

July

Harvests of the Month

First two weeks: Beets

Second two weeks: Green Beans

Final week: Lettuce

If these are not available in your child care program's garden, they should be available at the Farmers' Market. Grocery stores often have locally-grown produce in season, too.

Please choose at least one activity from each week to go along with your weekly gardening time. You may also create your own lesson plan.



	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
BEET ACTIVITIES	Book – <i>Colors of the Rainbow</i> , by Donna E. Warren, p. 2	Beet Mystery Bag and Taste Test, p. 2	Beet Craft, p. 3	Recipe – Roasted Beets with Sautéed Beet Greens, p. 4	Gardening!
BEET ACTIVITIES	Book – <i>The Farmer and the Beet</i> , by Jeremy David, p. 4	Beets...Where Do You Come From?, p. 4	Beet Finger Painting, p. 4	Recipe – Beet Smoothies, p. 5	Gardening!
GREEN BEAN ACTIVITIES	Book – <i>Green Beans, Potatoes, and Even Tomatoes: What Is In the Vegetable Group?</i> , by Brian P. Cleary, p. 6	Green Bean Mystery Bag, p. 6	Green Bean Taste Test, p. 7	Recipe – Green Beans with Lemon Basil Dip, p. 7	Gardening!
GREEN BEAN ACTIVITIES	Book – <i>How Martha Saved Her Parents From Green Beans</i> , by David La Rochelle, p.8	Green Beans...Where Do You Come From?, p. 8	Sprouting a Green Bean Plant, p. 8	Recipe – Rainbow Green Bean Salad, p. 9	Gardening!
LETTUCE ACTIVITIES	Book – <i>Lettuce Grows on the Ground</i> , by Mari C. Schuh, p. 10	Lettuce Mystery Bag and Taste Test, p. 10	Lettuce...Where Do You Come From?, p. 11	Recipe – Hawaiian Lettuce Wraps, p. 12	Gardening!

Note: Please feel free to adapt these activities as necessary. Younger children may require additional assistance with some of the tasks required.

Beets

Fun Facts

- Botany
 - Beets are a root vegetable of the Chenopodiaceae, or Goosefoot family, which also includes, beets, chard, mangel-wurzels, and sugar beets.
 - The entire beet is edible – from the leaves to the root.
 - The color of beet roots can range from dark purple to bright red, yellow, white and striped. (The Chioggia beet is red and white-striped, and nicknamed the “candy cane” beet.)
 - Beet juice is widely used as a “natural” dye to give pink or red coloration to processed foods.
 - Sugar beets contain a natural sugar called sucrose and contain twice the amount of sugar as table beets. They provide about one-third of the world’s table sugar supply.
- History
 - The wild beet is believed to have descended from the sea-beet (Beta maritima) and originated in the Mediterranean. It has been cultivated since about the third century.
 - The leaves were used for medicinal purposes, and then later as a potherb.
 - Romans were some of the first to cultivate and develop beets for their roots and used them for feeding animals. Greeks were the first to consume both roots and leaves.
 - The sugar beet (or “white beet”) was developed in the 18th century and, in the early 1800s, the French began extracting the sugar.
 - Colonists brought red and sugar beets to America in the 19th century.
- Nutrition
 - A ½ cup of beet root is a good source of folate and manganese. It is also a source of riboflavin.
 - A ½ cup of cooked beet greens is an excellent source of vitamin K, vitamin A, and vitamin C. It is also a good source of manganese, potassium, and riboflavin.

Adapted from: http://harvestofthemonth.cdph.ca.gov/documents/Winter/021712/ED_Beets_Newsletter_Final.pdf

Activity: Book – *Colors of the Rainbow*, by Donna E. Warren

Ages: 6 months-5 years

Time: 15 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will identify the fruits and vegetables from the story.
- Children will realize that fruits and vegetables come in a rainbow of colors.

Materials: *Colors of the Rainbow*, by Donna E. Warren

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.

Procedure:

1. Gather children in a circle on the floor.
2. Read *Colors of the Rainbow*, by Donna E. Warren. Ask the children to identify the fruits and vegetables from the story and what color they are.
3. Talk about beets: beets can be yellow, red, white and purple. They can be planted in the early spring or late fall. Beets can also be bought at a farmers’ market, farm stand, or supermarket. The root is the part that grows underground: this is the part you eat, but the leaves can also be used for salads, sautéed or made into chips (like kale)

Activity: Beet Mystery Bag and Taste Test

Ages: 3-5 years

Time: 20 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will identify beets as a solid, round shaped, red-purple fruit with a stem of green leaves and a thin root on the bottom.
- Children will describe the appearance, texture, and smell of beets.

Materials: 1 fresh beet with stem leaves and roots attached, a few more beets for tasting, mystery box/bag, plates (1/child), napkins (1/child).

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.
2. Wash, peel and cut the tasting beets into thin, small slices. Place a few slices of beet and a beet leaf onto each plate.



3. Place the beet (with the stem and leaves still attached) in the mystery box/bag. Keep the remainder of beets out of sight of children, but have available in case “enthusiastic feelers” damage the beet in the box and more are needed.

Procedure:

1. Gather children in a circle on the floor.
2. Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands
3. Mystery box/bag: Introduce or reintroduce the mystery box/bag (if you have used it before). One at a time, ask each child to come and feel inside the box or bag without looking. If a child seems afraid, feel inside the box/bag with the child. Ask each child to describe quietly to you what he/she feels. After everyone has guessed, reveal the beet. Show the beet to the children. Note the children’s guesses that were close (round, a vegetable) or correct (beet). Offer each child a few slices of beet to look at, touch, and smell. Talk about beets. Ask the questions below and any other questions you like.
 - a. Is a beet a fruit or a vegetable? (Vegetable)
 - b. What shape is it? (Round like a ball)
 - c. What color is it? (Purple/Red)
 - d. What color is the cap of leaves? (Green)
 - e. Are there seeds? How do they grow? (They are very small and they grow in the ground.)
 - f. Does it have a smell? (May have no smell or smell earthy (like dirt) or bitter)
 - g. Is it light or heavy? (heavy like a ball; let the children feel a ball)
 - h. Has anyone ever tasted a beet? (Yes or No)
4. Tasting
 - a. As necessary, remind the children how the group follows polite tasting manners:
 - i. “Don’t yuck my yum!” Remind children that we do not say negative things about how something tastes because it might offend someone and discourage others from trying something new.
 - ii. If a child tries something that they do not like, request that they quietly spit it out in a napkin so other children have an opportunity to taste it and form their own opinions.
 - iii. Encourage children to use respectful language like “I don’t care for it.”
 - iv. Remind children that sometimes it takes trying new things 10 times before you begin to like them.
 - b. Ask the children:
 - i. Is the beet soft/chewy/fleshy/hard/crunchy? (Chewy, Soft, Crunchy)
 - ii. How does the beet taste? (Sweet, Earthy)
 - iii. How does the beet leaf taste? (Earthy)
5. Optional: Create a sticker chart for children to document whether they “liked” the beet or “don’t like it yet.” A sample chart is included at the end of this document.

Activity: Beet Craft

Ages: 3-5 years

Time: 30 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will demonstrate how beets grow underground.
- Children will identify the different parts of the beet.

Materials: Construction paper in a variety of colors (purple (1 sheet/child), green (1 sheet/child), brown (1 sheet/child) and blue (1 sheet/child)), glue

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.
2. Create a model paper beet: Cut out a beet using the PURPLE construction paper for the root and the GREEN paper for the leaves. Glue the root to the BROWN paper (the soil).
3. Cut out beets and leaves for children.
4. Set up tables with materials.

Procedure:

1. Invite children to sit at tables where materials are set up.
2. Tell children that they will be creating their own beet plants today out of construction paper. (Show them the model beet you created.)
3. Have the children glue the beets and leaves onto the soil (brown paper). Assist as needed.
4. Review the different parts of the beet (roots, stem, leaves, etc.) with children as you work.
5. Ask the children what the beet needs to grow (water, sunlight, etc.). Ask the children which parts of the beet can be eaten (all of it!).



Activity: Recipe – Roasted Beets with Sautéed Beet Greens

Ages: 6 months-5 years

Time: 45 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will identify the parts of the beet that are edible.
- Children will try the different parts of a beet prepared in a new way.

Materials: Chef's knife, cutting board, baking sheet, oven, sauté pan, mixing spoon, mixing bowl, plates (1/child), forks (1/child)

Servings: ~20, depending on size of beets

Ingredients:

- 5-8 beets with greens attached
- Olive oil
- Sea salt

Procedure:

1. Have children wash hands. Allow children to wash and dry beets, and remove leaves and stems! Cut the beets into bite-sized pieces and place in a mixing bowl. If desired, allow children to drizzle olive oil and sprinkle salt on the beets and stir them to coat evenly.
2. Spread the beets evenly on a baking sheet lined with foil or parchment paper. Bake at 425 degrees F for 20 minutes, until tender when pierced with a fork.
3. Place washed and dried beet greens in sauté pan with olive oil. Sprinkle with sea salt and sauté until wilted and tender.
4. Cool beets and greens and serve.

Activity: Book – *The Farmer and the Beet*, by Jeremy David

Ages: 6 months-5 years

Time: 15 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will learn that beets are planted in the ground.
- Children will learn that roots help anchor a plant in the ground.

Materials: *The Farmer and the Beet*, by Jeremy David

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.

Procedure:

1. Gather children in a circle on the floor.
2. Read book with children.
3. Ask children why the farmer had a difficult time pulling the beet out of the ground.
4. Explain to children that a plant's roots have several important jobs: roots soak up water and nutrients (food) from the soil to feed the plant; they also help to keep the plant in place.
5. Ask children how they might know when a beet is ready to be picked (when the top of the beet is popping out of the ground and it is dark in color).

Activity: Beets...Where Do You Come From?

Ages: 3-5 years

Time: 15 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will describe how beets grow from a seed into a plant that produces beets.
- Children will describe the resources needed to grow beets.

Materials: Packet of beet seeds, clear plastic cup, child-size magnifying glass, ruler, beet plant or beet plant picture (see Harvest for Healthy Kids Beet Picture Cards – http://www.harvestforhealthykids.org/wp-content/themes/harvest/assets/HfHK_Beets.zip)

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.

Procedure:

1. Gather children in a circle on the floor.
2. Explain to children that they are going to learn about how beets grow. Show children the beet seeds in the packet. Pass the seeds around in the plastic cup.
3. Let children touch the seeds and look at them with the magnifying glass. What shape are they?



4. Ask children if they know what the seeds need to grow into a beet plant. Identify correct answers; explain that the seeds grow in soil and need help from sun and water to turn into plants. Using the ruler, show children that seeds must be planted at least 12 inches apart to have room to grow.
5. Show children the picture of the beet plant (or a real plant if you have one!). Point out the green leaves that bloom on the stems, and explain that the beet grows underground. Ask if children know how to tell when a beet is ready to be picked (when the top of the beet is popping out of the ground and it is dark in color).

Activity: Beet Finger Painting

Ages: 3-5 years

Time: 30 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will experience finger painting with beet juice.
- Children will paint a picture of a beet and identify its parts.

Materials: Blender, beets, water, strainer, corn starch (optional), cups (1/child, optional), white drawing paper (1 sheet/child)

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.
2. Blend the beets in a blender with a little water. (Add more as necessary.)
3. Strain the juice to get rid of lumps.
4. Add corn starch to make thicker paint, or leave it watery for more of a water color feel.
5. Set up tables with materials.

Procedure:

1. Invite children to sit at tables where materials are set up.
2. Provide children with paper and beet "paint." Ask children to paint a beet (including leaves, stems, and root).

Activity: Recipe – Beet Smoothies

Ages: 6 months-5 years

Time: 10 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will taste beets mixed into a smoothie.
- Children will identify fruits and vegetables that can be used to make smoothies.

Materials: Blender, cups (1/child), chef's knife, cutting board, measuring cups

Servings: ~2 cups (increase recipe for larger portions/class sizes)

Ingredients:

- ½ cup orange juice
- 1 cup mixed berries (fresh or frozen)
- 1/3 cup diced beets (fresh or frozen)
- ¼ cup low-fat or fat-free plain yogurt (or low-fat coconut milk)
- Ice (optional)

Procedure:

1. Dice beets (if using fresh).
2. Have children wash hands. Allow children to help measure ingredients and pour into the blender. Cover the blender and puree until smooth. Serve immediately!
3. While children are helping, ask them what other fruits and vegetables might be good in a smoothie. Ask children their favorite way to eat beets.



Green Beans

Fun Facts

- Botany
 - The common bean is a species of the herbaceous annual plant of the Fabaceae family. These plants are grown worldwide specifically for their edible beans.
 - There are two main classifications of beans — edible pod beans and shell beans. Green beans are the most popular edible pod bean, while lima beans are the most common shell bean sold in the United States.
 - There are more than 200 species of beans, which vary in color and shape. The pod color of green beans can be green, golden, purple/red, or even streaked, but the beans inside the pod are always green. Green beans range in shape from thin “fillet” to wide “romano” types.
 - Green beans are edible pod beans that can be grown as bush beans or pole (running) beans. They are often referred to as string beans because a fibrous string that ran along the seam of the bean pod. The string was noticeable when snapping off the end of the pod. This snapping noise is the reason for its other common nickname, snap beans. Botanists, however, found a way to remove the string through breeding and in 1894 the first “stringless” bean plant was cultivated. Today, nearly all varieties of edible pod beans are grown without strings.
 - Green beans are nitrogen fixers, which means they have the ability to draw nitrogen from the air and return it to the soil. Because of this, farmers often plant beans and legumes in their crop rotations to replenish the soil.
- History
 - The common bean was cultivated in ancient Mesoamerica as early as 8,000 years ago. Beans were even found in the mummy covering of a woman in a Peruvian cemetery dating back to pre-Inca civilization.
 - Green beans originated in the tropical southern part of Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, and part of Costa Rica. They spread from this center of origin to North and South America long before European explorers ever arrived. Early explorers found the climbing beans planted alongside maize.
- Nutrition
 - A ½ cup of cooked green beans provides: a good source of vitamin C, vitamin K, vitamin A, fiber and folate.

Adapted from: http://harvestofthemonth.cdph.ca.gov/documents/Summer/GreenBeans/Green%20Beans%20-%20Educator%27s%20Newsletter_Final.pdf

Activity: Book – *Green Beans, Potatoes, and Even Tomatoes: What Is In the Vegetable Group?*, by Brian P. Cleary

Ages: 6 months-5 years

Time: 15 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will identify vegetables they already like.
- Children will name vegetables they don't like yet, but are willing to try.
- Children will learn the benefits of eating vegetables.

Materials: *Green Beans, Potatoes, and Even Tomatoes: What Is In the Vegetable Group?*, by Brian P. Cleary

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.

Procedure:

1. Gather children in a circle on the floor.
2. Ask children to name vegetables they like to eat. Ask children if there are vegetables they don't like to eat yet. Explain that sometimes you have to try a new food several times before you like it, or try it in a new way.
3. Read book with children. Discuss ways they might try vegetables they don't like yet that may taste good.

Activity: Green Bean Mystery Bag

Ages: 3-5 years

Time: 15 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will identify green beans as a long, narrow, smooth vegetable.
- Children will describe the outside appearance and feel of green beans.

Materials: Fresh green beans, mystery box/bag

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.
2. Out of sight of children, place a couple of green beans in the mystery box/bag.



Procedure:

1. Gather children in a circle on the floor.
2. Introduce or reintroduce the mystery box/bag, if you have used it before. One at a time, ask each child to come and feel inside the box or bag without looking. If a child seems afraid, feel inside the box/bag with the child. Ask each child to describe quietly to you what he/she feels. After everyone has guessed, reveal the green beans. Show the green bean to the children. Note the children's guesses that were close (long, bean) or correct (green beans). Pass the green bean(s) around for children to look at, touch, and smell. Talk about green beans. Ask the questions below and any other questions you like.
 - a. Are green beans a fruit or a vegetable? (Vegetable)
 - b. What shape is it? (Long, thin, like a pencil or a pen)
 - c. What color is it? (Green, depending on variety)
 - d. How does it feel? (smooth, soft)
 - e. Does it have a smell? (May have no smell or smell like grass)
 - f. Is it light or heavy? (Light)

Activity: Green Bean Taste Test**Ages:** 3-5 years**Time:** 15 minutes**Objective(s):**

- Children will taste green beans.
- Children will describe the taste and texture of green beans (soft, chewy, crisp, stringy, sweet).

Materials: Green beans (1/child), plates (1/child), chef's knife, cutting board**Preparation:**

1. Gather materials.
2. Wash green beans, remove and cut off ends, slice into smaller pieces if desired. Reserve at least one washed bean/piece per child for tasting.

Procedure:

1. Gather children in a circle on the floor.
2. Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands.
3. Tasting
 - a. Provide each child with a piece of green bean. Invite children to taste the green bean. As necessary, remind the children how the group follows polite tasting manners:
 - i. "Don't yuck my yum!" Remind children that we do not say negative things about how something tastes because it might offend someone and discourage others from trying something new.
 - ii. If a child tries something that they do not like, request that they quietly spit it out in a napkin so other children have an opportunity to taste it and form their own opinions.
 - iii. Encourage children to use respectful language like "I don't care for it."
 - iv. Remind children that sometimes it takes trying new things 10 times before you begin to like them.
 - b. Ask the children:
 - i. Is the green bean soft/chewy/stringy? (soft, crunchy, stringy)
 - ii. How does the green bean taste? (Sweet, grassy, mild taste, watery, depending on variety)
4. Optional: Create a sticker chart for children to document whether they "liked" the green bean or "don't like it yet." A sample chart is included at the end of this document.

Activity: Recipe – Green Beans with Lemon Basil Dip**Ages:** 6 months-5 years**Time:** 30 minutes**Objective(s):**

- Children will taste fresh green beans with dip.
- Children will help prepare a healthy dip for vegetables.

Materials: Mixing bowls, mixing spoons, measuring spoons, measuring cups, plates (1/child), napkins (1/child), grater, chef's knife, cutting board**Servings:** ~20 tastings**Ingredients:**

- ½ pound green beans, washed and trimmed (or enough for each child to have a small handful)
- 2 cups plain Greek yogurt
- ½ cup chopped fresh basil (or 2 Tbsp and 2 tsp dried basil)



- 1 Tbsp lemon zest
- 1/2 tsp salt (or more to taste)
- Pepper if desired
- Optional: Additional vegetables to be eaten with dip (carrots, peppers, celery, broccoli, radishes, cauliflower, etc.)

Procedure:

1. Have children wash their hands.
2. Allow children to assist with measuring and mixing the ingredients for the dip. Talk about the different ingredients-how they taste or smell (remind children not to put them near their face, though, unless you have extra!).
3. Serve dip with green beans (and other veggies, if using). Ask children if they can taste the different ingredients you put in the dip.

Activity: Book – *How Martha Saved Her Parents From Green Beans*, by David LaRochelle

Ages: 6 months-5 years

Time: 15 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will learn that eating green beans (and other fruits and vegetables) helps their bodies grow.

Materials: *How Martha Saved Her Parents From Green Beans*, by David LaRochelle

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.

Procedure:

1. Gather children in a circle on the floor.
2. Ask children to name vegetables they like to eat. Ask children if there are vegetables they don't like to eat yet. Explain that sometimes you have to try a new food several times before you like it, or try it in a new way.
3. Read the book. Explain to them that green beans (and other fruits and vegetables) help give their bodies what they need to grow.

Activity: Green Beans...Where Do You Come From?

Ages: 3-5 years

Time: 30 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will describe how green beans grow upright into a climbing plant.
- Children will describe what is needed to grow green beans.
- Children will learn the relationship between legumes and vegetables.

Materials: Packet of green bean seeds, clear plastic cup, child-size magnifying glass, ruler, a green bean plant or picture of a green bean (see Harvest for Healthy Kids Beans Picture Cards – http://www.harvestforhealthykids.org/wp-content/themes/harvest/assets/HfHK_Beans.zip)

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.

Procedure:

1. Gather children in a circle on the floor.
2. Explain to children that they are going to learn about how green beans grow. Show children the green bean seeds in the packet. Pass the seeds around in the plastic cup.
3. Let children touch the seeds and look at them with the magnifying glass. What shape are they? (round)
4. Ask children if they know what the seeds need to grow into a green bean plant. Identify correct answers; explain that the seeds grow in soil and need help from sun and water to turn into plants. Using the ruler, show children that seeds must be planted at least 12 inches apart to have room to grow.
5. Show children the picture of the green bean plant (or a real plant if you have one!). Remind the children they grow on a vine that "climbs," so they need something nearby like a fence for them to grow up. Point out that the green beans hang from the stem of the plant.
6. Explain the difference between a legume and a vegetable. Legumes are a special type of vegetable. Legumes grow on vines or bushes, and their seeds (or beans!) usually grow inside a pod (open up the green bean and show them the seeds in the pod; identify which parts are the seeds/beans and which is the pod).

Activity: Sprouting A Green Bean Plant

Ages: 3-5 years

Time: 30 minutes



Objective(s):

- Children will be able to identify the basic needs of sprouting a green bean seed (sun, water, air).
- Children will be able to explain what “germination” means.

Materials: Clear zip lock sandwich bags (1/child), dry green beans seeds (1 seed/child), paper towels (1/child), permanent marker (1/teacher), tape

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.
2. Set up tables with materials.

Procedure:

1. Invite children to sit at tables where materials are set up.
2. Explain to the children that they are going to germinate a green bean seed and watch it sprout. Be sure to define what germination is (it is the process by which a plant grows from a seed).
3. Distribute a zip lock bag to each child and write their name in the top corner with a permanent marker.
4. Dampen a paper towel per child and have them place the folded towel in the bag. Paper towels should be damp enough to provide moisture for the bean, but not dripping (which could cause mold).
5. Have children place a dry bean on top of the damp paper towel and seal the bag.
6. Tape each bag to a window or a wall that gets some sunlight. (A window can make it easier to see the seed as it germinates.)
7. These seeds should begin to germinate in 3-5 days. Moisten the paper towels if they are drying out.
8. Have the children observe the growth of the sprouts. You can have the children record the growth on a piece a paper throughout the week or through a series of drawings.

Activity: Recipe – Rainbow Green Bean Salad

Ages: 6 months-5 years

Time: 20 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will try green beans as part of a salad.
- Children will learn that fruits and vegetables can be mixed together to make a new food.

Materials: Chef’s knife, cutting board, measuring cups, measuring spoons, large mixing bowl, small mixing bowl, mixing spoons, can opener, colander, whisk

Servings: 24, ¼ cup servings

Ingredients:

- 2 cloves chopped garlic
- 2 cups fresh green beans, washed and trimmed
- 1, 15 oz can black beans, washed and drained
- 1 large tomato
- ½ cup carrots, cut into short, thin strips
- ½ cup yellow or red bell pepper
- 2 Tbsp fresh basil (or 2 tsp dried)
- 1 Tbsp fresh oregano (or 1 tsp dried)
- 1 Tbsp fresh parsley (or 1 tsp dried)
- 3 Tbsp lemon juice
- 3 Tbsp olive oil
- 1/8 tsp salt
- 1/8 tsp pepper

Procedure:

1. Cut green beans, tomato, bell pepper, and herbs into bite sized pieces and add to large mixing bowl.
2. Add black beans.
3. In small bowl, whisk together lemon juice, olive oil, salt and pepper.
4. Pour dressing over vegetables
5. Serve and enjoy.



Lettuce

Fun Facts

- Botany
 - 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.
- History
 - Thousands of years ago, lettuce 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.
 - 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.
- Nutrition
 - The nutritional value of lettuce varies with the variety. One cup of raw leaf lettuce has 9 calories, 1 gram of protein and 1.3 grams of fiber. It's also a moderately good source of vitamin C, calcium, iron and copper. The spine and ribs of lettuce provide dietary fiber, while vitamins and minerals are concentrated in the delicate leaf portion.
 - Iceberg is a head lettuce that is very low in nutritional value and flavor. The most abundant nutrient in iceberg lettuce is water. Dark green lettuce leaves always indicate higher fiber, flavor and nutritional value.
 - If possible, do not cut or slice lettuce leaves in advance. Damaged, cut lettuce leaves release an ascorbic acid oxidase, which destroys vitamin C and causes the cut edges to discolor.

Adapted from: <http://www.wafarmtoschool.org/ToolKit/20/lettuce/Facts> and http://www.vermontharvestofthemoth.org/uploads/2/8/9/6/28966099/mixed_greens_educator.pdf

Activity: Book – *Lettuce Grows on the Ground*, by Mari C. Schuh

Ages: 6 month-5 years

Time: 15 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will learn how lettuce grows.

Materials: *Lettuce Grows on the Ground*, by Mari C. Schuh

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.

Procedure:

1. Gather children in a circle on the floor.
2. Ask children if they know how lettuce grows. Ask them if they know any other vegetables that grow on the ground (i.e., kale, spinach, etc.).
3. Read book with children. Point out what lettuce needs to grow (soil, water, sun, etc.).

Activity: Lettuce Mystery Bag

Ages: 3-5 years

Time: 15 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will identify lettuce as a thick, leafy vegetable.
- Children will describe the outside appearance and feel of lettuce.

Materials: Fresh lettuce leaves (not iceberg), mystery box/bag

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.
2. Out of sight of children, place a piece of lettuce in the mystery box/bag.

Procedure:

1. Gather children in a circle on the floor.
2. Introduce or reintroduce the mystery box/bag, if you have used it before. One at a time, ask each child to come and feel inside the box or bag without looking. If a child seems afraid, feel inside the box/bag with the child. Ask each child to describe quietly to you what he/she feels. After everyone has guessed, reveal the lettuce leaves. Show the lettuce to the children. Note the children's guesses that were close (plant, leaf) or correct (lettuce). Pass the lettuce around for the children to look at, touch, and smell. Talk about lettuce. Ask the questions below and any other questions you like.
 - a. Is lettuce a fruit or a vegetable? (Vegetable)



- b. What shape is it? (Long, leaf shaped, may have wrinkly edges; explain that there are different kinds of lettuce that look different)
- c. What color is it? (Green, depending on variety)
- d. How does it feel? (Smooth, thick)
- e. Does it have a smell? (May have no smell or smell like earth or grass)
- f. Is it light or heavy? (Light)

Activity: Lettuce Taste Test

Ages: 2-5 years

Time: 10 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will taste lettuce.
- Children will describe the taste and texture of lettuce (crunchy, watery, may have no taste).

Materials: Chef's knife, cutting board, plates (1/child)

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.
2. Wash lettuce, slice into smaller pieces if desired. Reserve at least one pre-washed piece per child for tasting.

Procedure:

1. Gather children in a circle on the floor.
2. Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands.
3. Tasting
 - a. Pass out lettuce.
 - b. As necessary, remind the children how the group follows polite tasting manners:
 - i. "Don't yuck my yum!" Remind children that we do not say negative things about how something tastes because it might offend someone and discourage others from trying something new.
 - ii. If a child tries something that they do not like, request that they quietly spit it out in a napkin so other children have an opportunity to taste it and form their own opinions.
 - iii. Encourage children to use respectful language like "I don't care for it."
 - iv. Remind children that sometimes it takes trying new things 10 times before you begin to like them.
 - c. Invite children to taste the lettuce. Ask them:
 - i. Is the lettuce soft/crunchy/chewy? (crunchy, chewy)
 - ii. How does the lettuce taste? (Mild, grassy, no taste, watery, depending on variety)
4. Optional: Create a sticker chart for children to document whether they "liked" the lettuce or "don't like it yet." A sample chart is included at the end of this document.

Activity: Lettuce...Where Do You Come From?

Ages: 3-5 years

Time: 30 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will describe how lettuce grows in the ground.
- Children will describe the resources needed to grow lettuce.

Materials: A packet of lettuce seeds, clear plastic cup, child-size magnifying glass, ruler, lettuce plant or picture of a lettuce plant (<https://www.epicurious.com/ingredients/varieties-and-types-of-lettuce-article>)

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.

Procedure:

1. Gather children in a circle on the floor.
2. Explain to children that they are going to learn about how lettuce grows. Show children the lettuce seeds. Pass the seeds around in a plastic cup.
3. Let children touch the seeds and look at them with the magnifying glass. What shape are they? (long, oval, thin)
4. Ask children if they know what the seeds need to grow into a lettuce plant. Identify correct answers; explain that the seeds grow in soil and need help from sun and water to turn into plants. Using the ruler, show children that seeds must be planted at least 12 inches apart to have room to grow.
5. Show children the picture of the lettuce plant (or a real plant if you have one!). Remind the children that the leaves on the lettuce plant are the actual lettuce that can be eaten.



Activity: Recipe – Hawaiian Lettuce Wraps

Ages: 6 months-5 years

Time: 30 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will try lettuce as a wrap.

Materials: Chef's knife, cutting board, plates (1/child), napkins (1/child)

Servings: 1 wrap/child

Ingredients:

- Romaine lettuce leaves (1/child), rinsed and dried
- Provolone cheese, sliced (1 slice/child)
- Dijon mustard (optional)
- Pineapple, cut into small pieces

Procedure:

1. Have children wash their hands. Explain that you are going to use lettuce leaves to make a wrap.
2. Provide each child with a piece of lettuce, a slice of cheese, a few pieces of pineapple, and a small amount of mustard. Help children spread mustard on lettuce if they would like to try their wrap with mustard. Direct children to place remaining ingredients on top of the lettuce. Demonstrate how to roll the lettuce into a wrap, helping as necessary.
3. Enjoy! While children are eating, share other foods that might be good in a lettuce wrap.



Name of Taste Test Here

"I LIKE THIS"



"ME GUSTA"

"I DON'T LIKE THIS YET"



"NO ME GUSTA
TODAVÍA"

