "dilla" meaning "to lull." In turn, it was used as the main ingredient in gripe water, a formula meant to calm fretful babies.

**Medicinal benefits:** Helps calm digestive disturbances and helps the body detoxify.

**Vitamin and minerals:** Copper, potassium, calcium, manganese, iron, magnesium, vitamin A, beta carotene and vitamin-C.

**MINT** — Mint's history is colored with stories from ancient Greek mythology. One story claims that a water nymph, named Minthe, attracts the attention of Hades, god of the Underworld. Hades' wife, Persephone, finds out and attacks Minthe by trampling on her. To escape, Minthe turns herself into a mint plant, which smelled of a sweet odor every time Persephone stomped on her. According to this myth, that was how mint got its name. Mint came to this country by way of the Pilgrims.

**Medicinal benefits:** Used to freshen breath; as an aromatic stimulant to help headaches; and has digestive properties which help to prevent "wind from blowing" after a big Mexican dinner.

**Vitamins and minerals:** Vitamin C, A, beta carotene and iron.

**PARSLEY** — Native to the Mediterranean region, parsley has a lot of superstitions associated with it. Parsley was said to be sprung from the forerunner of death, Archemorus, and has a lot of ominous history. Ancient Greeks decorated tombs with parsley. In respect to the deceased, parsley wreaths were laid upon the dead. The saying, “To be in need of parsley.” was meant to mean someone was very sick and was soon to die. It was only until later in European history that parsley was used in cooking. It was also used as a remedy for baldness, liver and kidney problems as well as an antidote for poison.

**Medicinal benefits:** Contains high amounts of chlorophyll which cleanses the blood. Parsley also helps raise potassium levels which in turn, releases water from the body (fluid retention) due to salt.

**Vitamins and minerals:** Parsley is a very good source of vitamin C, folic acid, iron, calcium, zinc, magnesium and fiber.

### **FUN FACTS:**

- Basil was and is highly regarded by many cultures. In India, Hindus consider it sacred. In ancient Greece, it was referred to as basilikon, meaning “royal” and in Italy, it’s regarded as a symbol of love.
- Basil was used in the embalming process in ancient Egypt.
- The Greeks and Romans considered oregano to be a symbol of happiness; its Latin name, origanum, is derived from the Greek words for “mountain” and “joy”. During marriage ceremonies, couples wore laurels comprised of oregano.
- Mint was once used to add fragrance to homes and temples

### **STORAGE AND SELECTION TIPS:**

1. Fresh: Store in the fridge, wrapped in a slightly damp paper towel in a plastic bag; leave bag partially open or poke holes to allow herbs to breathe.
2. To dry: Wash, dry, then bunch together freshly clipped herbs with a rubber band. Do not bunch too tightly, as exposure to air is important. Next, hang bunches upside down in a dry, cool, dark space; herbs can also be dried lying on a rack or mesh screen. Drying times will vary.
3. Dried: Keep in a sealed container in a dry, cool, dark space.
4. To freeze: Put in freezer grade bag, whole or chopped; do not blanch. You can also fill ice cubes trays with leaves and cover in olive oil, stock or water. Put cubes in a freezer grade plastic bag

# LESSON ONE

## HERB IDENTIFYING AND TASTING

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### MATERIALS:

3 prepared herb pesto recipes

3 paper (lunch sized) bags  
labeled with the names of the  
herbs

Crackers or slices of bread for  
pesto sampling

A small bunch of each of the 3  
herbs used in the pestos

Supplies, as needed, from the  
General Supply Check List

### DIRECTIONS:

This lesson will convey the unique flavors and scents of three locally grown herbs and how they can be used to enhance the enjoyment of other foods. Attendees will first smell the herbs and then get a sense of their taste through three herb based pesto recipes.

### OBJECTIVES:

1. Attendees will identify three different herbs by scent.
2. Attendees will test three pesto recipes featuring herbs.
3. Attendees will rate their response to the herbs.

### PROCEDURE:

1. Place each bunch of herbs in the appropriate bag and arrange the bags on the table.
2. Next to each bag, place the bowl of the corresponding pesto.
3. As attendees approach the table, smile, greet them and be ready to talk about the herbs and pestos. Encourage each person to first smell the herb in the bag to make a scent identification. Then have them try the pesto for a taste connection.
4. Be sure to highlight that the pestos all have the same base recipe and the only difference is the herb. They may be surprised at how they are each unique.
5. Ask attendees to share their thoughts through the beans and voting jars.
6. At the end of the session clean up the table and remove any trash, pack up your supplies and complete the reporting sheet.

**ASSESSMENT:** To be tracked on the reporting sheet

1. The number of people that try the food.
2. The number of recipe cards taken by attendees.
3. The response in the voting jars.

# BASE PESTO

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Total Time: 15 min.

## INGREDIENTS

2 cups packed herbs or greens  
1/4 cup pine nuts, or any other nut  
1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese  
1-2 garlic cloves  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
(more oil may be needed to  
make blending easier)  
2 tablespoons lemon juice  
Salt, to taste, if needed

## DIRECTIONS

1. Combine all ingredients together in a food processor and pulse until smooth. If you don't have a food processor, finely chop the first four ingredients together, adding in more of each ingredient a little at a time. Then combine with the oil and lemon juice.

**NOTES:** This pesto recipe is easily adaptable to your preferred herb. Simply swap out one herb for another at the same rate. For the purpose of the herb lesson, choose three herbs and prepare three different pestos for the tasting.

Possible herbs for pesto: Basil, Mint, Parsley, Cilantro, Oregano, Dill

**USES:** Pesto has a wide range of uses. Here are just a few:

- Toss with warm pasta and some of the reserved pasta cooking water
- Thin with additional oil to make into a salad dressing
- Add into tomato sauce
- Toss with vegetables, either cooked or raw
- Use as a condiment on a sandwich
- Serve with your favorite protein as a condiment
- With chips or crackers

**STORAGE:** Pesto can be stored in the fridge, tightly covered and with a thin layer of oil on top, for up to two weeks. Alternatively, you can freeze it and use within six months. Try freezing in ice cube trays for convenient portion sizes.



# GREENS

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## STORAGE AND SELECTION TIPS:

1. Choose firm, richly green leaves and avoid limp, yellowing or brown-edged greens
2. Arugula and Lettuce: store 2-5 days in the fridge, depending on the variety; place in a perforated plastic bag, loosely wrapped in a damp paper towel or place in an airtight container
3. Spinach: stores 4-5 days in the fridge

## HISTORY:

There are a wide variety of salad greens available in Vermont, spanning across several plant families, each bearing a unique history. Arugula is a spicy, mustard-like plant that is currently grown as a “specialty green” in Vermont. It is a member of one of the dominant families in our food system: Brassicaceae; broccoli, kale and rutabagas are also in this family. It is native to Europe and western Asia and was introduced to the United States by the colonists. Lettuce is a member of the family Asteraceae, along with artichokes, marigolds and sunflowers. It is native to the eastern Mediterranean and boasts over 100 varieties. Thousands of years ago, it was most likely grown for the oil its seeds produced. Christopher Columbus introduced varieties of lettuce to North America during his second voyage in 1493. Spinach is a member of the family Amaranthaceae, along with beets, chard and quinoa. It is native to Persia and was not introduced to the Greeks and Romans until the Moors brought it to Spain in the 11th century.

## FUN FACTS:

- Arugula is nicknamed “salad rocket”, which is derived from the Latin word *eruca*, meaning caterpillar—this is most likely referring to the hairy stems some varieties possess.
- The word lettuce is derived from the Latin word *lactuca*, which stems from *lactus*, meaning “milk”; this name was designated because of the white resin the stems secrete when they’re cut. In China, lettuce represents good luck.
- During the Middle Ages, spinach leaves were sold in the form of round balls, called *espinoche*. Spinach contains more iron by weight than a hamburger.

# MANY SHADES OF GREEN

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## MATERIALS:

Greens for table display

Handout:

A Guide to Greens

Recipe(s):

Greens Salad, prepared with three kinds of greens

Supplies, as needed, from the

General Supplies Checklist

## DIRECTIONS:

This lesson will expose participants to a variety of kinds of salad greens. The Greens Salad recipe is highly versatile and can be easily altered to suit available greens or expected audience tastes.

## OBJECTIVES:

1. Attendees will identify three different kinds of salad greens.
2. Attendees will test the same preparation of several different greens.
3. Attendees will rate their response to the salad greens.

## PROCEDURE:

1. On your clean, clothed table arrange the three kinds of greens in bowls. Place signs in front of each to indicate what they are. Also arrange a small amount of raw greens on the table in order for people to make a visual identification.
2. If not serving the greens pre-dressed, prepare small cups of dressing.
3. As attendees approach the table, smile, greet them and be ready to talk about the different greens. Explain what they are, how they were made, and a little about the green(s) being highlighted. Be sure to emphasize how and where the greens can be found locally.
4. At the end of the session clean up the table and remove any trash, pack up your supplies and complete the reporting sheet.

**ASSESSMENT:** To be tracked on the reporting sheet

1. The number of people that try the food.
2. The number of recipe cards taken by attendees.
3. The response in the voting jars.

# THE VERSATILITY OF LEAFY GREENS

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## MATERIALS:

Greens for table display

Recipe(s):

Greens Salad

Greens Smoothie

Greens Chips

Supplies, as needed, from the  
General Supplies Checklist

## DIRECTIONS:

This lesson will demonstrate that leafy greens can be prepared in a variety of creative, delicious ways and used interchangeably with other greens. The greens used in three simple recipes can be consistent throughout or interchanged. Possible options include kale, bok choy, chard, mustard greens, collard greens and beet greens.

## OBJECTIVES:

1. Attendees will identify three different ways to prepare leafy greens.
2. Attendees will test different recipes featuring leafy greens.
3. Attendees will rate their response to the leafy greens.

## PROCEDURE:

1. On your clean, clothed table arrange the three greens recipes in their respective containers. Place signs and recipe cards in front of each recipe to indicate what they are. Also arrange a small amount of raw greens on the table in order for people to make a visual identification.
2. On each plate, dish out a small sample of the salad and chips. Pour the smoothie into the small cups and place one on each plate.
3. As attendees approach the table, smile, greet them and be ready to talk about the recipes. Explain what they are, how they were made and a little about the green(s) being highlighted. Be sure to emphasize how and where the greens can be found locally.
4. At the end of the session clean up the table and remove any trash, pack up your supplies and complete the reporting sheet.

**ASSESSMENT:** To be tracked on the reporting sheet

1. The number of people that try the food.
2. The number of recipe cards taken by attendees.
3. The response in the voting jars.

# GREEN CHIPS

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Serves: 4  
Tastings: 16  
Time: 30 min

## DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F.
2. Wash and dry greens then tear into medium sized pieces.
3. In bowl, toss greens with oil and vinegar.
4. Spread pieces onto baking sheet and sprinkle with salt. Bake for 15 min or until crispy, checking on the chips about halfway through. Serve immediately.

**NOTES:** While kale chips are the most widely recognized, other greens, including bok choy, chard, mustard greens, and collards, can be made into chips as well. To mix things up, try seasoning the chips with spices such as garlic powder, chili powder, or curry powder.

# GREENS SALAD

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Serves: 4  
Tastings: 16  
Time: 15 min

## INGREDIENTS

1 bunch greens (4-5 cups)

Apple Cider Vinaigrette:

¼ c olive oil

¼ c maple syrup

¼ c apple cider vinegar

or

Buttermilk Ranch Dressing:

½ c cultured buttermilk

¼ c mayonnaise

2 tsp rice vinegar, optional

1 tsp garlic powder, optional

4-5 tsp finely chopped fresh chives,  
mint, and/or Italian parsley, optional

salt & pepper

optional add-ins

(ie. fresh fruit, nuts, seeds)

## DIRECTIONS

1. Thoroughly wash and dry the greens.
2. If serving with vinaigrette, shake together oil, syrup, and vinegar in jar. If serving with ranch dressing, whisk together buttermilk and mayonnaise. Add in vinegar, garlic powder, and herbs, as desired. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
3. Immediately before serving, toss together the dressing and the greens. Use your hands to massage the dressing into the greens and make them more tender. You can also serve the dressing separately to allow participants to determine the amount.

**NOTES:** A similar concept can also be used to introduce participants to multiple kinds of greens. Try serving several kinds of greens – ie kale, spinach, and arugula – with the same optional dressing.

# GREENS SMOOTHIE

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Serves: 1  
Tastings: 16  
Time: 15 min

## INGREDIENTS

1 medium banana, frozen and peeled  
½ c mixed frozen berries  
1 Tbsp peanut butter  
¾ c milk  
2 c loosely packed greens

## DIRECTIONS

1. Combine all ingredients in blender and blend until smooth. Alternatively, blend in jar or pitcher with immersion blender.
2. Add more milk or berries, if needed, to adjust consistency.
3. Serve immediately or keep cold.

**NOTES:** Although this recipe offers an unusual and exciting way to serve greens, it is not very budget friendly. It could be a good fit for sponsored events in which funding is plentiful but prep time is not. For more economical greens suggestions, check out the Greens Salad recipe.

# BERRIES

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## STORAGE AND SELECTION TIPS:

1. Choose berries that are free of mold, firm, and not overripe (usually indicated by a dark, dull color)
2. Store berries in the refrigerator, unwashed, until ready to consume.
3. Remove rotten or moldy berries to prevent other berries from becoming damaged.
4. Blueberries can last up to a week in the fridge, while strawberries and raspberries are more fragile and last 2-3 days.
5. To freeze: Freezing berries whole retains their highest nutritional value. Remove overripe or moldy berries, wash, then drain. Lay a single layer of berries on a baking sheet, and freeze overnight. Store the berries in labeled, freezer grade bags; you can pre-portion the berries for specific recipes.

## HISTORY:

**Blueberries:** Blueberries are native to North America; the wild varieties of the plant are referred to as lowbush and the cultivated varieties as highbush. Native Americans used blueberries to season ceremonial pemmican, a mixture of dried elk, bison, or deer meat powder and melted fat. Blueberries are a true berry: the seeds and flesh are produced from a single ovary. Blueberries are a member of the heath family, which includes cranberries and huckleberries.

**Raspberries:** Raspberries are believed to be native to East Asia. Brought by the Crusaders from Turkey, the red raspberry was the first variety to be cultivated in Europe. Raspberries exist in a spectrum of colors: red, black, yellow, orange, amber, and white. The raspberry is not a true berry, as it is produced from the merging of several ovaries.

**Strawberries:** Strawberries are native to temperate zones in Europe and North and South America. The strawberry is also not a true berry, in the botanical sense. The flesh we eat is actually a swollen part of the stem, called the receptacle.

## FUN FACTS:

- Blueberries, raspberries and strawberries all grow in the wild and are cultivated in Vermont.
- The blue pigment in blueberries comes from a group of antioxidants called anthocyanins.
- The waxy coating on the surface of blueberries is called the “bloom”.
- Raspberry bushes have thorns—be wary!
- Native Americans called strawberries “heartseed berries” and ground them into cornmeal bread. Inspired by this recipe, colonists created a similar version, referred to today as strawberry shortcake.

# BERRY DELICIOUS

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## MATERIALS:

Freezer bags

Cookie sheet

Fresh or frozen berries for demonstration

Handout:

Pick-Your-Own Berry Farms Handout

Recipe Cards

Recipe(s):

Homemade Blueberry Sauce  
Yogurt

Supplies, as needed, from the General Supplies Checklist

## DIRECTIONS:

As delicious as berries are, their growing season is depressingly short. This lesson explains how to enjoy the goodness of local berries all year-round by freezing them. Additionally, participants will get to sample Homemade Blueberry Sauce served over yogurt, a recipe that takes well to frozen berries.

## OBJECTIVES:

1. Attendees will be introduced to methods of easy storage of berries for year-round use.
2. Attendees will test a recipe made from frozen berries.
3. Attendees will rate their response to the berry recipe.

## PROCEDURE:

1. Arrange table with educational materials, recipes, and handouts. Place some berries out in order for people to make a visual identification. Set out a cookie sheet, freezer bags, paper towels and other materials necessary to demonstrate proper freezing and storage of berries.
2. Discuss with attendees the benefits of picking or purchasing berries in season, and freezing them for later use.
3. Demonstrate freezing techniques: freezing berries by spreading them out on a cookie sheet first, then transferring to freezer bags to prevent frozen berries from lumping together. Berries can also just be washed, dried, and placed into bags or airtight containers and then placed directly in the freezer.
4. In small cups or serving containers, have attendees sample a blueberry sauce made from frozen blueberries served over yogurt.
5. Hand out recipe cards and talk about how this sauce can be made from frozen berries and is a healthy and tasty dressing for yogurt or ice cream.
6. At the end of the session, clean up the table, remove trash, pack up supplies, and complete the reporting sheet.

**ASSESSMENT:** To be tracked on the reporting sheet

1. The number of people that try the food.
2. The number of recipe cards taken by attendees.
3. The response in the voting jars.



# TOMATOES

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## STORAGE AND SELECTION TIPS:

1. Look for tomatoes that are firm and free of bruises. If you plan to cook the tomatoes down into a soup or sauce, try requesting seconds! They might be bruised, but they will cook down nicely and are less expensive.
2. Ideally, store them at room temperature, out of direct sunlight.
3. If overripe, they can be put in the refrigerator for 1-2 days; to acquire maximum flavor, be sure to let them reach room temperature again before eating.
4. To freeze: Rinse, hull and place in a labeled and dated freezer-grade bag. Make sure to leave room for expansion that occurs during freezing and remove all excess air. Frozen tomatoes will keep for 8-12 months.

## HISTORY:

Tomatoes are a member of the family Solanaceae, along with eggplants, peppers and potatoes. They are native to Central America and Mexico; their dissemination throughout the globe was sparked by the Spanish's colonization of the Americas. In tropical regions, they grow as short-lived perennials; in the temperate region of Vermont, they are annuals.

## FUN FACTS:

- The word tomato stems from the word tomalt, which was what the fruit was called in Nahuatl, the language of the Aztecs.
- There are over 1,000 varieties of tomatoes.
- Italians refer to the tomato as pomodoro, which translates as golden apple.

# LESSON ONE

## NOT ALL TOMATOES ARE RED

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### MATERIALS:

At least 3 different varieties, preferably at least three different colors, of tomatoes (the more, the better!)

Toothpicks

Paper plates

Cutting board

Sharp knife

A voting card with voting space for each variety of tomato being offered that day

Several writing utensils (markers are best)

### DIRECTIONS:

This lesson is designed to introduce attendees to the wide variety of tomatoes that are grown in Vermont! It's fun, tasty, and requires minimal materials or prep time. It's a fabulous way to get people engaged and to start conversations. A great quick win lesson suitable for lots of public events! For best results, and tight budgets, plan this for late August & early September when the tomatoes are plentiful. We've had great success getting donated tomatoes from area farmers for activities like this.

### OBJECTIVES:

1. Attendees will learn that tomatoes come in all shapes, sizes and colors.
2. Attendees will taste several varieties of tomatoes.
3. Attendees will cast a vote for their favorite variety.
4. Attendees will read/hear some funny tomato jokes.

### PROCEDURE:

1. Cut up larger tomatoes into bite sizes and put each variety on a separate plate.
2. Write the name of the tomato variety on each plate, or on a card in front of each plate.
3. Encourage tasters to try as many varieties as they would like and cast one vote for their favorite.

**ASSESSMENT:** To be tracked on the reporting sheet

1. The number of attendees that try the food.
2. The number of votes cast for each variety of tomato

# FRESH TOMATO SALSA

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Time: 30 min

## INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups of chopped tomatoes
- ½ cup of chopped green bell pepper
- 1 cup of onion, diced
- ¼ cup of minced fresh cilantro
- 2 Tbsp. fresh lime juice
- ½ Tsp. ground cumin
- ½ Tsp. kosher salt
- ½ Tsp. of ground black pepper

## DIRECTIONS

1. Gather ingredients and bowl.
2. Stir all ingredients in a bowl. Serve.

**NOTES:** For younger kids, you may want to chop some ingredients ahead of time. Tomatoes are a great vegetable for small kids, because they can be chopped easily with a plastic knife.

## DISCUSSION POINTS:

- How do we use this plant?
- Processing, storage, different recipes – how have you eaten this before?
- Show pictures of different versions of this plant.
- Try the food.
- Discuss vocabulary to describe flavors.
- Make a graph showing how many people liked it and didn't like it