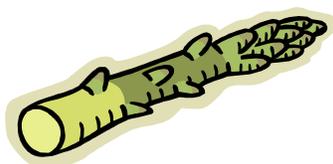


FARM TO PRESCHOOL HARVEST OF THE MONTH ACTIVITY PACKET

Asparagus



April 2011 Read Aloud Books and Activities

Week 1 Theme: A is for April, A is for Asparagus

**Week 2 Theme: Purple, Green, and White Foods Help
Us Grow Strong**

Week 3 Theme: We Eat Food That's Fresh!



Urban & Environmental
Policy Institute
OCCIDENTAL COLLEGE



Materials provided by the UEPI at Occidental College
Materials modified by permission from the Network for a Healthy California-Merced County Office of Education

HARVEST OF THE MONTH ACTIVITIES

Asparagus Week 1

A is for April, A is for Asparagus

Objectives:

- Students will learn that we eat the asparagus stem.
- Students will recognize that "A" is the first letter in Asparagus.
- Students will identify other fruits and vegetables that begin with the letter "A"

Materials:

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Photo cards

Picture of Asparagus with labeled plant parts

Large paper or poster board with a larger letter "A" (or more if in small groups)

Directions:

1. Show the class the Asparagus Fresh Fruit and Vegetable card. Ask the class "Do you know what vegetable this is?" "It's called Asparagus." Ask them to describe it, for example: it's long and green.
2. Show the class the picture of the Asparagus plant. Asparagus is a plant that grows from the ground. Point out the roots and stem (spear) of the plant. Explain that the stem is the part of the asparagus vegetable we eat. This is different than the other parts of plants we eat. Do we eat the stem of a grapefruit tree? No, we eat the fruit. Do we eat the stem of the Bok Choy plant? No, we eat the leaves.
3. Tell the class that this month's Harvest of Month vegetable is Asparagus. Ask the class what month is it? April. Then, ask the class what is the first letter in April? What is the first letter in Asparagus? "A" is for April and A is for Asparagus. As a class you can also count the number of A's in asparagus.
4. Ask the class to name other fruits and vegetables that begin with the letter "A". Examples could be: apple, apricot, artichoke and avocado. Show the class a Fruit and Vegetable Photo Card for each.
5. As a class (or in small groups) have the students draw or write words that begin with the letter "A" including April and Asparagus. Recommend the fruit and vegetables discussed but also encourage them to think of any words that begin with the letter "A." Write their descriptions of their drawings and display in the classroom.

HARVEST OF THE MONTH ACTIVITIES

Asparagus

Week 2

Purple, Green, and White Foods Help Us Grow Strong

Objectives:

- Students will learn that Asparagus can be purple, green or white.
- Students will know Asparagus is a healthy food.
- Students will identify other healthy fruits and vegetables that are green, purple, and white.

Materials:

Photos of different colored Asparagus
Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Photo cards*

Directions:

1. Show the class the asparagus Fresh Fruit and Vegetable card. Ask the class "Do you remember what vegetable this is?" "That's right, it's called asparagus." Ask the class, "What color is this asparagus?" Green.
2. Show the class the pictures of purple, green, and white asparagus. "Do you know that asparagus can grow in three different colors? What colors do you see here?" Point to the corresponding asparagus pictures as you say the colors "purple, green, and white."
3. Ask the class "Do you know that different colored fruits and vegetables help our bodies in different ways?" Purple and blue foods help our brains with memory. Green foods give us strong bones and teeth and help our eyes see well. White foods help our hearts stay healthy and strong.
4. Pass out a fruit and vegetable card of purple/blue, green, and white fruit and vegetables to each student. Then ask for the students with purple/blue fruit or vegetables to stand up. One by one, ask them to name their fruit or vegetable. Remind them that purple/blue foods help us remember things. Now ask the class to say the names again. "Wow what a great memory you have! You must be eating purple fruit and veggies."
5. Next, ask the students with green fruit and veggies to stand up. One by one,

ask them to name their fruit or vegetable. Remind them that green give us strong bones and teeth and help our eyes see. Ask them to do arm curls or push ups while the class counts to 10. "Wow, you all have very strong bones! You must all be eating lots of green fruits and vegetables."

6. Next, ask the students with white fruit and veggies to stand up. One by one, ask them to name their fruit or vegetable. Remind them that white foods help our hearts stay healthy and strong. Ask them to do some jumping jacks or run in place while the class counts to 10. Then ask them to place their hand on their heart-is it pumping faster? "Wow your hearts are very healthy and strong! The more you eat white fruits and veggies and exercise the stronger will you will be."

* Prior to activity select purple, green, and white fruit and vegetable cards, enough for one for each student. Below are some examples:

Purple/blue: blueberries, cabbage, eggplant, grapes

Green: bok choy, broccoli, celery, collard greens, green beans. kiwi, lettuce, snow pea, spinach, sugar snap pea

White: banana, cauliflower, garlic, onion, pear, pineapple guava, potato, radish, sweet potato, yambean/jicama

HARVEST OF THE MONTH ACTIVITIES

Asparagus Week 3

We Eat Food that's Fresh!

Book: *We Eat Food That's Fresh!* By Angela Russ-Ayon

Objectives

- Students will learn about the different ways foods are prepared.
- Students will describe asparagus features.
- Students will prepare and taste cooked asparagus.

Materials:

Taste test
Large paper or poster board

Directions:

1. Read the book *We Eat Food That's Fresh!* (Or play the accompanying CD while you point to the pictures and turn the pages)
2. Discuss with the class the different ways foods in the book are prepared, for example: fresh, cooked, boiled, peeled, juiced, etc. Display to the class the last page of the book. While pointing to the asparagus ask the class "What is the name of this vegetable?" Remind them that it is long and green. "Its asparagus."
3. Talk to the students about different places we can buy fresh asparagus and other vegetables and fruits. While we can go to a store like a supermarket, the freshest produce is at the farmers' market. You can find asparagus there this month. Farmers sell all different colors of asparagus at the farmers' market, fresh from the farm. Fresh food tastes better!
4. Write "Asparagus" on the large paper or poster board. Show the class an asparagus spear. Ask the class to describe the asparagus you are holding - What does it look like? What shape is it? Pass it around - what does it feel like? Refer to the handout in your binder for **Conducting An In-Class Taste Test** and for more ideas on how to engage the class. Record their observations on the large paper.
5. Remind the class that asparagus can be green, purple, or white. Today we

will taste green asparagus. Some people eat asparagus fresh (raw), but most people cook it by boiling, baking, or grilling it.

6. Follow the directions for the taste test.*
7. Record which students liked the taste of asparagus on the **I Like This/I Don't Like This** chart.

* Or serve asparagus simply cooked with lemon juice or parmesan cheese sprinkled on top.

ACTIVITIES TO EXTEND THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

WEEK 1 (optional)

Asparagus Song (tune of "My Bonny Lies Over the Ocean")

Asparagus is so amazing
It's a veggie that looks like a spear
It grows faster than most people
It can grow 12 inches in a year

Lyrics by Sam Jones, Veggie Songs, Volume 1

WEEK 2 (optional)

Tutti Frutti Instant Recess

- This exercise is meant to get your students moving.
- Studies have shown that Physical Activity breaks increase student concentration and attentiveness throughout the day
- During this exercise you can ask questions about fruits and vegetables that require a yes or no answer to reinforce their fruit and vegetable knowledge.

Here are some examples:

Does asparagus grow on a tree like a grapefruit?

Is asparagus green like spinach?

Are vegetables healthy for you?

YES AND NO STRETCH

- (1) Turn your head to the right
- (2) Turn your head to the left
- (3) Repeat 10 times
- (4) Look up to the sky
- (5) Look down at the ground
- (6) Repeat 10 times



WEEK 3 (optional)

Set a table aside for an **Asparagus Discovery Lab**

Comparing through measurement:

- After conducting the Taste Test, place the remaining uncooked asparagus on the table for the students to examine.
- Include some cooked asparagus if possible. Observe changes as it cools (smell, color, texture). Compare cooked and uncooked asparagus.
- Cut asparagus into different lengths and encourage students to arrange by length (shortest to longest) and width (narrowest to widest).
- Slice crosswise and lengthwise, observe and record internal structure.
- Encourage students to use all their senses to describe and compare the asparagus.
- Make scientific tools available, such as measuring tapes/rulers, a scale, magnifying glasses, and tweezers.
- Make paper, pencils, and crayons available for students to draw their observations. Teachers can write down the students' observations on each student's paper or collectively on one large paper.

Enhancing the Experience in Your Organic School Garden

April is a great time to start planting:

Beans (Snap)	Beets	Cantaloupe	Carrot	Chives	Corn
Cucumber	Eggplant*	Herbs	Kohlrabi	Leek	Lettuce (leaf)
Mustard	Okra	Parsley	Parsnip	Pepper	Pumpkin
Radish	Squash	Sunflower	Tomato*	Turnip	Watermelon

* Best to start in flats or individual containers

Modified from the Burpee Planting Guide- California

Food Experience Calendar

Week 3 Raw Asparagus with Parmesan Dressing

Optional Pasta with Asparagus and Lemon

Optional Asparagus-Tip Tea Sandwiches

FOOD EXPERIENCE RECIPES

WEEK 3

Raw Asparagus with Parmesan Dressing

Ingredients:

2 pounds large asparagus
1 cup coarsely grated Parmesan cheese (3 ounces)
3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
2 tablespoons warm water
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
Salt and Pepper

Directions:

1. Using a vegetable peeler, shave the asparagus into long, thin strips and transfer to a large bowl.
2. In a small bowl, mix the Parmesan with the lemon juice, water and olive oil.
3. Add to the asparagus and toss to coat.
4. Season with salt and pepper.

Makes 20-30 taste tests

Recipe adapted from Food and Wine Magazine (April 2010)

Optional

Asparagus-Tip Tea Sandwiches*

Ingredients:

16 asparagus stalks with woody bottoms snapped off, cooked**
1 tablespoon salted butter or margarine, softened
1 tablespoon extra- virgin olive oil
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper (optional)
4 slices of whole wheat bread, toasted, quartered *or* 16 whole wheat crackers

Directions:

1. Cut off the tips (top 2 inches) of the cooked asparagus and reserve.

2. Cut the remaining stalks into ½ inch pieces and put in food processor along with butter, oil and salt.
3. Blend until mixture is smooth and spreadable.
4. Spread 1 teaspoon of asparagus butter on each toast or cracker.
5. Line 2 to three toasts on top and serve.

* If a food processor is not available, you can also use a hand-held immersion blender.

** **Boil** asparagus spears in salted water until the stalks are just tender, about 4 minutes, allow to cool, chill if needed.

Grill asparagus spears in a skillet with olive oil for about 10 minutes, cool.

Microwave asparagus spears in ½ cup water on high for 1-2 minutes, or until slightly tender, cool.

--Remember to save some fresh asparagus for the optional Discovery Lab--

Makes 16 taste tests

Recipe adapted from Diane Forley Otsuka on wondertime.go.com

Pasta with Asparagus with Lemon

Ingredients:

4-6 pounds of cooked asparagus with ends trimmed

¼ cup of Olive Oil

¼ cup of Lemon Juice

14 cups of cooked pasta

Salt and pepper

Directions:

1. Cut asparagus into bite-sized pieces.
2. Combine asparagus pieces with the cooked pasta.
3. Combine lemon juice and oil in a bowl.
4. Pour mixture over pasta and asparagus.
5. Season with salt and pepper.

Makes 28 taste tests (1/2 cup)

Recipe adapted from LA County HOTM Rubus (pictorial) recipe