



# Fruits & Veggies Theme

This is a great theme to do in the fall when many families harvest foods from gardens and grocery stores have lots of local produce for sale. Learning about fruits and vegetables can help promote healthy eating habits as well!

## Language & Literacy

### Books

**How Did That Get In My Lunchbox** by Chris Butterworth

**I Can Eat a Rainbow** by Annabel Karmel

**Eating Pairs: Counting Fruits and Vegetables by Twos** by Sarah L. Schuette

**Oh No, Monster Tomato** by Jim Helmore

**Eating the Alphabet: Fruits and Vegetables from A to Z** by Lois Ehlert

**Carrots Grow Underground** by Mari Schuh

**The Adventures of Alex the Vegetarian Coyote** by Mike McCarty and Carlos Ygoe

**Yummy Plants ABC: A Vegetable and Fruits Rhyming Alphabet Book** by Jan Denn

**Tops and Bottoms** by Janet Stevens

### Songs, Poems, & Finger-plays

#### Vegetable Colors

There are many-colored vegetables-

They are good for you.

Carrots are orange, I'll eat a few,

Beans are green, I'll eat them too.

\*Keep repeating and adding different veggies.

### Activities

**Favorites:** Ask the kids to name some of their favorite fruits and veggies and write them on chart paper. Talk about the difference between fruits and veggies.... fruits have seeds. Where do they grow? Where do we get them? (Have some real ones cut in half, ask the kids "fruit or veggie?" then show them the center to see what it is.... then use these for prints, they work much better if you have let them dry a bit any way.)

**Make a Class Book:** "Our Favorite Vegetables." Invite each child to illustrate a page and tell about their favorite vegetable. You could do this with fruit too.

## Math & Number Concepts

**Fruit & Veggie Count:** Have some smaller things out for counting, like cherry tomatoes, or let the kids count seeds in things like apples, pumpkins, and oranges. Ask them to "estimate" how many seeds they will find in an apple, an orange, etc. Make a graph of their findings and compare the information they have discovered.

**Counting Buckets:** Download and print copies of the **Counting Buckets Activity Sheet** from the **Theme Enhancements Page**. Provide stickers fruit shaped stickers or invite the children to draw fruit shapes on each bucket based on the number on the bucket.

## **Art**

### **Fruit and Veggie Print Placemats:**

*Supplies:* A variety of fruits and veggies cut in half. We used green peppers, apples (cut one length wide and one through the center so you get the apple shape and the "star"), carrots, broccoli, pears, celery, \*\*star fruit, an orange, a lemon, and potatoes. Colored construction paper, clear contact paper or laminate. Opt. cut edges of construction paper with a fancy cutting scissors.

*Directions:* Let the kids "stamp" fruit and veggie prints on the construction paper. Older kids might find it fun to make different patters, or create a fruit and veggie person... dog... anything! When dry cover with clear contact paper or laminate for use as a place mat!

### **Fruit and Veggie Collages:**

*Supplies:* Magazines, construction paper, glue scissors.

*Directions:* Let kids cut out pictures of fruits and veggies, and glue to construction paper for a fruit and veggie collage!

**Creative Food Art:** Have out a variety of fruits and veggies for painting with, or cut pictures on the end of a potato for stamping with.

## **Dramatic Play**

### **Farm Market**

*Supplies:* Lots of plastic fruits and vegetables, paper bags, baskets, etc. A pretend or real cash register, play money, rebus grocery lists, other items that would be fun are a grocery cart, apron for the clerk, store signs like a chalk board, etc.

*Directions:* Set up a pretend farm market, set up one table for fruits and one for veggies. Have one child be the clerk, and the others have to be shoppers. Give the shoppers a list and they need to purchase the items on their list. After they find their items they can pay the clerk. Have them separate and put back the foods when they are done and let a different child be the clerk, give them different lists and let them do it again.

Supply the children with plenty of paper and pencils for writing lists. Give them small pieces of poster board or small chalkboards to make signs for the Farm Market. Hang colorful shopping ads in the area from your local grocery or farm market for the children to look at and "read".

## **Music & Movement**

**Vegetable Soup** by Wendy Rose Baldinger: cut out pictures of the different vegetables from this song and pass them out to the children. Let them throw their vegetable into a big pot in the middle of the circle when it comes up in the song.

**Going to the Market** by Greg & Steve: In this song have children add the pictures of the different vegetables to a big brown grocery bag in the middle of the circle.

**Apple/Orange Toss:** Let the children take turns trying to toss an apple or an orange into a basket.

## **Science & Sensory**

**Grow a Potato Head:** Provide each child with a potato that has had the top cut off. Let them glue on buttons for eyes and a pom-pom for a nose, maybe some yarn for a mouth. After it is dry give the children some grass seeds to sprinkle on the top of the head. The seeds will sprout and Mr. Potato head will look like he grew hair. (You may wish to store them in a plastic container that has a lid so that they do not dry out)

**Fruity Play Dough:** Add some fruity smelling Cool Aid mix to your homemade play dough when you make it! It will smell so good! Set out some fruit and vegetable cookie cutters to go with it!

**Fruit & Veggie Taste Tests:** Provide the children with a variety of fruits and vegetables to sample, encourage them to smell them touch them and taste them and describe the qualities of each one.

**Veggie Sorting:** Collect a variety of fruit and vegetable pictures and sort by color, size shape, fruit or veggie, etc.

**Veggies and Fruits Color Sort :** Give the children colored homemade baskets to sort vegetable & fruit pictures into. \*Use two paper plates, cut them in half, staple two halves together with tops facing each other, then cut a handle from one of the extra halves and staple to the top of the basket. Paint or color them different colors. Have the kids fill the baskets with the correct color fruits and veggies. (This could easily be made into an interactive bulletin board)

**Apple/Pumpkin Sequence Cards:** Let the kids practice ordering sequence cards of an apple tree, or a pumpkin, etc. You can purchase these in school supply stores or make your own using index cards.

Let the children examine cut open fruits and vegetables, like apples, oranges, squash, and peaches. As they examine them ask open-ended questions like... What is in them? How are they the same? How are they different?

### **Blocks & Building**

Add trucks and crates and plastic fruits and vegetables so the children can use them to role-play the idea of transporting fruits and vegetables. In the fall there are often many trucks on the roads carrying potatoes.

### **Technology**

<http://www.larrysproduce.com/funAndGames.html>

### **Cooking & Snacks**

**Veggie People:** Let the kids build edible veggie people with carrots, radishes, celery, broccoli, etc. Give them PNB to hold the body parts together.

**Stone Soup:** Have the children each bring a vegetable from home and cook up a big pot of soup using their vegetables. They will obviously need an adult to do the cooking, but they should be able to wash and cut their own vegetables with assistance. Give everyone a turn to stir the soup as it cooks. (A great activity to use along with the story *Stone Soup* by Maurice Sendak)

**Friendship Vegetable Soup:** Have everyone bring in a veggie to cut up and add to the soup.

### **Veggies & Dip**

### **Fresh Fruit**

### **Bulletin Boards**

**We Can Eat a Rainbow-** Promote healthy eating habits by discussing with the children healthy food choices. Then invite the children to draw or paint a picture of their favorite fruits or vegetables. Create a big rainbow on the bulletin board and place their pictures on them in the corresponding color of the rainbow.

**Write your ideas here...**