

August

Harvests of the Month

First two weeks: Summer Squash

Second two weeks: Peaches

Final week: Melons

If these are not available in your school 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
SUMMER SQUASH ACTIVITIES	Book – <i>Mrs. McNosh and the Great Big Squash</i> , by Sarah Weeks, p. 2	Summer Squash Mystery Bag and Taste Test, p. 2	Crookneck Squash: A Look Inside, p. 3	Recipe – 5-Star Pizza, p. 4	Gardening!
SUMMER SQUASH ACTIVITIES	Book – <i>Zora's Zucchini</i> , by: Katherine Pryor, p. 4	Squash Patch Field Trip, p. 5	Squash...Where Do You Come From?, p. 5	Recipe – Yellow Submarines, p. 5	Gardening!
PEACH ACTIVITIES	Book – <i>Giant Peach Yodel</i> , by Jan Peck, p. 7	Peach Mystery Bag and Taste Test, p. 7	Peach Craft, p. 8	Recipe – Peach Cobbler, p. 8	Gardening!
PEACH ACTIVITIES	Book – <i>Juicy Peach</i> , by Mary Dixon Lake p. 9	Song – Old McDonald Had a Peach Farm, p. 9	Grow a Pretend Peach Tree, p. 10	Recipe – Peach Muffins with Oatmeal Topping, p. 11	Gardening!
MELON ACTIVITIES	Book – <i>Down by the Bay (Raffi Songs to Read)</i> , by Raffi, p. 12	Melon Mystery Bag and Taste Test, p. 12	Watermelon Shapes, p. 13	Recipe – Mini Fruit Pizzas, p. 13	Gardening!

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

Summer Squash

Fun Facts

- **Botany**

- Summer squash are members of the Cucurbitaceae (Cucurbit) family, which includes melons, pumpkins, cucumbers, and gourds.
- Summer squash are eaten when they are still immature, small, and have a soft rind. The entire squash – skin, seeds, flesh – is edible, raw or cooked.
- In the culinary world, squash are referred to as vegetables since they are commonly eaten this way. Botanically speaking, squash is the immature fruit, or swollen ovary of the female squash flower.
- Squash grows on bushy, non-vining plants with large, dark green, mature leaves that have silver-gray splotches and streaks. The plants are monoecious, producing male and female flowers on the same plant.
- Varieties include: zucchini, pattypan squash, crookneck squash, sunburst squash, yellow squash, chayote squash, opo squash, among many others.
- When green summer squash started growing in the Mediterranean, Italians called it “zucchini” and the French called it “courgette.” Both names mean “small squash.” In Great Britain, zucchini is referred to as “vegetable marrow.”

- **History**

- The Native Americans introduced squash to European settlers as one of the “Three Sisters” – three indigenous plants used for agriculture: maize (corn), beans, and squash.
- While most squash varieties were brought from America to Europe, zucchini originated in Italy as a result of spontaneously occurring mutations.
- Zucchini arrived in California with Italian immigrants in the 1920s.

- **Nutrition**

- A ½ cup of sliced zucchini is a good source of vitamin C, manganese, potassium and vitamin B6.

Adapted from: http://harvestofthemonth.cdph.ca.gov/documents/Summer/021712/ED_Zucchini_Newsletter_Final.pdf

Activity: Book – *Mrs. McNosh and the Great Big Squash*, by Sarah Weeks

Ages: 6 months-5 years

Time: 15 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will be introduced to squash.
- Children will learn that squash grows on a vine on the ground.

Materials: *Mrs. McNosh and the Great Big Squash*, by Sarah Weeks

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.

Procedure:

1. Gather children in a circle on the floor.
2. Read book.
3. Ask children to name other vegetables and fruits that grow on the ground or on vines.
4. Discuss what food group the squash belongs to. (Technically, squash is a fruit because it contains seeds! But it is typically eaten as a vegetable.)

Activity: Summer Squash Mystery Bag and Taste Test

Ages: 3-5 years

Time: 20 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will identify squash as a solid, with a variety of shapes and a thick stem.
- Children will describe the outside appearance and smell of squash.

Materials: Summer squash (variety), mystery bag/box, paper and pencil, chef’s knife, cutting board

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.
2. Wash and slice the squash, reserving at least one pre-washed slice of squash (multiple if using more than one variety) per child for tasting.
3. Place a squash in the mystery bag/box. Keep the remainder out of sight of children.

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 Bag/box
 - a. Introduce or reintroduce the mystery bag/box, 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 bag/box with the child. Ask each child to describe quietly to you what he/she feels. After everyone has guessed, reveal the squash. Show the squash to the children. Note the children's guesses that were close (thick, solid, fruit, food) or correct (squash). Offer each child a clean slice of squash on a napkin to look at, touch, and smell. Talk about squash. Ask the questions below and any other questions you like.
 - i. Is squash a fruit or a vegetable? (Vegetable)
 - ii. What shape is it? (Curved like a cane)
 - iii. What color is it? (Light yellow)
 - iv. How does the outside of it feel? (Smooth)
 - v. Is it light or heavy? (Light)
 - vi. Is it soft or hard? (Hard)
 - vii. Does it have a smell? (May have no smell or smell earthy)
 - viii. Has anyone ever tasted squash? (Yes or No)
4. Tasting
 - a. Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands.
 - b. Provide each child with a piece of squash. Invite children to taste the squash. 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. Ask the children:
 - i. Is the squash soft/chewy/fleshy/crunchy? (Chewy, crunchy, fleshy)
 - ii. How does the squash taste? (Buttery, watery, mild)
5. Optional: Create a sticker chart for children to document whether they 'liked' the squash or 'don't like it yet'. A sample chart is included at the end of this document.

Activity: Crookneck Squash: A Look Inside

Ages: 3-5 years

Time: 30 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will describe the appearance, smell, and taste of a crookneck squash.
- Children will tell that all of the crookneck squash can be eaten including the seeds, flesh, and peel.

Materials: Crookneck squash (at least 2, depending on number of children), chef's knife, cutting board, plates (1/child), napkins (1/child)

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.
2. Wash squash ahead of time. Instruct children to wash hands before beginning activity.

Procedure:

1. Have the children gather around the area with the crookneck squash and cutting board. Review with children how to be safe around sharp knives: only adults use them, children keep their hands away, and do not touch sharp knives.
2. Tell the children you have a crookneck squash to share today. Tell the children crookneck squash grow on the ground. We have to wash the outside very well to remove soil and germs before we cut it open. Tell the children you have already washed the crookneck squash.
3. Cut the crookneck squash in half to reveal the inside. Let the children know they will get to touch the inside if they want a little later. Cut a section of crookneck squash into small wedges with the peel and seeds intact. On a plate, give each child a small wedge of crookneck squash to look at, touch, and smell.
4. Talk with the children about the inside of the crookneck squash. Ask the following questions and ask additional questions if you like.
5. What color is the inside of the crookneck squash? (White)
6. What does the inside of the crookneck squash look like? (Seeds and white flesh of the crookneck squash)



7. How does the inside feel? (The flesh feels smooth and firm, the seeds feel like small, flat bumps)
8. How does the crookneck squash smell? (Mild, earthy, or no smell)
9. Once the children have explored their own piece of crookneck squash, invite them to taste the crookneck squash. Tell the children that all of the parts of the squash may be eaten: flesh, seeds, and peel.
10. How does the crookneck squash feel in their mouth? (Smooth, firm, crunchy)
11. How does the crookneck squash taste? (Mild)
12. After everyone has sampled their own crookneck squash wedge, invite the children to come to the board and feel the squash half with the seeds.

Activity: Recipe – 5 Star Pizza

Ages: 6 months-5 years

Time: 30 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will try squash in a new way.
- Children will brainstorm additional ways to incorporate squash or other produce into meals.

Materials: Chef's knife, cutting board, oven, sauté pan, stove, cookie cutters (optional), plates (1/child), spoons (1/child), cups (1/child), napkins (1/child)

Servings: 1 pizza/child

Ingredients:

- Whole wheat tortillas or English muffins (1/child)
- 1 jar pizza sauce
- Shredded mozzarella cheese (1/4 cup/child)
- 2-3 summer squash (Zucchini or crookneck squash work well)
- Olive oil
- Garlic (minced) or garlic powder

Procedure:

1. Prepare summer squash ahead of time. Wash and slice squash, then sauté with olive oil and garlic for 3 minutes. Cool before cooking with children. Optional: Cut squash slices into fun shapes using small cookie cutters, such as stars.
2. Have children wash hands. Provide each child with a tortilla or English muffin half. Spoon pizza sauce onto tortillas/English muffins and allow children to spread the sauce with their spoon. Provide each child with a small cup of shredded cheese. Instruct children to top their pizzas with the cheese. Provide each child with several slices of summer squash and ask children to decorate their pizzas with the squash. (Optional-provide additional toppings, such as meats, other cheeses, tomato slices, basil, or other veggies.)
3. Bake at 400 degrees for 12 minutes. Cool and serve.
4. While children are eating, ask them if they like the squash on their pizzas. Ask children what other fruits or vegetables might be good on pizzas.

Activity: Book – *Zora's Zucchini*, by Katherine Pryor

Ages: 6 months-5 years

Time: 15 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will learn about the different varieties of summer squash.
- Children will be introduced to the many ways to cook and eat zucchini or other summer squash.
- Children will discuss ways to use excess food.

Materials: *Zora's Zucchini*, by Katherine Pryor

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.

Procedure:

1. Gather children in a circle on the floor.
2. Read book with children. If you have not already discussed the different varieties of summer squash, use this opportunity to do so. Provide pictures or actual squash for children to touch and smell if possible.
3. Discuss the different ways Zora and her family cooked and ate their zucchini. Can children think of any other ways to eat zucchini or other summer squash? Have they tried any of these ways at home? (Zucchini and squash can be used in breads, muffins, and even cookies. It can be included in pasta or shredded into pasta sauce. Summer squash can be baked, roasted, grilled, sautéed, or even eaten raw in salads or with veggie dip.)



4. Ask children to share ideas about what you might do with extra food grown in the garden. (You might suggest donating food, sharing with friends and neighbors, cooking and freezing food for later, canning or pickling produce, or composting produce that has gone bad.)

Activity: Squash Patch Field Trip

Ages: 3-5 years

Time: 1/2 day

Objective(s):

- Children will become familiar with where and how their food is grown.
- Children will be able to identify that squash grows on a vine from the ground.

Materials: N/A

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.
2. Plan and coordinate ahead of time to schedule a visit to a local farm.
3. Ahead of time, ask children to share what they know about where their food comes from. Make a list of questions children can ask the farmers on their visit.
4. Ask the farmer to show the children a squash patch while you are there.

Procedure:

1. Enjoy your trip to the farm!

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

Ages: 3-5 years

Time: 30 minutes

Objective(s):

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

Materials: Packet of squash seeds, squash slices (1/child), clear plastic cup, ruler, squash plant picture -

<https://cuesa.org/article/zucchini-and-beyond-farmers-market-guide-summer-squash> (or a real one), chef's knife, cutting board

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.

Procedure:

1. Gather children in a circle on the floor.
2. Explain to children that you are going to learn about how squash grow. Show children the squash seeds from the packet. Tell children the seeds are just like the ones from the inside of the squash. Pass the seeds around in the plastic cup.
3. Let children touch the seeds and count them. What shape are they?
4. Explain that the squash seeds are planted in the soil in the spring. Ask children if they know what else the seeds need to grow into a squash plant. Using the ruler, show children that seeds must be planted at least 2 feet apart to have room to spread out as they grow. The seeds grow into long vines and yellow flowers will bloom on the vines. During the summer, squash will grow where the flowers bloomed.
5. Show children the picture of the squash plant (or a real plant if you have one!). Explain that squash are picked when they are tender and still have a glossy or shiny appearance. Squash stems and leaf stalks are prickly, so it is best to wear gardening gloves when picking squash.

Activity: Recipe – Yellow Submarines

Ages: 6 months-5 years

Time: 30 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will try squash prepared in a new way.

Materials: chef's knife, cutting board, several baking sheets, oven, plates (1/child), napkins (1/child)

Servings: 16

Ingredients:

- 4 summer squash (any submarine-shaped squash will do)
- ½ cup veggie mixture (diced bell peppers, onions, and tomatoes, as desired)
- ¼ cup shredded cheese (any good variety that melts well works), plus more to sprinkle on top
- 2 tbsp parsley (you can use other spices, such as cumin, oregano, or garlic, as desired)
- Olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste



Procedure:

1. Ahead of time: Wash and slice squash length-wise. Scoop out insides and add to veggie mixture. You should have 8 "submarines." Sauté veggie mixture in olive oil and allow to cool.
2. Have children wash hands. Allow children to help measure additional ingredients and pour into a large bowl. Add the cooled veggie mixture and stir. Place "submarines" on baking sheets and allow children to scoop veggie, cheese, and spice mixture into the hollowed-out squash. Top with additional cheese.
3. Bake at 350 degrees F for 15 minutes. Cool and serve.



Peaches

Fun Facts

- **Botany**

- The peach comes from a deciduous fruit-bearing tree of the rose family.
- Its botanical name, "Prunus persica," resulted from the original belief that peaches were native to Persia (Iran).
- Peaches are classified as a stone fruit, meaning that they possess a single large seed or stone surrounded by juicy flesh. Other common stone fruits include cherries, plums, apricots and nectarines. (Commercially, peaches and nectarines are treated as different fruits, but they belong to the same species. The nectarine is a type of peach with a smooth, fuzzless skin.)
- There are two major peach cultivars — clingstone and freestone — based on how the flesh sticks to the stone (or pit). Commercially, nearly all clingstone varieties are processed (pit removed), then canned, preserved, juiced, or used in other food products (i.e., baby food). Freestone peaches are primarily sold as fresh.

- **History**

- The peach tree originated in western China about 4,000 years ago.
- Alexander the Great introduced the peach to Greek and Roman society.
- From the Mediterranean and North Africa, the peach traveled north during the Middle Ages with the Moors to the Iberian Peninsula.
- Spanish and Portuguese explorers brought peaches to the Americas in the 1500s.
- The peach is the state flower of Delaware and state fruit of South Carolina. Georgia is nicknamed The Peach State.
- In World War I, peach pits were used as filters in gas masks.

- **Nutrition**

- A ½ cup of sliced peaches (about half of a medium peach) provides vitamin A, vitamin C and fiber.

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

Activity: Book – *Giant Peach Yodel*, by Jan Peck

Ages: 6 months-5 years

Time: 15 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will learn how peaches grow.
- Children will identify additional ways to eat peaches.

Materials: *Giant Peach Yodel*, by Jan Peck

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.

Procedure:

1. Gather children in a circle on the floor.
2. Read book with children. Discuss how the peach grows from a peach pit into a tree that produces more peaches.
3. Ask children if they have tasted a peach before. Did they like it? Discuss different ways they might eat peaches that would taste good. Explain that sometimes you have to try a new food several times before you like it, or try it in a new way. (As part of a smoothie or fruit and yogurt parfait, baked in a muffin, or grilled with honey and cinnamon are a few ideas.)

Activity: Peach Mystery Bag and Taste Test

Ages: 3-5 years

Time: 20 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will identify a peach as a lightweight, round fruit.
- Children will describe the outward appearance and smell of a peach.
- Children will taste peaches.
- Children will describe the taste and texture of peaches.

Materials: Whole peach, peach pieces (1/child), spoons (1/child), napkins (1/child), mystery bag/box, tennis ball

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.
2. Out of sight of children, place a round peach in the mystery bag/box.
3. Wash peaches, slice into smaller pieces. Reserve at least one pre-washed piece per child for tasting.

Procedure:



1. Gather children in a circle on the floor.
2. Mystery bag/box
 - a. Introduce or reintroduce the mystery bag/box, 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 bag/box with the child. Ask each child to describe quietly to you what he/she feels. After everyone has guessed, reveal the peach. Show the peach to the children. Note the children's guesses that were close (round, food, a plant) or correct (peach). Pass the peach around for children to look at, touch, and smell. Talk about peaches. Ask the questions below and any other questions you like.
 - i. Is a peach a fruit or a vegetable? (fruit)
 - ii. What shape is it? (round, like a ball)
 - iii. What color is it? (yellow and red)
 - iv. How does it feel? (fuzzy, like a baby chick or tennis ball)
 - v. Does it have a smell? (may have no smell or smell sweet like a flower)
 - vi. Is it light or heavy? (small, round, light like a tennis ball-pass around the tennis ball for children to feel)
 - vii. Has anyone ever tasted a peach? (yes or no)
3. Taste Test
 - a. Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands.
 - b. Provide each child with a piece of peach. Invite children to taste the peach. 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. Ask the children:
 - i. How does the peach feel in their mouth? (cool, soft, fleshy)
 - ii. How does the peach taste? (sweet)
 - iii. Optional: Create a sticker chart for children to document whether they "liked" the peach or "don't like it yet." A sample chart is included at the end of this document.

Activity: Peach Craft

Ages: 3-5 years

Time: 30 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to identify the different parts of peaches.

Materials: tissue paper (yellow, orange, red), glue, paper plates (1/child), scraps of brown or green paper, scissors

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.
2. Create a sample paper peach (see instructions below).

Procedure:

1. Gather children in a circle on the floor.
2. Tell children they are going to create their own peaches using paper plates and tissue paper.
3. Cover the back of the paper plate with glue.
4. Have children tear the tissue paper into small pieces and cover the plate to look like a peach.
5. Next, ask children to cut out a small rectangle of brown paper (stem) and a green leaf and glue them onto the peach.
6. As they are working, ask children to name the different parts of the peach. How would the outside feel? How would the inside feel? What would they find inside a peach? How would the peach taste and smell? Where do peaches grow?

Activity: Recipe – Peach Cobbler

Ages: 6 months-5 years

Time: 60 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will try peaches prepared in a new way.

Materials: Chef's knife, cutting board, 1 ½-quart dish, mixing bowls, mixing spoon, measuring cups, measuring spoons, oven, plates (1/child), napkins (1/child)



Servings: 16, ½ cup

Ingredients:

- 2-3 peaches, cut into small pieces
- ½ cup whole-wheat flour
- ½ cup enriched all-purpose flour
- ½ cup quick-cook oatmeal
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1½ tbsp canola oil, plus more for greasing the pan
- ½ cup low-fat or fat-free milk
- Optional: Low-fat or fat-free plain yogurt for serving

Procedure:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Grease ovenproof 1 ½-quart dish with oil.
2. Have children wash their hands. Ask children to spread peach slices evenly in the baking dish.
3. In a large mixing bowl, have children combine the flours, oatmeal, sugar, and baking powder and stir.
4. Allow children to help measure and add oil and milk to the dry ingredients and mix until smooth.
5. Children can drop the dough on top of peach slices by spoonfuls, covering peaches.
6. Bake in oven for about 30 minutes or until fruit bubbles and the topping is slightly brown.
7. Remove from oven. Let cool before serving. Serve warm and garnish with a small scoop of low-fat or fat-free plain yogurt, if desired.

Activity: Book – *Juicy Peach*, by Mary Dixon Lake

Ages: 6 months-5 years

Time: 15 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will understand the importance of sequence in a story.

Materials: *Juicy Peach*, by Mary Dixon Lake

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.

Procedure:

1. Gather children in a circle on the floor.
2. Read book. Review the sequence of events. Would there be any events that could be switched in their order? Why not?
3. Connect children's experiences eating peaches with those of children in the book.

Activity: Song – Old McDonald Had a Peach Farm

Ages: 2-5 years

Time: 10 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will learn that peaches grow in an orchard.
- Children will mimic harvesting and eating peaches.

Materials: Chart paper, marker

Preparation:

1. Write lyrics on chart paper.

Procedure:

1. Gather children in a circle on the floor.
2. Teach children the lyrics:

1st Verse

Old MacDonald had an orchard, EIEIO! (Skip in place)

In this orchard he grew some peaches, EIEIO! (Pretend to carry a basket of peaches)

With a peach tree here and a peach tree there, (Pretend to be trees reaching high into the air stretching tall)

Here a tree, there a tree, everywhere a peach tree!

Old MacDonald had an orchard, EIEIO! (Skip in place)

2nd Verse

Old MacDonald had an orchard, EIEIO! (Skip in place)

In this orchard he grew some peaches, EIEIO! (Pretend to carry a basket of peaches)



With a blossom here and a blossom there, (Wiggle fingers – blossoms – to the left and right, moving arms until above head)

Here a blossom, there a blossom, everywhere peach blossoms!

Old MacDonald had an orchard, EIEIO! (Skip in place)

3rd Verse

Old MacDonald had an orchard, EIEIO! (Skip in place)

In this orchard he grew some peaches, EIEIO! (Pretend to carry a basket of peaches)

With a fuzz, fuzz here, and a fuzz, fuzz there, (Pretend to climb a tree and pick peaches)

Here some fuzz, there some fuzz, everywhere peach fuzz. (Pretend to climb a tree and pick peaches)

Old MacDonald had an orchard, EIEIO! (Skip in place)

4th Verse

Old MacDonald had an orchard, EIEIO! (Skip in place)

In this orchard he grew some peaches, EIEIO! (Pretend to carry a basket of peaches)

With a bite, bite here, and a bite, bite there (Pretend to eat peach)

Here a bite, there a bite, everywhere a healthy bite. (Pretend to eat peach)

Old MacDonald had an orchard, EIEIO! (Skip in place)

Activity: Grow A Pretend Peach Tree

Ages: 3-5 years

Time: 5 days

Objective(s):

- Children will experience making a pretend peach tree.
- Children will describe the resources needed to grow peaches.

Materials: Brown paper (at least 4 feet in height), green paper (cut to look like peach leaves), construction paper (white, yellow, orange, and red), crayons, markers, or colored pencils (yellow-green, orange, and red), scissors, reusable adhesive or double stick tape

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.
2. Copy and cut out, from white paper, peach blossoms (1/child).

Procedure:

1. Gather children in a circle on the floor.
2. Let the children know you are planting a pretend peach tree. The class will take care of this tree for the next few days. Tell the children that peaches grow from seeds called peach pits that are planted in the ground. The pit needs soil, water, sun, and time to grow into a peach tree. When the tree is at least 3 years old, the tree grows flowers called peach blossoms every spring. The blossoms fall away and peaches grow where the flowers were. At first the peaches are small, hard, and slightly yellow-green with some orange in color. By the middle of summer, the peaches have grown larger, are changing in color to have less green and more orange and red. By the end of the summer, the large peaches on the tree are soft, round, and creamy yellow with orange-red in color. Once the peaches are ripe, they are picked and sent to stores or farmers' markets. That is where we buy peaches to take home and eat.
3. Have children help you draw and cut out a 4 ft outline of a tree. (You may also do this ahead of time.) Attach the tree to a wall and have children help add the leaves.
4. Help children to draw and cut various sizes and colors of peaches. The smallest peach (2" size) is the least ripe; it appears yellow-green with some orange. The medium size peach (3" size) is growing and ripening; it appears to have a little yellow-green, more orange and the beginning of red tones. The largest peach (4" size) is ripe and ready to pick; it is yellow-orange with more red.
5. For the next 5 days, allow your children to do the following:
 - a. Day 1: Help the children attach a peach blossom to the tree with reusable adhesive or tape. As the blossoms are added, remind the children that the tree has grown for 3 years before it produces blossoms.
 - b. Day 2: Remove the blossoms and place the 2" peaches in the blossom positions. As the small peaches are added, remind the children that peaches start to grow where the blossoms were located on the tree. Talk with the children about the resources needed for the tree to grow peaches (water, sun, soil, and time).
 - c. Day 3: Replace the 2" peaches with the 3" ones. As the medium size peaches are added, remind the children that peaches grow larger during the summer on the tree. Talk with the children about the resources needed for the tree to grow peaches (water, sun, soil, and time).



- d. Day 4: Replace the 3" peaches with the 4" ones. As the large size peaches are added, remind the children that after peaches reach their full size, they ripen on the tree. Talk with the children about the resources needed for the tree to grow peaches (water, sun, soil and time).
- e. Day 5: Continue the lesson by celebrating with a pretend harvest of the 4" peaches from the tree. Talk with the children about the resources needed for the tree to grow peaches (water, sun, soil, and time). Optional: Serve peaches for snack.

Activity: Recipe – Peach Muffins with Oatmeal Topping

Ages: 6 months-5 years

Time: 45-60 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will try peaches prepared in a new way.

Materials: Chef's knife (if using fresh peaches), cutting board (if using fresh peaches), 1 ½-quart dish, mixing bowls, mixing spoon, measuring cups, measuring spoons, oven, plates (1/child), napkins (1/child)

Servings: 12 muffins or 24 mini muffins

Ingredients:

- Muffin batter ingredients:
 - ½ cup quick-cook oatmeal
 - ½ cup enriched all-purpose flour
 - ½ cup whole-wheat pastry flour
 - ¼ tsp salt
 - ½ Tbsp baking powder
 - ½ tsp ground cinnamon
 - ¼ tsp ground nutmeg
 - ½ cup sugar
 - 1 cup low-fat or fat-free plain yogurt
 - 1 large egg
 - 2 tbsp canola oil, plus more for greasing the pan
 - ½ cup peaches, diced (Fresh, frozen and thawed, or canned and packed in water or juice and drained thoroughly will all work)
- Oatmeal Topping Ingredients:
 - ¼ cup quick-cook oatmeal
 - 1 tbsp all-purpose flour
 - 1 tbsp sugar
 - 1 tbsp canola oil

Procedure:

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.
2. Have children wash their hands.
3. Make the topping: Children can help measure and combine oatmeal, flour, sugar, and oil in small bowl and mix with fork.
4. Make muffin batter: In large bowl, have children mix the oatmeal, flour, salt, baking powder, cinnamon, nutmeg, and sugar.
5. In a separate bowl, mix yogurt, egg, and oil until smooth. An adult must handle the egg.
6. Add the yogurt mixture to the dry ingredients. Mix only until the ingredients are combined, about 1 minute. The batter will be slightly lumpy.
7. Gently stir in the diced peaches.
8. Grease muffin pan. Divide the batter evenly in the muffin pan, filling each cup about ¾ full.
9. Allow children to sprinkle the oatmeal topping evenly over each muffin, about 1 teaspoon per muffin or ½ teaspoon per mini muffin.
10. Place muffin pan on a lower oven rack and bake for 25-30 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center of muffin comes out clean. Mini muffins will take less time; about 10-12 minutes.
11. Variation: Substitute whole-wheat pastry flour for all the flour (all-purpose and whole-wheat) listed in the recipe.



Melons

Fun Facts

- **Botany**

- Melons are an annual fruit and require a long growing season.
- There are male and female flowers on the plant, which require bees for pollination. On average, it takes about 10 to 15 bee visits for proper pollination to grow melons.
- They grow best under conditions with warm, sunny days and cool nights.
- Watermelons are loosely called melons because, although in the cucurbitaceae family, they are only distantly related to honeydew or cantaloupe.
- There are many varieties of the “western shipping type” cantaloupe, but since consumers cannot differentiate between them, they are marketed under the general name as “cantaloupe.”
- There are four main varieties of watermelon: allsweet, ice-box, seedless, and yellow flesh.

- **History**

- Melons are believed to be one of the earliest domesticated plants having first been cultivated between 4,000 and 5,000 years ago in Africa and Southwest Asia.
- They were brought to Europe towards the end of the Roman Empire and to North America by Christopher Columbus on his second expedition to the new world.
- Watermelons are thought to have come to the US by African slaves.
- It was not until the latter half of the 20th century that melons were commercially cultivated in the US. Before that, they were mostly grown in home gardens. China is the largest producer of melons in the world.
- By weight, the watermelon is the most common melon consumed in America, followed by the cantaloupe and honeydew.

- **Nutrition**

- A ½ cup of cantaloupe is an excellent source of vitamin C and vitamin A.
- A ½ cup of casaba or honeydew is an excellent source of vitamin C.
- A ½ cup of watermelon is a good source of vitamin C.
- Melons provide a rich source of carotenoids, such as lycopene (watermelon) and beta-carotene (cantaloupe).

Adapted from: http://www.harvestforhealthykids.org/wp-content/themes/harvest/assets/HfHK_Melon.zip and http://harvestofthemoth.cdph.ca.gov/documents/Summer/021712/ED_Melons_Newsletter_Final.pdf

Activity: Book – *Down by the Bay (Raffi Songs to Read)*, by Raffi

Ages: 6 months-5 years

Time: 15 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will sing a silly song about melons.

Materials: *Down by the Bay (Raffi Songs to Read)*, by Raffi

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.

Procedure:

1. Gather children in a circle on the floor.
2. Read book with children.
3. Optional: Play song (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-CSxGHve6oE>) and have children sing along.

Activity: Melon Mystery Bag and Taste Test

Ages: 3-5 years

Time: 20 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will identify melons as a heavy, round fruit.
- Children will describe the outside appearance and smell of honeydew melons.

Materials: Fresh honeydew melon, honeydew slices for each child, plates, napkins, mystery bag/box, chef’s knife, cutting board

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.
2. Wash melons thoroughly: 1) wash the outer surface of the melon under running cool tap water to remove surface dirt; 2) scrub melons with a clean produce brush before cutting; and 3) cut away any bruised or damaged areas before serving.
3. Slice enough melon for each child for tasting. Place a whole honeydew melon in the mystery bag/box. Keep the remainder out of sight of children.



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. The Activity
 - a. Introduce or reintroduce the mystery bag/box, 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 bag/box with the child. Ask each child to describe quietly to you what he/she feels. After everyone has guessed, reveal the melon. Show the melon to the children. Note the children's guesses that were close (round, fruit, food) or correct (melon). Offer each child a clean slice of melon on a napkin to look at, touch, and smell. Talk about melon.
 - b. Ask the questions below and any other questions you like.
 - i. Is a honeydew melon a fruit or a vegetable? (Fruit)
 - ii. What shape is it? (Round like a ball)
 - iii. What color is the outside of the melon? (White)
 - iv. How does the outside feel? (Smooth, hard)
 - v. Where are the seeds? (In the center of the melon, you may cut the melon in half to show them)
 - vi. Does it have a smell? (May have no smell or smell sweet)
 - vii. Is it light or heavy? (Heavy)
 - viii. Has anyone ever tasted a honeydew melon? (Yes or No)
4. Taste Test
 - a. Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands.
 - b. Provide each child with a piece of honeydew. Invite children to taste the honeydew. 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. Ask the children:
 - i. Is the melon soft/crunchy/fleshy? (Fleshy)
 - ii. How does the melon taste? (Sweet)
 - iii. Optional: Create a sticker chart for children to document whether they 'liked' the melon or 'don't like it yet'. A sample chart is included at the end of this document.

Activity: Watermelon Shapes

Ages: 2-5 years

Time: 30 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will be able to make a simple snack with watermelon melon.

Materials: Watermelon cut into thin slices, small cookie cutters, paper plates (1/child), napkins (1/child), chef's knife, cutting board

Preparation:

1. Gather materials.
2. Wash watermelon thoroughly: 1) wash the outer surface of the melon under running cool tap water to remove surface dirt; 2) scrub melons with a clean produce brush before cutting; and 3) cut away any bruised or damaged areas before serving.

Procedure:

1. Gather children in a circle on the floor.
2. Give each child a paper plate with at least two thin slices of watermelon. Let each child select a small cookie cutter(s).
3. Show children how to press the cookie cutter into the honeydew melon. Assist children if needed.
4. Discuss the shapes they are making. Once through with cutting, allow children to eat their shapes. Talk about how the honeydew melon tastes and feels in their mouth.

Activity: Recipe – Mini Fruit Pizzas

Ages: 6 months-5 years

Time: 15 minutes

Objective(s):

- Children will make mini pizzas with cantaloupe.



Materials: Plates (1/child), napkins (1/child), butter knives or spoons for spreading (1/child)

Servings: ~18 servings

Ingredients:

- 1 cantaloupe sliced into bite-sized pieces
- Whole grain tortillas (small) or English muffins (1/child)
- 8 oz low fat or fat-free cream cheese or nut/seed butter
- Additional fruit, as desired

Procedure:

1. Wash melons thoroughly: 1) wash the outer surface of the melon under running cool tap water to remove surface dirt; 2) scrub melons with a clean produce brush before cutting; and 3) cut away any bruised or damaged areas before serving.
2. Provide each child with a few slices of cantaloupe, 1 tortilla/English muffin and a small amount of cream cheese or nut/seed butter.
3. Help children spread the cream cheese or nut/seed butter.
4. Encourage children to place cantaloupe slices and other fruit (if using) on top of their pizzas.



Name of Taste Test Here

"I LIKE THIS"



"ME GUSTA"

"I DON'T LIKE THIS YET"



"NO ME GUSTA
TODAVÍA"

