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Making a Difference for California

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PRESCHOOL NUTRITION NEWS

CalFresh Healthy Living, University of California

PLAY WITH YOUR FOOD



Did you know toddlers who have the chance to inspect, draw, and play with different fruits and vegetables are more likely to taste those foods at mealtime?

One study demonstrated when young children were given unfamiliar fruits and vegetables such as sweet potatoes, rhubarb, and pomegranates for sensory activities, like drawing, smelling, and poking, every day for four weeks they were 32% more likely to taste the produce they had been exposed to in the activities.

Why is this study important?

The consumption of fruits and vegetables is associated with a lower risk of obesity as well as a decrease in likelihood of cardiovascular disease and some cancers. However, most children do not meet the recommended intake of fruits and vegetables each day. Starting healthy eating

habits at a young age can translate into healthy eating habits later in life, increasing their overall health and well-being.

Convincing toddlers and children to try new foods can be frustrating and messy for parents and educators alike. Familiarizing children with new foods through sensory activities such as letting them poke their finger inside of them, smelling them, and having them draw pictures of them may increase their willingness to take a taste at mealtime.



Winter 2020

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More Resources

Visit our website:
<http://ceplacer.ucanr.edu>

You can email a CalFresh Healthy Living, UC representative with any questions or information needs. Also, please feel free to share any tips or suggestions you might have with other teachers!

FOOD SCAVENGER HUNT

In this activity, preschoolers will hunt around the classroom for hidden fruits and vegetables. Perfect for a rainy day!

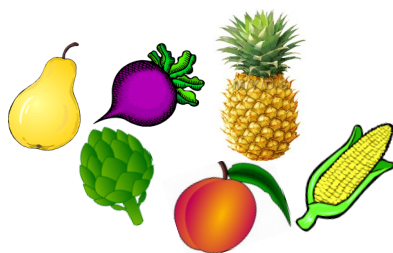
What you need:

- Whole fruits and vegetables
- A list of the fruits and vegetables with pictures to help preschoolers identify the hidden foods

Tip: Do the food scavenger hunt prior to the sensory food activity game using the same fruits and vegetables to further familiarize the preschoolers with each new food item.

What to do:

1. Hide fruits and vegetables around the classroom in reachable places for preschoolers.
2. Make some hiding places harder to discover than others.
3. Show the preschoolers pictures of each food hidden or a sample of the food.
4. Challenge them to search the classroom to find all the hidden fruits and vegetables.



FUN WITH FOOD

Sensory activities using unfamiliar fruits and vegetables can increase a toddler's consumption of those food groups at mealtime. Exploring new things using their senses is how they learn!

What you need:

- Fruits and Vegetables—use 4 unfamiliar foods (preferably ones that are in season)
- 4 plates
- Paper for each student
- Crayons

What to do:

1. Place each fruit or vegetable on a plate.
2. Let preschoolers pick up the foods to touch, poke, and smell.
3. Have each child draw the foods on their paper using crayons.

Follow-up Activity:

- ✓ Serve students these fruits and vegetables at snack or mealtime.
- ✓ Conduct a tasting of each fruit and vegetable. Make a chart to see how many students liked each one.
- ✓ Example chart:

Food	How Many Liked it
Potato	xxxxxx
Pomegranate	xxxxx
Kiwi	xxxxxxxxxx

SEASONAL WINTER PRODUCE

Need some winter fruit and vegetable ideas for the sensory activity games and scavenger hunt? You may be thinking the winter season lacks a large variety of fresh produce, but here's a short list of the many fruits and vegetables found in Placer and Nevada Counties December through February:

- Pomegranate
- Kumquat
- Broccoli
- Carrot
- Cauliflower
- Kiwi
- Potato
- Winter Squash
- Kale

Food Safety Tip

Wash and scrub the fruits and vegetables in cool water. After washing, make sure to dry the produce before using for any activities and before eating. This is the best method to clean produce and reduce the possibility of spreading bacteria.



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Happy Healthy Me...Moving, Munching & Reading Around MyPlate for 4- to 6-Year-Olds

Combines stories and literacy with nutrition education for Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten.

Parent Workshops

Fun, interactive parent workshops are available. Please call for more information.

Go Glow Grow

A preschool curriculum that teaches about healthy foods and what they do for the body.

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