

University of California Cooperative Extension, Alameda County

Tips for Early Childhood Educators



Classroom Activity:

Children will learn that a cucumber has a lot of water which is essential for the body. They will also grow cucumbers from seeds.

RESOURCES/SUPPLIES

- Different kind of cucumbers: Persian, English, lemon, baby cucumber. Display for children to observe.
 - Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Photo Card. Or post pictures of different types of cucumbers.
 - Cucumber seeds and soil.
 - Small pot or any container with holes at the bottom (e.g. yogurt cups).
3. Our bodies need a lot of water to keep working. Regular plain water is good to drink every day. Fruits and vegetables have a lot of water as well.
 4. Cucumbers have a lot of water. Can you think about other juices from a fruit or vegetable (apple, orange).
 5. Let's plant cucumber seeds and watch them grow. Fill your pots with soil. Make three holes with your pinky finger and place the seed inside the soil. Cover with soil.

WHAT TO DO NEXT?

1. Read *Cool as a Cucumber* and explain that a cucumber grows on a vine like a pumpkin. It is a healthy vegetable and has a lot of water.
2. Everybody needs water: animals, plants, and people. We get water from rain, water fountains, bottles, cans, and what other sources?
6. We need to water the seed so it will grow. Place containers close to the window. Make the children responsible for watering the seeds. The plant should sprout in 7-10 days.

“C” is for Cucumber!

- Cucumber is a green vegetable mostly made out of water.
- Cucumber grows on a vine like kiwi and pumpkin.
- Eat cucumbers raw in salad, or pickle them.
- Cucumbers are a good source of vitamin K.

For more information visit:
www.harvestofthemonth.com and
www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov

Physical Activity Brain Break

Teacher leads the children: Plant a little seed in the cold, cold ground (squat down, pretend to plant). Out comes the yellow sun, big and round (put arms above head like sun). Down come the raindrops soft and slow (dancing fingers). Up comes the flower, grow, grow, grow (jump as flowers emerge).

Recommended Books:

Cool as a Cucumber by Sally Smallwood. Introduces children to the texture, taste, and appearance of fruits and vegetables.

Cucumber Soup by Vickie Leigh Krudwing. A tale of bugs preparing cucumber soup.

Cooking with Children in the Classroom

Create a child-friendly cooking area

CHILDREN COOKING:

- They can use the colander to wash the produce
- Measure salt and sugar
- Mix ingredients
- Peel the oranges and cucumbers
- Squeeze limes (be careful for children's eyes)

COOKING UTENSILS:

- Select age-appropriate utensils. Use ordinary home or school cooking utensils.
- Use plastic cutting boards and serrated plastic knives with rounded ends
- Use plastic spoons, bowls, measuring spoons and cups

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT:

- Post different cucumber varieties
- Post a picture of the cafeteria menu with seasonal produce

SAFETY & SANITATION:

- Children wash their hands before and after cooking
- Children help clean the cooking and eating area

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Read NETA Cooking with Children Guide

Recipe:

Citrus Cucumber Salad

Makes 22 tastes at ¼ cup per taste

INGREDIENTS

- 5 cucumbers
- 5 oranges
- 2-3 limes
- 1¼ teaspoon of chili powder
- dash of salt and sugar

SUPPLIES

- Bowl, wooden mixing spoon
- Knives
- Measuring spoons or regular spoons
- Napkins and paper plates

PREPARATION

Wash the cucumbers, oranges, and limes under running water. Slice the cucumbers, peel and cut oranges into small pieces. Place cucumbers and oranges in a medium size bowl. Squeeze the limes and add the lime juice, salt and sugar. Sprinkle with chili powder before serving.

Nutrition information per serving:

Calories 22, Carbohydrate 5g, Dietary fiber ½g, Protein 12g, Total fat 4g, Saturated fat 0g, Trans Fat 0g, Cholesterol 0mg, Sodium 10mg

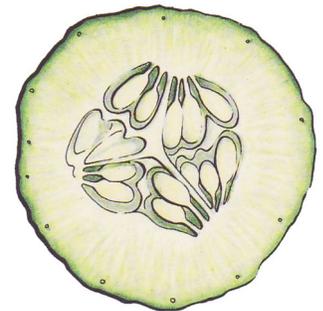
Adapted from

OCDE Network for a Healthy CA Pre-K Harvest Tools



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Cognitive Development: COG1, COG3, COG4
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