



HARVEST OF THE MONTH

December: Spinach

Nutrition News—

Spinach leaves are packed with nutrients such as folate, potassium, iron, fiber, vitamin A, vitamin C, and vitamin K.

In addition to giving your next salad a nutrition boost by adding spinach to your lettuce mix, you can also add spinach to your favorite smoothie for an icy green treat!



Did you know?

Spinach is a quick growing, cool season vegetable, making it a great choice for school gardens.





GRAPHING MY PLATE

Standards of Learning:

Health K.1, 1.2, 2.2

Objectives:

Students will be able to—

- Understand the basics of the My Plate food guide.
- Draw a bar graph and develop a conclusion regarding his/her family's diet.

Materials:

- My Plate poster(s), ChooseMyPlate.gov
- Food labels and empty food packages
- Graph paper
- Crayons or markers
- Construction paper or card stock
- Glue sticks
- Scissors



Background Knowledge:

The five dietary food groups of the My Plate guide are the building blocks of a healthy diet. Everything you eat and drink — the food and beverage choices we make day to day and over our lifetime — matters. By eating a variety of foods from each food group, we give our bodies what they need to be and stay healthy.

Procedure:

1. Have students collect food labels and empty food packages (set a minimum number to be collected) at home for a given period of time (week or two) and then have them bring labels and packages to school.
2. Divide students into groups of 3 or 4 to represent a “family.”
3. Give each group a set of labels in no particular order.
4. Have each group sort their labels into the 5 food groups using the main ingredient in each item. You may want to have a 6th “food group” for miscellaneous items such as soft drinks and “junk food.”
5. Using graph paper, have students create a bar graph, showing the foods eaten by their “family”. Each square will equal one label for each category. Color the squares to coordinate with the colors of My Plate. Orange = grains; green = vegetables; red = fruits; blue = dairy; purple = protein; black = miscellaneous.
6. Students will write a summary about the graph and the food consumed by their family group.
7. Have students cut their graphs apart in strips according to the food group and glue them onto a larger bar graph on the bulletin board.