



HARVEST OF THE MONTH

August: Tomatoes

Nutrition News—

A super versatile summer crop, tomatoes are high in lycopene, an antioxidant with disease-fighting properties.

In addition to being enjoyed raw on a salad or sandwich, tomatoes can also be stewed, roasted, or added to soups and will retain their healthy nutrients.



Did you know?

Fruit or vegetable? While scientifically a fruit, the Supreme Court in 1893 ruled that tomatoes are a vegetable for taxation purposes.





TOMATO LIFE CYCLE

Standards of Learning:

Science: K.7, 1.4, 2.4, 4.2

Objectives:

Students will be able to—

- Investigate the changes that occur in a plant's life cycle
- Correctly order the steps in the life cycle of a tomato.

Materials:

- Red paper plates
- White paper plates (cut in half)
- Scissors
- Staplers
- Markers/crayons
- Tomato life cycle template
- Green yarn
- Tape



Background Knowledge:

Tomatoes are used as fresh produce and to make ketchup and sauces. Tomatoes can be grown in the field, in the greenhouse and hydroponically (without soil). Tomatoes can be set out after the last frost and will produce fruit in 65 to 75 days. Tomatoes come in many sizes, shapes and colors.

Virginia is the nation's third largest producer of fresh market tomatoes. Many of these are produced on the Eastern Shore and sent by truck to markets and grocery stores

Procedure:

1. Introduce the lesson by asking students to brainstorm items they like that are made with tomatoes. Review the steps in the life cycle of a tomato plant.
2. Pass out red plates and white half plates. Staple or tape the half plate to the back of the red plate.
3. Pass out the tomato life cycle template. Have students color and then cut out the stages. Sequence them in the correct order on their desks and write the correct ordinal number of the back of each – 1st through 5th.
4. Give each student about a yard of green yarn and have them tape the tomato stages to it in the correct order.
5. Tape the yarn to the back of the half plate so that the 1st step is the furthest from the plate and the 5th step is the closest.
6. Optional: Punch a hole at the top of the red plate and add a green pipe cleaner to form the tomato's vine.
7. Have students take turns with a partner using their chains to retell the story of the tomato's life cycle, pulling out the seed first and so on until they reach the mature tomato (the red plate).

