

Taste-Testing



LEVEL: grades PreK – 6

SUBJECTS: Math, Science, Health

SKILLS: writing, graphing, personal health, and global connections

MATERIALS: Food from local farm, cups, napkins, knife, toothpicks

PLANNING: Before taste testing begins meet with students to determine which foods they have not tried. Secondly, meet or call farmers to find out what foods are in season and available.** Ask the farmer how they are grown if you do not know and invite them to do a presentation in your class. Check

www.MaineAgintheClassroom.org for a county by county listing of some interested farmers or contact you local county extension office.

PROCEDURE:

Pre-Teach: Humans are organisms that grow, what do we need to grow? What does food need to grow? Is everything we eat from plants? Do fish, cows, and chickens eat plants? Who grows the plants that we need to be healthy? Who grows the food you eat? Ask these questions and have students do a write about these ideas. (While students do this start on procedure 1)

1. Wash and chop produce into cups and pass out to students that have clean hands.
2. Talk about the origins of the foods you are eating and how they are grown.
3. Before they start to eat ask them to smell, taste and feel the texture with their tongue. Ask them to write down their observations and flavors they taste.
4. Do a class vote of “I tried it”, “I liked it”, “I would try it again”. Do not give any negative options such as “Did not like”. Use math skills to make a graph of the results on the board.
5. Brainstorm with students other ways to add fruits, vegetables and other local products to their diet. If items are discovered to be popular maybe they could be added to the School Lunch Menu (talk to your food service).

Conclusion:

Teaching students to appreciate where food comes from, can encourage them to eat healthier, encourage their parents to buy healthier, and encourage them to waste less.

OTHER TASTE-TESTING ACTIVITIES:

1. Ask students to locate new foods that they haven’t tried at the grocery store or farmers market.
2. Create recipes using locally available foods,
3. Make a large salad of unusual vegetables,
4. Make frozen drink smoothies from locally available fruits,
5. Compare different varieties of one food ie; apples, tomatoes, squash...
6. Try value added products such as cheese or yogurt,
7. Try dried fruits mixed with nuts or seeds
8. Make small sandwiches with new combinations of vegetables, fruit, yogurt, etc.
9. Oven bake different types and colors of potatoes, note the changes in cooking and differences in taste,
10. Have students add fruit to a favorite cereal or snack
11. Slice veggies and serve with low-fat dressing
12. Make a salsa or sauce and try on cracker
13. Make chips out of beets, kale, or rutabagas, students will try anything called chips!

** Some foods which may be available in your area: peas, pea shoots, cauliflower, asparagus, potatoes, cabbage, spinach, parsley, corn, turnip, rutabaga, beet, squash, tomatoes, onions, apples, pears, grapes, berries, cheese, yogurts, jams, jellies, dressings, salsa.

Some ideas from: Farm to School in the Northeast: Making the Connection for Healthy Kids and Healthy Farms, Cornell Farm to School Program, NY Farms! And New York School Nutrition Association. 2007

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

To build awareness of where food comes from and encourage children to eat healthier, locally grown foods.

OBJECTIVES

The students will:

- Be able to identify vegetables, fruits and products grown on Maine farms and gardens
- Be more likely to consume these foods at home or in the cafeteria

ESTIMATED TEACHING TIME

30-45 minutes

MAINE LEARNING RESULTS

Grades 3-4

Math: B2

Science: E2

Health: C1