



Beets and Carrots

This lesson plan works well with children 3-5 years old. Adaptations for younger children are also mentioned below. The lesson involves learning about carrots and beets through reading and singing, seed, color, and taste investigations, and a cooking activity. This plan was based off of ideas from the Harvest for Healthy Kids activity kits (available for free with registration at harvestforhealthykids.org). The "Rainbow Crunch Salad", a parent newsletter/recipe, teacher background information, and more can be found there.

Prep to do before class:

- Buy/assemble carrots and beets and Rainbow Crunch Salad ingredients:
 - If you don't have carrots or beets from your own garden, see if you can buy locally grown carrots or beets from your local Wisconsin farmer or farmers' market (see farmfreshatlas.org to find one)
 - If close enough, consider a walk or a field trip to a local garden or farmers' market to get the carrots and beets
 - If these are not possible options, local grocery stores and food co-ops often carry local produce in season as well, or ask your distributor
 - For this lesson, getting different colored beets and carrots, or ones that have different colors inside than outside are fun
- Gather cutting boards, knife, grater, wavy choppers, lemon juicer, measuring spoons and cups, bowls, and stirring spoons
- Get carrot and beet seeds to show (put them in baby food jars to make them easy to see and pass around)
- Pre-cook beets by boiling them in water until soft (for younger children for taste testing)
- Pre-shred some carrots and beets for younger children to mix into the Rainbow Crunch Salad (older children may be able to do some shredding themselves)
- Print "I tried it!" or "Ask me about carrots and beets" stickers. Print 'I Tried It' stickers using our free template and Avery 1.5" round labels #8293 (<http://bit.ly/ITriedItStickers>)
- Check out from the library or purchase the books ("Tops and Bottoms" by Janet Stevens, or "Up, Down, and Around" by Katherine Ayres for younger children)
- Make copies of the parent newsletter with recipe

Remember that just taking one idea or activity from this plan is a great start!

Large Group:

- Start by reading the book “Tops and Bottoms” by Janet Stevens, or “Up, Down, and Around” by Katherine Ayres for younger children
- Talk about what letters “carrots” and “beets” start with, name other foods/vegetables with those letters
- Talk about how carrots and beets grow – pass around the seeds
- Show different carrots and beets and their colors, have the children guess what they would look like inside, then cut them open for the children to see inside
- Finish with the beet sing-along or carrot finger play:

Beet Song (to the tune of “If you’re happy and you know it)

“If you’re hungry and you know it, eat a beet!
If you’re hungry and you know it, eat a beet!
Beets are red, orange and striped;
Open wide, and take a bite!
If you’re hungry and you know it, eat a beet!”

Carrot Finger Play

See the carrots in the ground (position hands and arms in a point to form a carrot, and point to the ground)
I pull them up without a sound (pull them out)
I wash and clean them up and down (scrub up and down with your palms of your hands)
I love to eat them all year round (Pretend to bring carrots to your mouth and eat!)

Smaller Groups – Activities:

- Beet stamping – making artwork with cut-off beet tops to stamp on paper
- Help make the salad – grating beets and carrots (older children), each child can help squeeze the lemons/oranges and add a scoop of grated beets or carrots.
- Sorting carrots in order of length and/or measuring them
- Taste tests of different colored carrots and cooked or raw beets – for younger children, taste tests of shredded carrots work well

Additional Notes:

- Any child that samples something can get an “I tried it!” sticker
- Send home the parent newsletter with the salad recipe on it
- Lemon juice can be used to remove beet stains from hands

Questions? Comments? Get in touch!

Contact our Farm to ECE team at wifarmtoece@rootedwi.org. Visit our website at rootedwi.org for more Farm to ECE resources.

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