

FRESH News

December 2012

In anticipation of 2013, let us reflect on the exciting and positive changes that have occurred in school meals. Hopefully you are finding that the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) is helping students transition more easily to the increased servings of fruits and vegetables required at breakfast and lunch. It is a busy month, full of hustle and bustle preparing for the holidays and closing out the calendar year. In December, introduce students to fruits and vegetables consumed around the world during winter holiday celebrations. During Kwanzaa, carrots, collard greens, bananas and jicama are just a few of the foods incorporated into traditional holiday recipes. For Hanukkah, pineapple, apricots, raspberries, brussel sprouts and potatoes are commonly served. For an Arizona grown treat, take advantage of the short growing season of tangerines! Algerian and Fairchild varieties are available through December. Tangerines are packed full of nutrients including anti-oxidants, vitamins A and C, and fiber. As a program reminder, the FFVP Self-Monitoring Form for each school is due by February 15th but can be submitted earlier using any month July to January. This form was included in your CD that you received at training and needs to be signed and emailed to FFVP@azed.gov.



Monthly Crunch

Canary Melon



How to Select

- Look for bright yellow rind without traces of green
- Canary melons should be firm
- The area around the stem should be slightly soft
- The rind should be ridged without fuzz

How to Store

- Ripen at room temperature
- Refrigerate ripe or cut melon for up to three days

Nutritional Benefits

- Excellent source of fiber
- Excellent source of vitamin A
- Excellent source of vitamin C
- Fat free
- Cholesterol free

Beets



How to Select

- Look for smooth, unwrinkled skin
- Choose beets that are heavy for their size
- Smaller beets will be sweeter
- Avoid very large beets due to being "woody" inside

How to Store

- Cut off tops and store unwashed roots in a sealed bag in the coldest area of the refrigerator
- Greens can be stored separately, but should be eaten within three days

Nutritional Benefits

- Good source of fiber
- Excellent source of folate and manganese
- Good source of potassium

A BITE OF THE SEASON

Canary Melon Smoothie

Ingredients

- 1 canary melon
- 3 - 4 bananas, peeled
- 4 tbsp dark flax seeds
- 12 ounces of ice

Yield

- 4 shakes

Preparation

- Cut melon in half and discard seeds
- Cut into strips and then cut off the rind
- Place melon flesh, flax seeds, bananas and ice into blender
- Blend at high speed until smooth



*Find this recipe and others at

<http://www.all-creatures.org/recipes/>

Beet and Apple Salad

Ingredients

- 2 apples, thinly sliced
- 4 celery stalks, thinly sliced
- 1 shallot, minced
- Juice from 1 lemon
- 1 tsp sugar
- 3 tbsp walnuts
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 1 head endive, sliced

Yield

- 2-3 servings

Preparation

- Toss apples, celery and shallot together in a bowl
- Mix in sugar, walnuts and olive oil.
- Let stand 10 minutes, then serve on sliced endive



*Find this recipe and others at

<http://www.foodnetwork.com>



In The Spotlight



This month we are recognizing Concho Elementary School located in eastern Arizona! This PK-8 school serves the FFVP snack in the classroom 2-3 times per week. Concho's Food Service Manager, Joe Clevenger, oversees the FFVP snacks and nutrition education. "Chef Joe" likes to do contests related to fruit and vegetable facts. Students are asked questions about the featured FFVP snack and the students research the information on their own. If they get the answer correct, the student earns a "Concho Buck" which can be spent in the school store. "Concho Bucks" are given out for a variety of reasons school-wide, but specifically for the FFVP for completing nutrition activities and participating in FFVP contests. The school store contains non-food items like bikes, toys, and video games. In addition to the school store, a greenhouse can be found on the school's campus and Joe plans to incorporate garden education into the FFVP. This school has tried a variety of fruits and vegetables including persimmons, donut peaches, pluots, figs, carnival cauliflower and cooked broccolini. It is clear that Chef Joe and his staff are popular with the students for providing healthy school meals and FFVP snacks. This is the school's second year participating in the FFVP.

**To nominate a school for the monthly "In the Spotlight" feature, please email FFVP@azed.gov with the name of the school, grades served, number of years on the FFVP, the primary FFVP contact for the school and the reasons why this school should be recognized for going above and beyond the FFVP requirements.*

Tasty Tidbits

December is...

Tropical Fruit Month



National Pear Month



December 1st is...

Eat a Red Apple Day!



Local Produce

Fruits: Canary Melons, Red Blush & White Grapefruit, Blood, Navel, Sweet & Temple Oranges, Lemons, Minneola & Orlando Tangelos, Algerian & Fairchild Tangerines

Vegetables: Beets, Bok Choy, Broccoli, Red, Napa & Green Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Beet, Collard & Mustard Greens, Kale, Kohlrabi, Leeks, Butter, Endive, Escarole, Iceberg, Leaf, Romaine and Spring Mix Lettuce, Green Onions, Radicchio, Radishes, Spinach, Swiss Chard, Tomatoes, Turnips

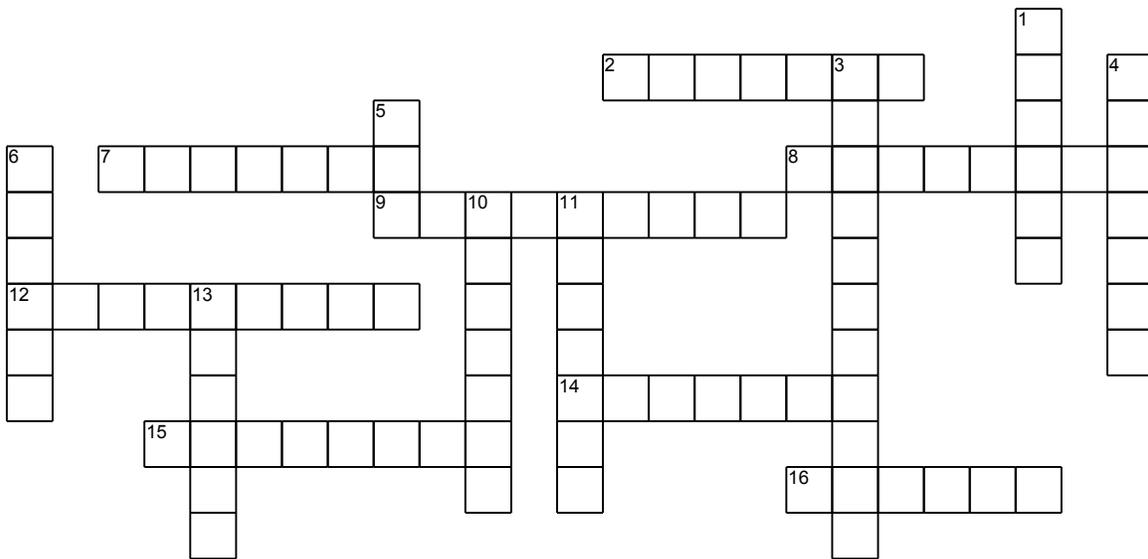
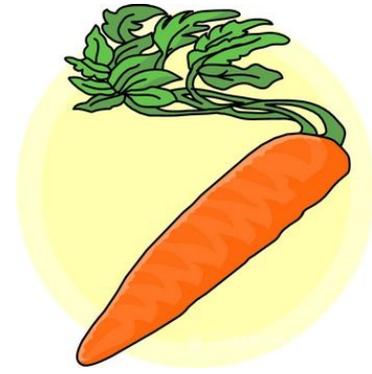


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Name: _____ Date: _____
 Class: _____ Teacher: _____

Vegetable Crossword

Complete the activity.



ACROSS

2. A green leafy vegetable usually used in salads.
7. A leafy green vegetable (some varieties have red/purple leaves).
8. The fastest growing of the summer fruits. Also known as the green Italian squash.
9. A member of the lily family, the earliest stalks are an apple-green with purple-tinged tips.
12. Mediterranean thistle-like plant widely cultivated for its large edible flower head.
14. A pear-shaped tropical fruit with green or blackish skin and rich yellowish pulp enclosing a single large seed.
15. Plant with dense clusters of tight green flower buds that look like miniature trees.
16. A vegetable with a light green stalk and leafy top.

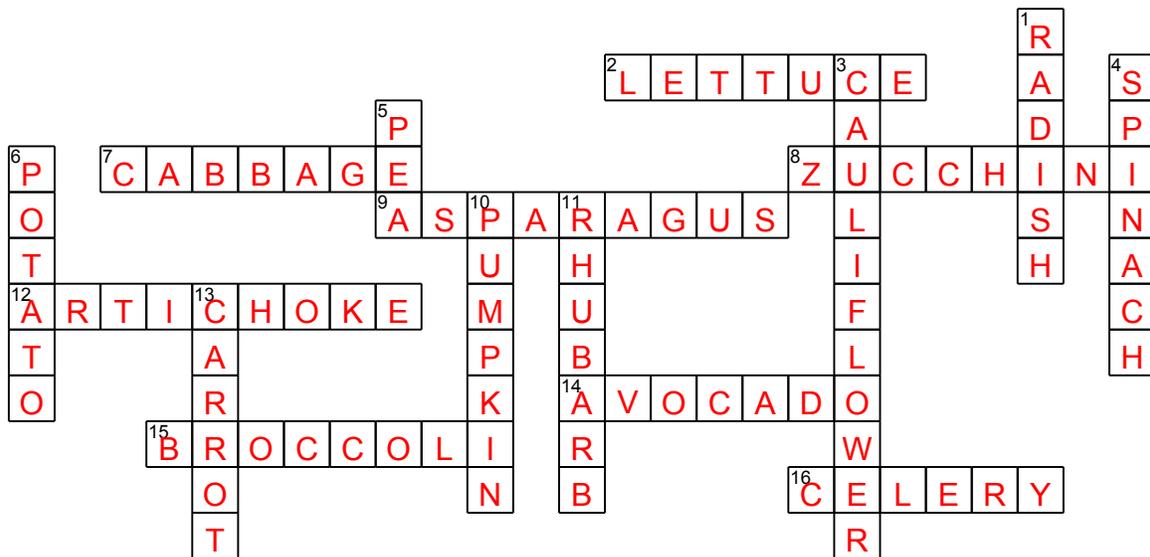
DOWN

1. A type of dark, root vegetable with a hot, sharp taste.
3. A plant having a large edible head of crowded white flower buds.
4. A leafy green vegetable that will make you strong like Popeye.
5. A plant with small white flowers and long green pods containing edible green seeds.
6. A very starchy root vegetable.
10. Usually large pulpy deep-yellow round fruit of the squash family maturing in late summer or early autumn.
11. Long pinkish sour leafstalks usually eaten cooked and sweetened.
13. An orange root vegetable.

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