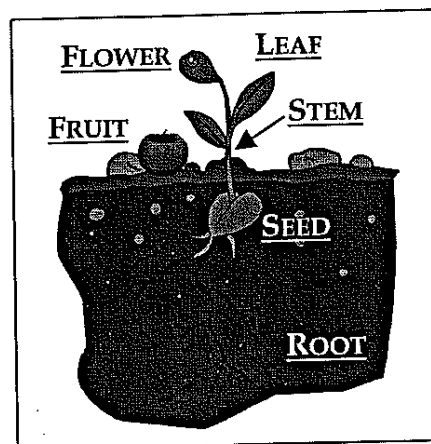


# The Plants We Eat Reference List

When you eat fruit or vegetables, think about which part of the plant it comes from. For example: a potato is a **ROOT**. We eat the **STEMS** and **FLOWERS** of broccoli. Berries, tomatoes, and bananas are **FRUITS** of the plant. Lettuce and spinach are the **LEAVES** of the plant.



Using the following list or actual vegetables and fruits as models, have students identify which plant parts they represent.

## ROOTS

beet  
onion  
carrot  
parsnip  
potato  
radish  
rutabaga  
sweet potato  
turnip

## STEMS

broccoli  
celery  
rhubarb  
Asparagus

## SEEDS

lima beans  
peas  
corn  
pumpkin seeds

## FRUIT

banana  
berries  
pear  
plum  
pineapple  
eggplant  
cucumber  
grapes  
pumpkin

## LEAVES

lettuce  
parsley  
cabbage  
spinach  
collards

## FLOWERS

cauliflower  
broccoli

## What is the difference between a fruit and a vegetable?

The answer depends on your relationship with the two items. If you're stocking the produce department at a grocery store, a tomato is a vegetable. If you're a plant scientist—a botanist—a tomato is a fruit. Cucumbers, pumpkins, avocados, and peppers are all fruits. Culturally, however, the grocer is going to call them vegetables.

A fruit is the ripe ovary or ovaries of a flower—the mature ovary of a seed-bearing plant. Let's say you've got a tomato plant with those little yellow flowers all ready. A bee comes along and fertilizes the flower. The flower starts developing into a fruit with the seed inside.

Vegetables, however, are the roots (carrots), tubers (potato), leaves (spinach), stems (celery), and other bits of plants that you might eat. For a botanist, a vegetable is sort of like the umbrella word for all the edible parts of a plant. Just to keep life interesting, mushrooms aren't plants at all, they are a kind of fungus.