



**Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program - Nutrition Education Curriculum**  
**Grades 3-5**

Lesson activities (listed at the bottom of each lesson) are arranged from simplest to more advanced. Educators are encouraged to select activities based on available time, required materials, class size, students' skill levels, and areas of interest.

If you have any questions about the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Nutrition Curriculum, contact **Stephanie Carlile, MS, RDN, LDN** at [scarlile@uri.edu](mailto:scarlile@uri.edu).

**LESSON 1: MYPLATE**

**Nutrition Objectives:**

1. Students will be able to name the five good groups and correctly identify an example of a food in each group.
2. Students will learn that fruits and vegetables are healthy foods and be able to explain why they are good for our bodies.
3. Students will think about their meals at home and notice if they include foods from different food groups.

**SAY** → Today we are going to learn about MyPlate and the five food groups.

- Show the students the [MyPlate poster](#).

**ASK** → What do you notice about the plate on this poster? *(There are five different colors, each representing a different food group.)*

**SAY** → This is called MyPlate and it is used as a guide to teach us how to eat healthy. There are five food groups on MyPlate.

**ASK** → Does anyone know what that means? Who can name the five food groups?

**SAY** → There are all sorts of foods that we eat, and they fall into certain groups. These groups are all important for our bodies because they help our bodies in different ways. We need to make sure we eat some foods from every food group, every day.

**SAY** → Let's look at the **fruit** group first. **Fruits** give you energy and help keep you healthy by giving your body vitamins and minerals.

**ASK** → Can anyone name their favorite **fruit**?

**SAY** → Let's look at the **vegetable** group next. **Vegetables** help you grow strong and keep your body working well.

**ASK** → Can anyone name their favorite **vegetable**?

**SAY** → The next group is **grains**. **Grains** give you energy so you can go to school and be active outside.

**ASK** → Can anyone think of foods that belong in the **grains** group? *(bread, rice, pasta, & cereal)*

**SAY** → The next food group is **protein**. Foods in the **protein** group help build strong muscles.

**ASK** → What are some foods in the **protein** group? *(beef, chicken, eggs, beans, fish and nuts)*

**SAY** → Our last food group is **dairy**.

**ASK** → Does anyone know what nutrient is found in **dairy** foods? *(Calcium)*

**SAY** → Foods in the **dairy** group have milk in them so think of foods that come from cows. Other non-dairy sources that have added calcium include *fortified almond milk and/or soy milk or low-fat lactose-free milk*. Calcium-rich foods help build strong bones and teeth.

**ASK** → What are some foods in the **dairy** group? (*milk, cheese, yogurt*)

**SAY** → We need to have foods from all the five food groups every day to make us grow and give us energy. All of the five food groups are important, especially the **fruit** and **vegetable** groups.

**SAY** → Let's take a closer look at the **fruit** (red) and **vegetable** (green) groups.

**ASK** → How much of the plate is full if you combine the **fruit** and **vegetable** groups? (*one half*)

**ASK** → What meal do you eat that looks most like this plate? (*example: lunch or dinner*)

**SAY** → That's because MyPlate shows us that at least half of our main meals, like lunch or dinner, should be filled with foods that come from **fruits** and **vegetables**.

**ASK** → Is your lunch or dinner plate at home half full of **fruits** and **vegetables**?

**ASK** → Maybe you can ask the person who cooks in your house to buy and/or prepare more **fruits** and **vegetables**?

**SAY** → Try to eat **fruits** and **veggies** every day this week and don't be afraid to try something new.

**SAY** → Remember: **Fruits** and **vegetables** help keep you healthy and growing strong, so you should try to eat them every day. During the next few lessons, you're going to be learning about the amount of **fruits** and **veggies** you should eat every day and how different colored **fruits** and **vegetables** help different parts of your body.

### **Optional Add-On Activity: Tasting Passport**

**SAY** → Over the next few weeks, you might get to try fruits or vegetables that are new to you, or ones you didn't like before. It's okay if you're not sure about them- just give them a try with a good attitude! Sometimes our taste buds change as we grow, and you might be surprised that you like something new.

**SAY** → When you try a new food, you'll get to fill out your *Tasting Passport*! In the oval, draw a picture of the fruit or vegetable you tasted. Then, circle the thumbs up, neutral face, or thumbs down to show how you felt about the taste.

#### **Teacher Note:**

*Have students fill in an oval for a fruit or vegetable they tried today. This can be done as a quiet wrap-up activity or as part of a discussion about what they've tasted recently. **The Tasting Passport can be used each time a new FFVP fruit or vegetable is offered to students.** Encourage students to keep adding to their passports throughout the program to track all the new foods they've tried!*

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### **Activity #1: Class Pledge**

Have your students take the *Fruit & Vegetable Pledge* by signing a single class certificate. Display the pledge in a prominent place in your classroom, and refer to it periodically to celebrate progress and remind students of their goal.

### **Activity #2: How Many Fruits and Vegetables Can You Think Of?**

- Group the students in teams of two. Give them about 3 minutes to write down as many fruits and vegetables as they can think of. Share the teams' results.
- Which team thought of the most? Does any team have a fruit or vegetable that no one else thought of?
- Have students circle the fruits and vegetables on their lists that they have **never tried**. Put a star next to the fruits and vegetables they're **willing to try** for the first time or **try again**.

### **Activity #3: MyPlate Crossword Puzzle (Curriculum Connection/Language Arts)**

**Activity #4: Write a Haiku (Curriculum Connection/Language Arts)** Have students write a haiku about their favorite fruit or vegetable. Suggest describing its color, shape, texture, and taste! Refer to the “Let’s Get Descriptive” section of the *Fruit and Vegetable Reference List for Teachers*. (A haiku is a short poem arranged in three lines. The poem has a total of 17 syllables, in the pattern 5-7-5). Example:

**Apple**

Red, round, and shiny,  
Considered nature’s toothbrush  
Refreshingly sweet

**Potatoes**

Earthy, humble roots,  
Mashed, fried, or baked, they delight,  
Comfort in each bite.

## LESSON 2: EAT COLORS, BE HEALTHY (FUNCTION AND VARIETY)

### Nutrition Objectives:

1. Students will learn how different colored fruits and vegetables are good for our overall health.
2. Students will be able to name a fruit or vegetable in each color group.
3. Students will be able to explain what each major color group does for our bodies.

### Lesson:

**ASK** → Can anyone name one of the food groups that we learned about last time? (Show the [MyPlate poster](#) and have the children name all 5 food groups.)

**SAY** → Remember that it is important to eat foods from all five food groups every day, including fruits and vegetables.

**ASK** → Has anyone tried a new fruit or vegetable this week?

**ASK** → What fruit or vegetable did you try?

**ASK** → Did you like it?

**SAY** → Over the next few weeks we will be learning about fruits and vegetables and why they are an important part of healthy eating.

**ASK** → Why is it important to eat fruits and vegetables? (*Fruits and vegetables are loaded with vitamins and minerals that help protect your body against germs and keep your heart, brain, eyes, and skin healthy.*)

**SAY** → Let's talk about fruits first. Fruits contain vitamin C which helps to protect you from getting a cold. **Fruit** also keeps our teeth, gums, and bones strong and healthy.

**ASK** → What are some examples of fruits? (*apples, oranges, bananas, peaches, pears, etc.*)

**SAY** → Now let's talk about vegetables. Vegetables contain vitamins and minerals that help keep you healthy and strong. They also contain fiber, which keeps food moving through your body. This helps you go to the bathroom regularly, which is important for your body to work well.

**ASK** → What are some examples of vegetables? (*carrots, green beans, potatoes, broccoli, etc.*)

**SAY** → You need a lot of different kinds and colors of fruits and vegetables to keep you healthy.

**SAY** → During the year, you may be served a fruit or vegetable that's new to you or not your favorite. Be curious and give it another chance—you might be surprised! Sometimes it takes trying a food about 10 times before your taste buds start to enjoy it.

**SAY** → Let's think about the fruits and vegetables you don't think you like as foods that you don't like yet.

**SAY** → Today we are learning how to choose a variety of fruits and vegetables.

**ASK** → Does anyone know what variety means? (*Variety means different colors, shapes, and sizes. Usually when you vary the color, you get different shapes and sizes, too.*)

**ASK** → Why is it important to eat a variety of fruits and vegetables every day? (*Eating a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables every day will help you to get all the vitamins and minerals your body needs to grow and to stay strong and healthy. Different colored fruits and vegetables are important for healthy skin and eyes, a strong heart, strong muscles, a healthy stomach and to help your brain.*)

**ASK** → Now that you know variety is different shapes, colors, and sizes, can you name three fruits and vegetables you think show a good variety? (*sample answer: red apple, green beans and corn*)

### A Variety of Fruits and Veggies Each Day handout (girl jumping)

- Distribute the handouts: *A Variety of Fruits and Veggies Each Day* (girl jumping) and *Fruit and Veggie Variety*
- Refer to the *Color Chart & Color Sheets* for more examples of fruits and vegetables in each color group.

- Refer to the handouts and read aloud ways that each different color helps the body function. As you read, students can fill in their answers on the *Fruit and Veggie Variety* handout.
  - **Brown, Tan and White:** Keeps your muscles strong and body safe against germs.
  - **Red:** Keeps your heart strong.
  - **Green:** Helps move food through your body for a healthy stomach.
  - **Purple/Blue:** Helps your brain learn and remember.
  - **Yellow/Orange:** Keeps your eyes healthy, skin glowing, and helps to keep you from getting a cold.
- Show the students the *Catch a Rainbow Every Day!* Poster.
  - **SAY** → Let's look at the rainbow.
  - **ASK** → What fruits and veggies do you see and what colors are they?
  - **SAY** → Fruits and vegetables can be red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, white, tan or brown.

**ASK** → What color fruits and vegetables keep your eyes healthy, your skin glowing, and helps to keep you from getting a cold? (*yellow and orange*)

**ASK** → What are some examples of yellow and orange fruits and vegetables? (*carrots, pineapple, cantaloupe, oranges, corn, sweet potatoes, tangerines, peppers*)

**ASK** → What color fruits and veggies helps move food through your body for a healthy stomach? (*green*)

**ASK** → What are some green fruits and vegetables? (*kiwi, broccoli, asparagus, celery, grapes, lettuce*)

**ASK** → What part of the body allows you to learn and remember? (*brain*)

**ASK** → What color fruits and vegetables help your brain? (*purple and blue*)

**ASK** → What are some examples of purple and blue foods? (*blueberries, eggplant, grapes, and raisins*)

**ASK** → What color fruits and vegetables keep your heart strong? (*red*)

**ASK** → What are some red fruits and vegetables? (*apples, peppers, cherries, strawberries, tomatoes*)

**ASK** → What color fruits and vegetables help to keep your muscles strong? (*brown, tan and white*)

**ASK** → What are examples of brown, tan and white fruits or vegetables? (*potatoes, bananas, pears, mushrooms, onions*)

- Note: Examples of white fruits and vegetables are those that are white on the inside like a banana, pear, or a potato, or those that are white inside and out like mushrooms.

**Don't forget!** Remind students to draw any new fruits and veggies they've tried in their Tasting Passports.

### **Activity #1: Fruit and Veggie Color Tracker**

Distribute and read the directions on the bottom of the handout. After students fill it out:

**ASK** → Which of your rows have the fewest circles?

**ASK** → Are you eating other fruits and vegetables that are not pictured?

**ASK** → What fruits and veggies are you willing to eat to add more of the colors you are lacking in your meals and snacks?

**ASK** → Why is it important to eat a variety of different colored fruits and vegetables every day? (*They help different parts of your body and give you nutrients you need to be healthy. Eating a variety also helps keep you from getting sick as you grow older.*)

**Activity #2: Get Mixed Up and Moving worksheet** Instruct students to unscramble the words to reveal terms related to fruits and vegetables. After decoding each word, they must complete the matching physical activity before moving on to the next word. Continue until all words are unscrambled and all activities are complete. For added fun, play as a relay by dividing the class into two teams.

**Activity #3: Fruit Fun Talk worksheet (Curriculum Connection/Language Arts)** Have the students work with a partner to complete the worksheet. Review the answers with the class.

### LESSON 3: 4-A-DAY & SERVING SIZE

#### Nutrition Objectives:

1. Students will learn why it is important to choose a variety of different colored fruits and vegetables.
2. Students will be able to state the number of fruits and vegetables they should eat each day.
3. Students will be able to apply knowledge of portion sizes by estimating fruit and vegetable servings in real-life examples.

**ASK**→ Has anyone tried a new fruit or vegetable this week?

**SAY**→ Let's review what we learned last time.

- Refer to the *A Variety of Fruits and Veggies Each Day* (girl jumping) handout and review how all the colors help different parts of the body.

**SAY**→ Today we are learning about the amount of fruit and vegetables you need to eat every day to be healthy.

**ASK**→ How many cups of fruits and veggies do you think kids your age need to eat every day? (*at least 2 cups of each*)

**ASK**→ What do the words "at least" mean? (*It's the minimum amount*)

**ASK**→ Can you have more? (*yes*)

**ASK**→ Why is it important to eat at least 2 cups of fruit every day? (*Fruit contains vitamin C, which helps keep you from getting a cold. Fruit also keeps our teeth, gums, and bones strong and healthy*)

Show pictures of the following (see *Fruit & Vegetable Serving Size Picture Cards*) and hold up a measuring cup as you discuss:

- 1 cup of fruit equals one large piece of fruit like an apple, orange, or banana
- 1 cup of fruit equals 32 red seedless grapes
- 1 cup of fruit equals ½ cup of dried fruit like raisins
- 1 cup of fruit equals 8 fluid ounces of 100% fruit juice
- 1 cup of fruit equals 2 small pieces of fruit like kiwi
- **½ cup fruit received as a snack in school** (You need 4 servings this size to equal the 2 cups of fruit you should eat every day.)

**ASK**→ Who can use the picture cards (see *Fruit & Vegetable Serving Size Picture Cards*) to show me how much fruit you need to eat to equal 2 cups of fruit per day? Get a variety of responses. Refer to the *What Counts as One Cup of Fruits?* reference sheet for answers. Examples:

- 2 kiwi and 1 cup 100% fruit juice
- 1 banana and ½ cup raisins
- 32 red seedless grapes and 1 cup of chopped fruit (fruit salad)

**How Much is a Cup of Vegetables?** Refer to *What Counts as 1 Cup of Vegetables?* reference sheet. Show students the picture cards provided. Each card has an amount listed on it. Hold up the measuring cup to reinforce what the amount looks like. Examples:

- 1 cup of vegetables equals 1 cup of raw or ½ cup cooked vegetables like broccoli, corn, peas, cucumbers, green beans, mushrooms, tomatoes, peppers or zucchini
- 1 cup of vegetables equals 1 large sweet potato
- 1 cup of vegetables equals 12 baby carrots or 2 medium carrots
- 1 cup of vegetables equals 1 cup of cooked beans and peas such as black, kidney, pinto, soy beans, black eyed peas, or split peas
- 1 cup of vegetables equals 2 cups of raw leafy greens like lettuce and spinach
- 1 cup of vegetables equals 8 fluid ounces of 100% tomato or vegetable juice

- **½ cup raw vegetables received as a snack in school** (You need 4 servings this size to equal 2 cups of vegetables which you should eat every day.)

**ASK**→ Who can use the picture cards to show me how many veggies you need to eat to equal 2 cups of vegetables per day? Get a variety of responses. Refer to the *What Counts as One Cup of Vegetables?* reference sheet for answers. Examples:

- 1 cup of raw green beans and 1 cup (8 fluid ounces) of 100% tomato or vegetable juice
- 2 cups of raw spinach and 1 large sweet potato
- 12 baby carrots and 1 cup of cooked broccoli

**SAY**▢ Measuring your fruits and vegetable is not always easy to do if you do not have measuring cups on hand. Instead, you can compare the amount of fruits and vegetables to everyday items, like a tennis ball or the size of your fist. (*Reference Portion Sizes Made Simple* handout and go over examples with students.)

*If lesson is given when FFVP snack is served:*

**SAY**→ Take a look at today's fruit or vegetable snack. Have students estimate the serving size of the snack.

**Don't forget!** Remind students to draw any new fruits and veggies they've tried in their Tasting Passports.

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**Activity #1: Fruit and Vegetable Diary:** Have students record how many cups of fruits and vegetables they eat each day for two days. The diary can be completed at home and/or in school. Invite volunteers to share examples with the class. As students share, the teacher (or a student helper) writes their answers on the board or a large chart paper under two headings: "**Fruits We Ate**" and "**Vegetables We Ate.**"

For curriculum connection to math: Have students add up the *total* amount of fruit eaten by the class in one day. What is the *average* amount of fruit eaten by each student?

**Optional Discussion Questions:**

**ASK**→ What fruits or vegetables showed up the most?

**ASK**→ Are there any colors missing?

**ASK**→ Are there some fruits and vegetables we didn't see at all that we could try in the future?

**Activity #2: Fruit and Veggie Fill Ins (Curriculum Connection/Language Arts)**

**Activity #3: Name That Fruit:** Instruct the students to work with a partner or in a group to complete the worksheet. Share the answers with the class.

**Activity #4: Fiber Fun (Curriculum Connection/Math)** Use this worksheet as part of a math lesson involving decimals. Students can also practice using calculators to add sums of numbers that are decimals.

## LESSON 4 - USING THE SENSES

### Nutrition Objectives:

1. Students will be able to describe two characteristics of their fruit or vegetable snack (or their favorite fruit or vegetable) by using their senses.
2. Students will be able to explain how preparation methods like cooking, adding spices, or mixing foods together can change the taste of food.
3. Students will be able to identify the role of tastebuds in experiencing tastes.

**ASK** → What do you think it means to **be** healthy? What do you think it means to **eat** healthy?

**SAY** → To be healthy means more than just eating healthy foods and being active. This includes getting enough sleep, being kind to yourself and others, and spending time with the people you love. Today we are going to be focusing on eating healthy foods.

**SAY** → Fruits and vegetables are healthy foods that many kids and grown-ups don't eat enough of. They contain many nutrients, which are things like vitamins and minerals, that your body needs for you to grow, play, learn and be healthy. You should eat lots of different colored fruits and vegetables every day to give your body all the nutrients it needs.

**SAY** → Today we are learning about using describing words for different fruits and vegetables. Fruits and vegetables come in many different shapes, colors, and sizes. They are also different in the way they taste and feel.

**ASK** → What are the 5 senses? Write them on chart paper or the board. (*see, hear, taste, smell, and feel*)

**SAY** → Let's talk about what **senses** you use when you eat an apple.

**ASK** → What does an apple **look** like? (*round, red, green or yellow*)

**ASK** → What does an apple **sound** like when you take a bite? (*crunchy*)

**ASK** → What does an apple **taste** like? (*sweet, juicy, tart*)

**ASK** → What does an apple **smell** like? (*sweet*)

**ASK** → What does an apple **feel** like? (*smooth, firm, hard*)

**SAY** → We can talk about fruits and vegetables in different ways. Let's talk about our snack today.

**ASK** → Does anyone know what taste buds are? (*Taste buds are tiny cells on your tongue and in your mouth that help you taste different flavors like sweet, sour, salty, and bitter.*)

**SAY** → As you grow and your body changes, your taste buds can change too. Trying fruits and vegetables in different ways can help you discover new flavors you enjoy.

**ASK** → Does your family ever cook or prepare fruits and vegetables in different ways, or serve them with different ingredients? Do you ever add special spices or sauces when making them at home?

**SAY** → Let's do an activity to get you thinking about your favorite fruits and veggies. I also want you to think about fruits and veggies you've never tried or some that you have tried in the past and didn't like, but you'd be willing to try again.

**Activity:** *If the lesson is done when the FFVP snack is served, have students explore today's fruit or vegetable snack. (If the snack is not being served at the time of the lesson, encourage students to think of their favorite fruit or vegetable).* Answer the following questions as a group. Write responses on chart paper or the board. (See *Fruit and Vegetable Reference List for Teachers*).

- What does your fruit/vegetable **look** like?  
*orange, tiny, like a leaf, like a tree*
- What does your fruit or vegetable snack **sound** like when you eat it?  
*crunchy, squishy, loud, quiet*
- What does it **taste** like?

*sweet, sour, sweet, juicy, yummy, bitter*

- What does it **smell** like?  
*sweet, fruity, fresh*
- What does your fruit/vegetable **feel** like?  
*cold, firm, fuzzy, hard, mushy, soft, sticky, wet*

**SAY** Great job exploring fruits and vegetables with your senses today! Remember, trying new fruits and veggies and eating lots of different colors helps your body stay strong, healthy, and ready to learn and play so it is important to keep being brave and curious with your food!

**Don't forget!** Remind students to draw any new fruits and veggies they've tried in their Tasting Passports.

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**Activity #1: My Favorite Fruit or Vegetable Guessing Game:** Using the *My Favorite Fruit or Vegetable* guessing game worksheet, instruct the children to choose a favorite fruit or vegetable and follow the prompts, using sensory words to describe it. Let students share their descriptions with the class to see if the other students can guess what it is.

**Activity#2: Fruit and Vegetable Matching Posters:** Display the posters so that the children will be able to reach them. Pass out the pictures of fruits and vegetables. Call on volunteers to come up to match the picture they have with the one on the poster. Ask the children to say one describing word about the fruit or vegetable when they place it on the poster.

*If you are interested in receiving a physical copy of this activity, please contact **Stephanie Carlile, MS, LDN, RDN** at [scarlile@uri.edu](mailto:scarlile@uri.edu). Copies may be provided depending on FFVP eligibility and funding.*

**Activity #3: Fruit and Vegetable Scavenger Hunt worksheet:** Display the Fruit and Vegetable Matching posters. Read the directions and instruct the children to work with a partner and refer to the posters to help them find the answers.

**Teacher Note:** *The Fruit and Vegetable Matching posters can be a helpful visual aid, but they are not required for students to complete this activity. If posters are not available, students can still work with a partner to answer the questions.*

## LESSON 5 - WHERE DO F/V GROW & PARTS OF THE PLANTS WE EAT:

### Nutrition Objectives:

1. Students will learn that fruits and vegetables come from plants.
2. Students will be able to identify the 6 different parts of plants and give examples of which parts common fruits and vegetables come from.

**ASK**→ What is the difference between a *fruit* and a *vegetable*? (*The answer can be found on “The Plants We Eat - Reference List.”*)

**ASK**→ What are the different parts of a plant?

**SAY**→ A plant is made up of a root, stem, fruit, leaves, flowers, and seeds (write these 6 words on the board):

- **Root:** Holds the plant in place and takes in water and minerals from the soil.
- **Stem:** Transports water, minerals, and sugar throughout the plant.
- **Fruit:** Contains the seeds for the plant to reproduce.
- **Leaves:** Produce food for the plant through photosynthesis.
- **Flower:** Produces seeds so the plant can reproduce.
- **Seed:** Contains everything needed to grow a new plant.

**ASK**→ Can anyone name the vegetable we eat when we eat the **leaves** of the plant? (*lettuce, spinach*)

**ASK**→ We eat the **root** of the plant when we eat this vegetable. What is it? (*carrots, radishes*)

**ASK**→ If you eat this vegetable you are eating the **stem** of the plant. What is it? (*celery, asparagus*)

**ASK**→ What vegetable are you eating when you are eating the **seeds** of the plant? (*corn, peas*)

**ASK**→ Who knows which vegetable we eat when we eat the **flowers** of the plant? (*broccoli, cauliflower*)

**ASK**→ We eat the **fruit** of the plant when we eat this vegetable. What is it? (*tomatoes, cucumbers*)

**SAY**→ Good job learning about the parts of a plant and where our fruits and veggies come from! Next time you eat a fruit or vegetable, see if you can guess which part of the plant you're eating. The more you know about your food, the more fun it is to eat healthy.

### **Optional Activity:**

**SAY**☑ Today I will be reading a book about fruits and vegetables. As I read, listen closely and look for how the vegetables are grouped by the different parts of the plant that we eat, like roots, stems, leaves, and more.

- Read aloud [Tops and Bottoms](#) by Janet Stevens. Discuss the following questions referring back to the text and *The Plants We Eat - Reference List*.

**ASK**→ Can anyone name the vegetables we eat when we eat the **top** or the **leaves** of the plant? (*lettuce, spinach, cabbage*)

**ASK**→ There are other vegetables we eat the **tops** of but they are considered to be **flowers**. Can you name one? Hint: flower is part of the name of one of these vegetables. (*broccoli, cauliflower*)

**ASK**→ We eat the **bottom** or the **root** of the plant when we eat these vegetables. What are they? (*carrots, radishes, potatoes, beets, onions, turnips*)

**ASK**→ What vegetables are you eating when you eat the **middle** and the **seeds** of the plant? (*corn, peas, lima beans*)

**ASK**→ If you eat these vegetables, you are eating the stem; the middle part that supports the plant. What are they? (*celery, asparagus, and broccoli, which is also classified as a flower*).

**ASK**→ We eat the **fruit** of the plant when we eat these fruits and vegetables. Think of fruits and vegetables that grow on vines or on trees. What are they? (*bananas, strawberries, blueberries, pears, grapes, tomatoes, cucumbers*)

*If you are interested in receiving a physical copy of this activity, please contact **Stephanie Carlile, MS, LDN, RDN** at [scarlile@uri.edu](mailto:scarlile@uri.edu). Copies may be provided depending on FFVP eligibility and funding.*

**Don't forget!** Remind students to draw any new fruits and veggies they've tried in their Tasting Passports.

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**Activity #1:** Use *The Plants We Eat - Reference List* to guide a discussion as students identify which part of the plant different fruits and vegetables come from (root, stem, leaf, flower, fruit, or seed). As you talk, write examples on the board under each plant part to build a class chart together. If possible, show real produce or images to help students guess and sort.

Next, have students make their own mini-list: ask them to think about the fruits and vegetables they ate yesterday or today, write them down, and identify which part of the plant each one comes from. Invite volunteers to share, and add some of their examples to the class chart.

**Optional Extension:** End with a challenge: *"Can anyone name a fruit or vegetable we haven't listed yet for each plant part?"*

**Activity #2: You Are What You Eat handout**

Review the handout and ask the students the following questions:

**ASK** → Do you eat any of these foods? Which ones?

**ASK** → Which of these foods do you think you could add to more of your meals?

**ASK** → Why do you think it is important to add more of these foods to your meals?

**Activity #3: School Garden (Curriculum Connection/Science):** If your school has a garden, have the students take turns caring for the plants so they learn about the process of making a plant grow. You can also grow plants in containers right in the classroom.

*Tip for Teachers:* Check with the URI Cooperative Extension or URI Master Gardener Program to inquire about the **Free Seed Program**. Schools and nonprofit organizations in Rhode Island are invited to request free vegetable, flower, and herb seed packets during December or January. This is a wonderful hands-on opportunity to support classroom gardening and help students explore plant science firsthand.

**Learn more and submit a request here:** URI Cooperative Extension - Free Seed Program  
[facebook.com+9web.uri.edu+9oceanstatetoday.com+9](https://www.facebook.com/9web.uri.edu+9oceanstatetoday.com+9)

**Activity #4: Santa Cruz Farms Reading Passage (Curriculum Connection/Language Arts)**

As a class, read the letter about Santa Cruz Farms and instruct the students to answer the questions in complete sentences.

**Activity #5: Market Math worksheet (Curriculum Connection/Math)** Ask the students to complete the worksheet and show all their work.

## LESSON 6- FRUITS AND VEGGIES IN MANY FORMS & THE MEDIA:

### Nutrition Objectives:

1. Students will be able to state one way that fruits and vegetables can be changed during cooking/preparation.
2. Students will be able to explain what it means for food to be “processed” and give examples of how fruit and vegetables change as ingredients like salt, sugar, and fats are added.
3. Students will be able to describe how food companies use different types of media to influence what we eat.
4. Students will be able to talk about how food ads might affect what they want to eat, and think about how ads for fruits and vegetables could encourage healthy eating.

### Fuel up with Fruits and Veggies

**ASK** → Let’s start with fruit. Do we remember why fruits are important for your body? (*Fruits contain vitamin C, which helps to protect you from getting a cold. Fruit also keeps our teeth, gums and bones strong and healthy. In addition, fruit contains fiber which keeps food moving through your body so it helps you go to the bathroom.*)

**SAY** → Today we are learning about how fruits and veggies can be changed when we prepare or cook them. Sometimes, when we prepare or cook a fruit or vegetable, we take some of the healthy parts away from it. Other times, we add extra ingredients like sugar, oil, or salt.

**SAY** → In each of the food groups, there are foods that are healthier than others. These foods are closest to how they are found in their natural state- just the way we would find them growing or freshly picked. They will give us vitamins and minerals that help you to feel good and grow strong, give you energy to learn and play, and keep you from getting sick.

**ASK** → Does anyone know what I mean by “processed”?

**SAY** → “Processing a food” means doing something to change it from the natural state it used to be in. That might mean cooking it, peeling it, mixing it with other ingredients, or even turning it into something totally different.

**SAY** → I’d like to give you an example (*refer to The 5 Food Groups: Make Healthy Choices handout*).

Apples are found on trees, its most natural state. If we were to pick that apple off of the tree to eat, it has not been modified/changed; it’s still in its natural state. Nothing has been added to it or taken away from it.

**ASK** → If we were to use those apples to make applesauce, how would the apples be changed?

**SAY** → If we made applesauce with these freshly picked apples by chopping and cooking them down with some white sugar, the apples would now be a bit more processed. The applesauce will still give us vitamins and minerals, including fiber, which helps to keep us full and going to the bathroom regularly, BUT we’re now eating added sugar. The apples are a little further from their natural state in this case.

**ASK** → Now if we wanted to take those freshly picked apples and use them to make apple pie, how would the apples be changed then?

**SAY** → If we picked fresh apples, peeled off the skin, sliced them into wedges, added sugar, and baked them in a buttery pie crust to make apple pie, they’d be even further from their natural state than applesauce.

**ASK** → Why do you think? (*Because we took away the skin (which has fiber) and added sugar and saturated fats (the less healthy kind of fat)*).

**SAY** → Now let’s talk about vegetables.

**ASK** → Why are vegetables important for your body? (*Vegetables have important vitamins and minerals that help us stay healthy and strong. They also have fiber, which helps food move through our bodies and makes it easier to go to the bathroom.*)

**ASK** → How many cups of vegetables do you need to eat every day? (*at least 2 cups*)

**SAY** → Let's look at three different ways that people eat potatoes.

*Reference the pictures of the baked potato, mashed potatoes, and french fries*

**ASK** → Which picture shows the potato that has not been changed very much? *(The whole baked potato)* How do you know that? *(It looks like how you would get it from the farm. It has been washed and cooked, but other than that it looks the same as when it comes out of the ground.)*

**ASK** → Which picture(s) shows a potato that has been changed? *(The mashed potatoes and french fries.)* Has anyone ever made mashed potatoes or french fries? How does the potato change during this process?

**SAY** → When we make mashed potatoes and french fries, we usually peel the potatoes. This takes away some of the healthy part of the potato, called fiber. Can someone remind me what fiber does for our body? *(helps us feel full and helps us go to the bathroom).*

**ASK** → After we peel the potatoes, what do you think we add to them to make mashed potatoes? *(milk or cream, salt, butter)* What do we add to them to make french fries? *(we cook them in lots of oil and add salt)*

**ASK** → Which of these three pictures shows the potato that has the most vitamins, minerals, and fiber to help us play, learn, grow, and to keep us from getting sick? *(the baked potato)* That's right, the baked potato still has all of its fiber and doesn't have too many other things, like oil or salt, added to it.

**SAY** → We just learned that adding sugar, salt, or fats can change fruits and vegetables. Food companies often do this to make foods taste sweeter, saltier, or crunchier, which can make people want to eat more of them. They also use advertisements and media to encourage us to choose their products. Let's take a look at how the media can influence what we eat.

**ASK** → What do you think of when I say the word "media"? *(Possible answers: TV, social media, newspaper, magazines, internet, cell phones, buses, billboards, YouTube, etc.)*

**ASK** → Who can tell us what the media is?

**SAY** → Right, the media can be TV, internet, movies, magazines, or newspapers. When we talk about media we are talking about the way we receive messages. Especially messages about what to buy or what to eat.

**ASK** → Do you know how many food advertisements you are exposed to?

**SAY** → For children it's about 1000 per year!

**ASK** → What kinds of foods do you usually see ads for?

**SAY** → Most advertising money is spent to promote foods like fast food, soda, sugary cereals, and candy. Most of these ads are aimed at children and teenagers. The food companies are trying to influence the types of foods you and your families buy.

**ASK** → Do you think the brand of a food affects what you eat? *(Most people are not even aware that they choose highly-advertised foods more often than less-advertised foods. Advertisers spend a lot of money to make you think their food is the best choice.)*

**ASK** → Do you ever see advertising for fruit or vegetables? *(Very little money is spent on ads for healthy foods like fruits and vegetables because they are not owned by large companies the same way processed food products are.)*

**SAY** → Probably not very often. That's because very little money is spent on ads for healthy foods like fruits and vegetables. They're not owned by big companies the same way chips, soda, or fast food are, so they don't get as many commercials or flashy billboards.

**ASK** → Do you think people would eat more fruit and vegetables if there was more advertising for them? Why or why not?

**ASK** → Do you think that it is okay to eat fruits and vegetables that have sugar, salt, or oil added to them?

**SAY** → Yes! If you like foods like apple pie and french fries, it is okay to eat these types of foods. We just want to make sure we are also eating fruits and vegetables that haven't been changed too much. These will have the most vitamins, minerals, and fiber to help us grow, play, and learn.

**SAY** → There are many different nutrients that your body needs to be healthy and strong. You can get these nutrients by eating a variety of different colored fruits and vegetables every day.

**Don't forget!** Remind students to draw any new fruits and veggies they've tried in their Tasting Passports.

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**Activity #1: Fruit and Veggie Rhymes: (Curriculum Connection/Language Arts)** Have the students complete the worksheet. Review the answers with the class.

**Activity #2: Add Up the Ads** Students will use the worksheet to track food advertisements they see, either at home or during class. Each time they notice a food ad, they record what the product was and where they saw it (TV, YouTube, social media, billboard, etc.). Afterward, students can discuss which types of foods were advertised most often and how these ads might influence food choices.

**ASK**→

- Which foods or types of foods were advertised the most?
- How might these ads influence what people want to eat?

**Activity #3: Fruit and Vegetable Trivia Challenge**

**Activity #4:** Have students brainstorm foods or drinks that can be found in many forms. Write their ideas on the board, starting with a whole fruit or vegetable and then listing the processed versions that come from it. Together, discuss how the food has changed from its natural state; what was added (sugar, salt, fat), what was taken away (fiber, skin), and how the preparation method (baking, frying, drying) changes how healthy it is for our bodies.

Examples could include:

- **Fruit:** cranberries → craisins; cherries → cherry pie; grapes → raisins
  - **Vegetables:** sweet potato → sweet potato fries; potato → potato chips; cauliflower → cauliflower crust pizza; Brussels sprouts → fried Brussels sprouts
- Optional Activity:** Have students create a simple "food transformation chain" on paper, drawing the original food on one side and its most processed form on the other, labeling the steps or changes in between.

**Activity #5: Apples and Potatoes Sorting Game**

**Activity #6: Create Your Own Poster Ad!**

**SAY** Let's talk about how advertising works. Companies use something called persuasive messages to get you to do or try something, like buying or eating a certain food. (Show the *Persuasive Messaging Images Example* while explaining.)

There are three main ways ads try to convince you:

1. **To make you feel good** - These ads show happy people, fun times, or families eating together.

2. **To give you information** - Like telling you that carrots help your eyes or that fruit gives you energy.

3. **To make you trust the product** - By using doctors, athletes, or phrases like “#1 recommended!”

**ASK** Has anyone heard of a slogan before?

**SAY** A slogan is a short, catchy phrase that helps people remember something like a product, a brand, or an idea. It’s kind of like a *mini advertisement* that sticks in your head!

You’ve probably heard slogans like “Just Do It” or “I’m Lovin’ It.”

**SAY** Slogans are powerful because they stick in our minds and can even change the way we think or what we choose to eat or do.

**SAY** Today, we’re going to create our own persuasive posters to encourage students in your school to eat more fruits and vegetables.

**SAY** Now let’s look at some example slogans you might use or get ideas from:

- *Start simple with MyPlate*
- *Focus on whole fruits*
- *Vary your veggies*
- *Make half your grains whole*
- *Move to low-fat or fat-free dairy*
- *Local food is fresher and tastier!*
- *I love my farmer!* (like the stickers from FFRI)

**SAY** Your job is to create a poster using persuasive messaging. This means adding a slogan, images, and colors or drawings that catch attention. Your goal is to convince your classmates or families (educator/student choice) to eat more fruits and vegetables. (*Pass out poster paper and crayons/colored pencils. Students can work individually and take their posters home to their families, or in groups and posters can be hung throughout the school.*)

**Teacher Note:** *Brainstorm a list of ideas with the students using the “Top 10 Reasons to Eat More Fruits and Vegetables” as a guide.*

**Activity #6: Kitchen Calculations (Curriculum Connections/Math)** review the directions and measurement tables and instruct the students to complete the worksheet.

## LESSON 7 - FOOD WASTE & FARM-TO-FORK:

### Nutrition Objectives:

1. Students will be able to describe the different parts of the food system
2. Students will be able to explain how food waste impacts resources, money, and the environment
3. Students will be able to identify at least two ways to reduce food waste at school or at home.

**ASK** → Did you eat at least 2 cups of fruit and 2 cups of vegetables yesterday? Who would like to share what they had?

**ASK** → Can anyone remember what we talked about in our last lesson? (*Fruits and veggies in many forms (processing) and the media- how it influences food choices.*)

**ASK** → Since then, did you notice any ads or media trying to persuade you to eat a certain food?

**ASK** → Did you think about how the fruits or vegetables you ate might have been changed from their natural form, like peeled, cooked, or mixed with other ingredients?

**SAY** → All of those changes are part of a bigger journey food takes. Today, we're learning about **food systems**- how food gets from farms to our plates, where food waste can happen along the way, and how *you* can help the planet.

**ASK** → Does anyone know what the word "system" means?

**SAY** → That's right! A system is a group of parts that work together to get something done. For example, you have all probably heard of an ecosystem before - this is a team of plants, animals/people, and the weather working together in nature. They depend on each other for survival and balance.

**SAY** → Today, we are going to learn about the different parts of a food system (*refer to Food Systems Cards*). That means all the steps that food goes through, beginning from when it is planted, to when you finally eat it: growing, harvesting (picking it), processing (getting it ready to eat), transporting (moving it to stores), marketing (selling it), purchasing (buying it), consuming (eating it), and disposing (throwing it out or composting).

**SAY** → Each step involves different people, places, and things working together, like farmers, trucks, grocery stores, and even you!

**ASK** → Can anyone think of examples of people, places, or things that might play a role in the food system?

**SAY** → That's right! Food doesn't just appear on our plates; it travels through many steps to get to us. Now, let's think about what can happen to food as it moves through those steps, starting with the very first - growing.

**ASK** → That makes us think, where do fruits and vegetables come from? (*They grow on plants, trees, bushes or shrubs, vines, and in the ground, often on farms or in gardens.*)

**ASK** → Has anyone ever been to a farm? What fruits or vegetables did you see there?

**ASK** → Have you ever helped grow something in a garden? What did you plant or pick?

**SAY** → Growing food takes time, care, and resources like water, soil, fertilizer, and energy. So what happens if that food never gets eaten?

**SAY** → When food is grown or made but never eaten, we call that food waste (*refer to "[Stop Food Waste, Help Our Planet](#)" poster: "What is food waste?" section*). Food waste means throwing away food that people could have eaten, along with all the water, energy, and work used to make it.

*If you are interested in receiving a physical copy of this poster, please contact **Stephanie Carlile, MS, LDN, RDN** at [scarlile@uri.edu](mailto:scarlile@uri.edu). Copies may be provided depending on FFVP eligibility and funding.*

**SAY** → Let's take a look at the section called "*Where is food waste found?*". Food waste can happen at every step of the food system, from farms, to stores, to schools and homes. Let's talk about what that really means with some examples.

**SAY** → On farms, food waste can happen even before food leaves the field. Farmers sometimes plant extra crops to make sure there is enough food for everyone. Weather, pests, or storms can damage crops, and some fruits and vegetables don't get sold just because they look "imperfect," even though they are still safe and nutritious.

**SAY** → At grocery stores, food waste can happen when stores order too much food, when food has a short shelf life, or when customers choose only fruits and vegetables that look "perfect," leaving others, like those that are "funny-looking" behind.

**SAY** → At schools and homes, food waste can happen when we take more food than we can eat, when there isn't enough time to finish a meal, or food goes bad before it can be eaten.

**SAY** → So, remember, food waste isn't just one problem in one place. It can happen anywhere along the food's journey.

**ASK** → Have you ever thrown away part of your lunch- maybe an apple, a milk carton, or some veggies? Would you say that's an example of food waste? *(yes!)*

**SAY** → When food is thrown away, we're not just wasting the food itself- we're also wasting the water, energy, time, and work it took to grow, make, and bring that food to us. *(Refer to the poster: "Wasted Food = Wasted resources + More pollution" section).*

**ASK** → What kinds of food do you see getting thrown away most often at lunch? Why do you think kids throw these types of foods away?

**ASK** → Does anyone know why we should reduce food waste in our schools and at home? *(to help our planet, to save money, to feed people.)*

**ASK** → What do you think happens when food rots in the trash instead of being eaten? *(it goes to waste, it gets smelly, it makes greenhouse gases that hurt the Earth.)*

**SAY** → That's right! When food is wasted, it doesn't just disappear. It adds up and affects our planet in big ways!

**SAY** → One big way food waste affects the planet is through greenhouse gases. *(Refer to the poster: "Earth's Warmth Team: The Sun and Atmosphere" and "What happens when food is wasted?" sections).* Greenhouse gases are gases that trap heat around the Earth, like a big, invisible blanket. When there are too many of these gases, the Earth gets too warm, which causes climate change. Climate change can lead to stronger storms, flooding, and other harmful changes for people, animals, and the planet.

**SAY** → The poster highlights three greenhouse gases to watch: methane, carbon dioxide, and nitrous oxide. Let's talk about how each one connects to food waste. *(Refer to poster: "3 Greenhouse Gases to Watch" section).*

**SAY** → Methane is released when food breaks down in landfills. When food from homes, schools, and restaurants is thrown away and rots in the trash or in landfills without air, methane is created.

**SAY** → Carbon dioxide is released when we use energy from oil and gas, like when trucks drive food to stores and schools, or when factories use electricity to make and package food. Growing, transporting, and storing food all create some carbon dioxide.

**SAY** → Nitrous oxide forms in farm soil when extra fertilizer isn't used by plants. Rain can wash that extra fertilizer from fields into nearby rivers, streams, and wetlands. This means that when food is grown but never eaten, the fertilizer used to grow that wasted food can create pollution in both the air and water for no reason.

**ASK** → If we wasted less food, what do you think that would help with? (*Saving our planet, saving money, helping more people get food.*)

**SAY** → Yes! When we waste less food, we **help protect the planet** by adding less to landfills and by saving the resources needed to produce food. Think about an apple you might eat at lunch. It might have come from a farm hundreds of miles away! First a farmer grows it, then it's picked, washed, packed, shipped, stored in a store or kitchen, and finally ends up on your tray. When we waste that apple, all those steps and all the energy, water, and fuel used at each step, go to waste too. That's why every bite matters!

**SAY** → Wasting less food can also **help to save money**. Did you know that 30–40% of all the food produced in the United States never gets eaten? That adds up to over 100 billion pounds of food each year. That's like throwing away a giant mountain of food- enough to fill about 3,000 school buses every single day! That's a lot of money spent on food that ends up in the trash.

**SAY** → Reducing food waste can also **help more people get the food they need**. Even though we grow plenty of food, a lot of it is wasted while many people still don't have enough to eat. When we waste less food, by saving leftovers, sharing extra food, or donating unopened food, more food can be used to help people instead of being thrown away.

**ASK** → What are some ways that food waste could be reduced at school and at home? (*Refer to poster: "How Can YOU Help Our Planet?" section*).

**ASK** → Looking at the poster, does anyone want to share one step they'd like to try to reduce food waste?

**SAY** → Every small step counts, and together, those steps can really help our planet.

### **Optional Add-on Activity: Planet Protectors Challenge**

*Teacher Note:* There's something called **PSE**, which stands for Policy, Systems, and Environmental change. The goal of the PSE strategies found in this curriculum is to create lasting changes that support healthy eating (with an emphasis on fruits and vegetables), reduce food waste, and promote a positive school environment. Instead of focusing only on individual choices, PSE strategies help shift the overall school culture, making the healthy choice the easy choice. The *Planet Protectors* challenge is an optional add-on activity that introduces students to these ideas by working together to reduce food waste and build eco-friendly habits. Teachers may choose to organize the challenge within a single classroom (students competing individually or in small teams) or between classrooms to encourage school-wide participation.

#### **Challenge Overview & Directions (For Teachers):**

Help your students become Planet Protectors by completing fun, simple activities that support healthy eating, reduce food waste, and care for the environment!

- Each week, students or the class can complete “eco-actions” from the list (see *Planet Protectors* tracking sheet).
- For every activity completed, individuals or your class earn 1 point.
- Track your progress using the checklist provided.
- Set a due date for final points to be submitted.

**Prize Ideas (low or no cost, curriculum-related):**

- **Smoothie or fruit tasting party** - organized with food service. \*Note: Consider food costs and equipment availability (i.e. blender, cups).
- **Garden snack time** - taste herbs or veggies grown at school.
- **“Fruit & Veggie Superhero” art day** - students create posters or mascots.
- **Food art afternoon** - students draw, paint, or collage their favorite fruits and veggies.
- **Chef hat craft** - students decorate paper chef hats to wear for the day.
- **Garden day** - plant seeds in cups or in a school garden bed.
- **Game time** - fruit- and veggie-themed relays or scavenger hunts
  - URI Community Nutrition Education [printable/PDF activities and games](#).
- **Nature walk** - explore school grounds and spot colors of fruits and veggies in nature.
- **Outdoor lunch or picnic day.**
- **Extra recess!** Enjoy an additional 15–20 minutes of outdoor play.
- **Music and movement break** - mini dance party.
- **Food-themed storytime** with a teacher, principal, or special guest (example: [Tops and Bottoms](#) by Janet Stevens).
- **Composting demo or hands-on activity** using school food scraps. For example:
  - **Mini Compost Jar:** Bring in a clear jar or plastic container and layer food scraps (apple cores, banana peels, veggie peels) with soil, leaves, and shredded paper. Students can watch over time as the scraps break down.
- **Recognition awards** - printable Planet Protector certificates for each student.
- **Principal’s shout-out** - winning class recognized on morning announcements.
- **Buddy lunch** with another class.
- **Thank-you cards** for cafeteria or custodial staff who help reduce food waste.

**SAY**→ Now that we’ve learned how the food system works and why reducing food waste is so important for our planet, our school, and our community, we want to invite you to be a part of the solution.

**ASK**→ How many of you want to help reduce food waste in your school and at home, and protect the planet?

**SAY**→ This month, your classroom is joining a new challenge called **Planet Protectors!** That means you’ll be working together (or individually) to complete fun activities that help the Earth, like saving leftover food, trying new fruits and vegetables, turning off lights to save energy, and even sharing family recipes.

**SAY**→ Each time you or your class completes one of these “eco-actions,” you earn a point. The more actions you complete, the more points you earn and at the end, the class with the most points will win a special prize.

**ASK**→ What are some things you think might be on the Planet Protector list? (Encourage a few guesses: “eat a new fruit,” “not throw away your milk,” “compost” etc.)

**SAY**→ That’s right! You’ll get a special checklist to keep track, and each week you’ll work together as a team to help the planet and make healthier choices. Every action you take matters!

**Don’t forget!** Remind students to draw any new fruits and veggies they’ve tried in their Tasting Passports.

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### **Activity #1: Fruit Fractions (Curriculum Connection/Math)**

**Activity #2: Where Do Apples Come From? (Curriculum Connection/Social Studies):** On a world map, point out all of the different countries that ship apples to the United States (examples: New Zealand, Chile, China, Argentina, Australia). Remind students that the U.S. grows lots of apples here, including locally in Rhode Island.

**ASK**→

1. Why do you think apples travel so far to reach us? (*Different seasons, climate, demand for year-round supply*).
2. What challenges might there be in shipping food from so far away? (*Fuel use, pollution, cost, apples losing freshness, bruising/mushy texture*).
3. How does eating local apples help our community? (*Supports local farmers, tastes fresher, less fuel/shipping, keeps money in the community, reduces pollution*).

### **Activity #3: Telling the Apple Story-** (Refer to *Food System Cards*)

**Instructions:**

1. Ask for **8 student volunteers** and give each one a **Food System card**.
2. Explain that together, they will help tell the story of how an apple grows and becomes a food we eat.
3. As a group, have the students work together to figure out the correct **order of the steps** in the food system.
4. Once they agree, have them **stand in line** to represent the apple's journey from start to finish.

**Correct order:**

Growing ☐ Harvesting ☐ Storing ☐ Transporting ☐ Selling ☐ Preparing ☐ Consuming ☐ Disposing

**ASK**☐ Who has ever been apple picking?

**ASK**☐ When you pick your own apples, which steps of the food system are you doing yourself? (*harvesting, storing, and transporting*)

**SAY**☐ Let’s talk about transporting which means delivering the apples from where they are grown to where they will be sold. Think about what happens to the environment.

**ASK**☐ What happens when we ship apples thousands of miles around the world? (*it uses up lots of gasoline, creates pollution, apples get mushy and don’t taste as good*)

**SAY**☐ Let’s talk about the final step: *disposing*, which means throwing your trash away.

**ASK** Why is it better for the environment if you eat fresh fruits and vegetables rather than processed or packaged foods? *(All the trash you create will break down and become part of the soil and you won't have to throw away a lot of packaging like paper or plastic which ends up in a landfill.)*

## LESSON 8 - FRUIT AND VEGGIE FAVORITES:

### Nutrition Objectives:

1. Students will be able to identify the class's favorite fruit and vegetable.
2. Students will be able to analyze the pictograph and identify the classes first, second, and third favorite fruit and vegetable, least favorite, or any ties.

### Lesson:

**SAY** Today we are going to find out what the class's favorite fruit and vegetable were from everything we've tasted together in class. First, let's review all the fruits and vegetables we've tried as part of our FFVP snacks. (Review the list with the class.)

**SAY** To find out our class favorites, we're going to make a pictograph- a kind of graph that uses pictures to show information! We will use fruits and veggies that you color as the pictures for our graph.

### Directions: Create a Pictograph (Curriculum Connection/Math)

1. Distribute coloring sheets with various fruits and vegetables.
2. Instruct students to color and cut out one favorite fruit and one favorite vegetable.
3. Set up two separate graphs on the board or on chart paper; one for fruits and one for vegetables (*Refer to the pictograph template -Tally the Votes for Fruits and Veggies*).
4. Call students up individually to place their fruit and vegetable on the respective pictographs using tape or glue.
5. **ASK**→
  - a. Which fruit was the class's favorite? How many votes did it get?
  - b. Which fruit came in second place? How many votes did it get?
  - c. Which fruit came in third place? How many votes did it get?
  - d. How many more votes did the first place fruit get compared to the second place fruit?
  - e. How many more votes did the first place fruit get compared to the third place fruit?
  - f. Did any fruits get the same number of votes? Which ones?
  - g. What is the class's least favorite fruit? How many votes did it get?

*(Repeat the questions for vegetables.)*

### Discussion Questions:

**ASK** Why is it important to try new fruits and vegetables? (*It might turn out to be a new favorite.*)

**ASK** Was anyone surprised by something they learned when they tasted a new fruit or vegetable in class?

**ASK** Do you think you're more open to trying more fruits and vegetables now- maybe ones you've never had before, or even ones made in a different way?

**SAY**→ Sometimes we don't think we'll like something, but once we give it a try, we're surprised! The more we try, the more chances we have to find new favorites, and to keep our bodies strong and healthy.

**Don't forget!** Remind students to draw any new fruits and veggies they've tried in their Tasting Passports.

### **(Optional) Tasting Passport Review & Reflection**

#### **Class Discussion Prompt**

When everyone has completed their Tasting Passport, gather students for a short group reflection. Ask questions such as:

- Which new fruit or vegetable was your favorite?
- Was there something you thought you wouldn't like, but you did?
- What's one thing you learned about fruits or vegetables?
- Which fruit or vegetable would you like to eat again?
- Is there a fruit or vegetable you want to try next?

**Goal:**

This reflection helps reinforce positive attitudes toward trying new foods and encourages students to connect the tasting experience to healthy eating habits outside the classroom.

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**Activity #1: Fruit & Vegetable Riddles**

Have the children solve the fruit and vegetable riddles (two separate sheets). Correct it together and share the information on the answer sheet.

**Activity #2:** Lead students in the **Fruit & Veggie Colors Challenge** chant. Assign groups or the whole class to recite each color verse with movements, then come together for the final cheer to review how different colors of fruits and vegetables help our bodies.

**Fruit & Veggie Colors Challenge**

(Clap, stomp, or snap to keep a beat)

**All:** *Colors, colors, on my plate  
Fruits and veggies make me great!*

**Red:** *Red keeps my heartbeat strong  
That's the rhythm all day long!* (pound chest gently)

**Orange/Yellow:** *Orange and yellow help my sight  
Eyes that shine and skin so bright!* (point to eyes, then arms)

**Green:** *Greens are power, fresh and clean  
Good for my tummy, fuel for my team!* (rub stomach, flex arms)

**Blue/Purple:** *Purple, blue - brainpower crew!  
Helps me think and learn in school!* (point to head)

**White/Brown:** *White and brown, muscles around  
Strong and steady, standing ground!* (show muscles)

**All (louder/faster):**  
*Colors, colors, every day  
Fuel me up so I can play!* (jump in place or high-five)

**Activity #3: Fruit and Veggie Fun worksheet**

## **LESSON 9 (EXTRA LESSON) - CULTURAL RELEVANCE & FOOD TRADITIONS:**

*Teacher Note: This is an optional add-on lesson that connects nutrition with cultural relevance. It can be taught as a stand-alone lesson or blended into **Lesson 5 (Fruits & Veggies in Many Forms)** or **Lesson 7 (Food Systems & Food Waste)**. The activity works best as a discussion-style class, encouraging students to share and reflect on their own food traditions while learning from their peers.*

### **Nutrition Objectives:**

1. Students will be able to explain how food traditions are connected to family, culture, and identity.
2. Students will be able to share at least one fruit or vegetable that is part of their family's or community's food traditions.
3. Students will be able to describe how different cultures use fruits and vegetables in meals.

**SAY**→ Food is more than just something we eat. It connects us to our families, our culture, and even our history. Different cultures around the world prepare and enjoy fruits and vegetables in unique ways.

**ASK**→ Can you think of a fruit or vegetable that is important in your family or culture? How is it usually prepared or eaten?

**SAY**→What we eat is often influenced by the traditions of our family and culture. Here are some examples of food traditions from different places:

Example #1: Many families from Central and South America eat rice and beans most days.

Example #2: In Ethiopia, people do not eat with utensils- instead, they use spongy unleavened bread called *injera* (pronounced *in-jeer-ah*) to scoop up stews made of vegetables and lentils.

Example #3: Here in Rhode Island, many people drink coffee milk. In other parts of the United States, people usually drink only plain or chocolate milk.

**SAY**→ There may also be special foods your family prepares on holidays or other celebrations.

**ASK**→ Who has a special food that is part of your family's culture or traditions?

**SAY**→ Sometimes the same fruit or vegetable shows up in many different dishes around the world. For example, potatoes can be mashed, fried, baked, or added to soups and stews, and each culture might have a different version.

**ASK**→ Why do you think it's important to learn about foods from different cultures? How can this help us understand and respect one another?

**SAY**→ Food is something we all share, and it's also something that makes each of us unique. By learning about different food traditions, we celebrate our own families and respect the cultures of others. Every fruit and vegetable has a story to tell.

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### **Activity #1: Family Food Connection (Curriculum Connection/Language Arts, Social Studies)**

Put students in pairs and give each pair one Family Foods worksheet. One student acts as the interviewer, asking the questions and recording the answers. Then they switch roles so both students get a turn.

Finally, have students share their family's favorite fruits and vegetables with the class or create a drawing of the dishes.

**Activity #2 (Curriculum Connection/Social Studies):** Have each student choose a country or region to explore. Research some of the food traditions from that place, focusing on fruits and vegetables.

Consider the following questions:

- What kinds of fruits and vegetables are commonly grown or eaten there?
- How are they usually prepared or enjoyed?

Remind students that every culture is unique, and food traditions can be different even within the same country.

**Activity #3: Classroom Cookbook-** Ask each student to bring in a family recipe that includes fruits or vegetables. Recipes can be written down, typed, or illustrated with drawings. Collect all of the recipes and compile them into a simple "classroom cookbook." Students can design a cover, add artwork, or include short notes about why the recipe is special to their family. Share the cookbook with families, the school library, or as a class display.