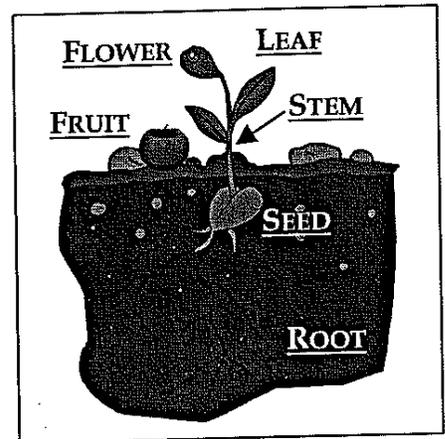


# The Plants We Eat Reference List

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.