

Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Taste Test Ideas

Many kids think they don't like fruits and vegetables, but often that's because they haven't been exposed to a variety of produce. Help students make better food choices by adding fruits and vegetables to their daily diets, offering as many different fruits and vegetables as you can. Whenever possible, feature fresh, local produce. Frozen and canned fruits and vegetables also offer nutritious options.

Tip: Serve raw fruits with low-fat yogurt dip flavored with fruit juice or fruit pieces. Serve veggies with low-fat yogurt dip flavored with herbs.

Fruit Options:

- strawberries
- blueberries
- raspberries
- blackberries
- grapes
- kiwi
- mango
- papaya
- citrus fruit
- cantaloupe
- honey dew melon
- pineapple
- cherries
- star fruit
- pear
- plum
- apricot
- peach
- nectarine
- cranberry
- watermelon

Vegetable Options:

- asparagus
- beets
- jicama
- bell peppers of all colors
- carrots
- grape tomatoes
- cucumbers
- broccoli
- cauliflower
- green onions
- okra
- celery
- fresh green beans
- snow peas
- avocado
- artichoke
- summer squash
- zucchini
- eggplant
- mushrooms
- radishes
- sweet potatoes
- sugar snap peas



Other fruits and vegetables to taste:

- baked potato bar with low-fat cheese and veggie toppings
- fruit smoothies made with low-fat or fat-free yogurt or milk
- tropical fruit salad
- spinach salad with whole grain croutons
- fruit and yogurt parfait with low-fat, low-sugar granola
- low-sugar cranberry sauce
- pineapple juice
- tomato juice

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Extending the Experience: Other Things You Can Do

Other fruit- and vegetable-related activities can be held as stand-alone events, can accompany taste test events or can be included as part of a school carnival or health fair.



Eating the Alphabet Taste Test:

In this multi-day promotion, students taste test fruits and vegetables and learn about all the varieties from A to Z. An ambitious version of this activity would run every day for a month and would cover a different letter of the alphabet each day. But you don't need to run the A to Z taste test for an entire month in order for students to learn and have fun. You might choose particular letters to highlight (perhaps the letters in your school's name or team). Or you might cover several letters in one day. Develop an evaluation form for students to record when they tried certain fruits and vegetables, if they liked them and if they would like the fruits and veggies to be added to the school lunch menu. A great accompaniment to this activity for kindergarten and primary grade students is Lois Ehlert's book *Eating the Alphabet: Fruits and Vegetables from A to Z*. Ask your school librarian to put the book on display during your A to Z taste tests.

Fruit and Education Bar:

Think about adding a Fruit and Education Bar to the cafeteria during the challenge — or include in a health fair. Make sure the design of the Fruit and Education Bar includes offerings from the Food Groups to Encourage — fruits, vegetables, whole grains and milk/milk products — with a special focus on enabling students to look at, learn about and (of course!) taste a variety of fabulous fresh fruits. Include information about the fruits featured in the Fruit and Education Bar. Make small education cards for each fruit, including the following information: the name of the fruit, where it is grown, how to eat it, what nutrients it contains, how to store it, where to buy it and how much it costs. Copy the education cards on brightly colored paper. Make enough cards so that each participant can take one for each fruit that's offered. You might also develop an evaluation form that students can use to rate the fruits they taste.

Adapted from: actionforhealthykids.org

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