SUGGESTED SCHEDULE
Week 1: Cool as a Cucumber
Week 2: Vegetables Count
Week 3: From Seed to Salad
Optional Activities
Cucumbers

Week 1: Cool as a Cucumber

LESSON

1) Show the class the Cucumber Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Photo Card (or fresh cucumber if available). Ask the class “Do you know what vegetable this is?” “It’s called Cucumber.” Ask them to describe it, for example: it’s long and green. (If using a fresh cucumber, ask the class if it feels hot or cold). Tell the class that this month’s Harvest of Month Vegetable is Cucumber.

2) Tell the class that a cucumber is a vegetable that grows on a vine, like a pumpkin or kiwi. It is a healthy vegetable. Cucumbers contain a lot of water in them. They hold so much water that the temperature of a cucumber is cooler than the outside air.

3) What do you, a tree, and a hamster have in common? You all need water. All living things must have water to survive, whether they get it from a water fountain, a rain cloud, or a little bottle attached to the side of a hamster cage.

4) Explain the importance of water. Without water, your body would stop working properly. Water makes up more than half of your body weight and a person needs it every day. Water makes up more than half of your body weight and a person can’t survive for more than a few days without it. Why? Your body has lots of important jobs and it needs water to do many of them. For instance, your blood, which contains a lot of water, carries oxygen to all the cells of your body.

5) Your body doesn’t get water only from drinking water. Any liquid you drink will contain water, but water and milk are the best choices. Lots of foods contain water too. Fruit and vegetables contain quite a bit of water. Can you think of some fruits or vegetables that you have tasted that were really juicy and sometimes drip down your chin when you bite into it? Some examples are apples, kiwis, grapefruit, oranges, tomatoes, and cucumbers.

6) Today we are going to plant some cucumber seeds and watch them grow. As a class fill the pots up with soil. Make 3 holes in the soil 3 times the size of the width of the seed. Place a seed in each hole and cover with soil.

7) Ask the class, “What does this cucumber seed need to grow into a cucumber plant?” Water! Add water to the pot, place on a plate and place in a sunny window. The plant should sprout in 7-10 days.

8) We watered the plants, now it’s time to water our bodies. Let’s drink some water!

Students will...
* recognize cucumbers as vegetables.
* learn that cucumbers are mostly water.
* understand that water is an important part of our diet.
* plant cucumber seeds and observe a cucumber plant sprout.

Modified from http://kidshealth.org/kid/stay_healthy/food/water.html

MATERIALS
Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Photo Cards
Cucumber Seeds
Soil
Small pot or any container with holes on the bottom (ie: yogurt cups)
* You can also make your own pots.
See “Newspaper Pots” activity on Page 9 of the Southern California Preschool Garden Primer.
Cucumber (optional)

LEARNING STANDARDS
Head Start Learning Domains
- Physical Development and Health
- Approaches to Learning
- Language Development
- Literacy Knowledge and Skills
- Science Knowledge and Skills
- Social Studies Knowledge and Skills

DRDP-R
- Language and Literacy Development, LLD1, LLD3, LLD4
- English Language Development, ELD1, ELD2.
- Cognitive Development, COG1, COG3
- Mathematical Development, MATH2
- Health, HLTH1, HLTH2

Students will...
* recognize cucumbers as vegetables.
* learn that cucumbers are mostly water.
* understand that water is an important part of our diet.
* plant cucumber seeds and observe a cucumber plant sprout.
Students will...
* identify and review a variety of vegetables.
* learn that to stay healthy they should eat at least 3 servings of vegetables a day.
* learn that a ½ cup is a serving.

LESSON
1) Read *Vegetables Count* to the class.
2) Turn to page 15. Have the students identify the fruit/vegetable on the page. Tomatoes! Ask for a show of hands who likes to eat tomatoes. Remind the class that they learned about tomatoes at the beginning of the school year and tasted them in class.
3) On page 15, review how one serving is ½ cup. Demonstrate with a measuring cup.
4) Turn to page 9. Review that we need at least 3 servings of vegetables a day to keep us healthy. Five servings is even better! Review the 5 vegetables on the page (1- tomatoes; 2- carrots; 3- string beans; 4- broccoli; 5- radishes). Ask students what vegetables they would like to put in the measuring cups and eat.
5) Turn to pages 10-11. Review the vegetables they have learned about this year. Ask them, “how many kinds of peppers do you see?” (Answer: 4) What colors do you see? “How many kinds of squashes do you see?” (Answer: 5) (#10, 22, 25 and 30 – peppers; #1, 11, 13, 16, 26 – squashes). Review the names of the squash varieties (see side table on page 11). Ask them to identify #19 (cucumber) and #20 (tomato) as well.
6) Use the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Photo cards as a supplement if the pictures in the book are too small for the class to see.
Cucumbers
Week 3: From Seed to Salad

MATERIALS
- Up, Down and Around by Katherine Ayres
- Food Experience Ingredients
- Observe-Predict-Check Chart

LEARNING STANDARDS
Head Start Learning Domains
- Physical Development and Health
- Language Development
- Literacy Knowledge and Skills
- Science Knowledge and Skills
- Social Studies Knowledge and Skills

DRDP-R
- Self and Social Development, SSD1, SSD12
- Language and Literacy Development, LLD1 through LLD7, LLD10
- English Language Development, ELD1, ELD2, ELD3, ELD4
- Cognitive Development, COG3, COG4
- Physical Development, PD3
- Health, HLTH2

LESSON
1) Read the book Up, Down and Around.
2) Stay on the page that says “let’s have lunch!” and ask the class- what are they eating? Some possible answers are tomatoes, corn, cucumber, sandwiches, soup, pie, salad, etc. Did they grow their lunch in a garden? Yes!
3) Today we are going to make a salad with cucumber grown at a nearby farm from the farmer’s market. A farm is like the garden in the book, except a farm is much bigger.
4) Show the class a fresh cucumber. Ask the class “What is the name of this vegetable?” That’s right, it’s a cucumber. Ask the class to describe the outside of the cucumber you are holding- what does it look like? What shape is it? Pass it around- what does it feel like? Record their observations on the “Observe-Predict-Check chart.” Next ask them to predict what the inside will look like and record their observations. During the taste test and after the cucumber is sliced, ask the class to describe the inside and record their observations.
5) Follow the directions for the taste test. Refer to the handout in your binder for Conducting An In-Class Taste Test and for more ideas on how to engage the class. Have students put a sticker on either the “I Like This” or “I Don’t Like This Yet” columns of the taste test sheet, or have them write or initial their name if they are able to do so.

Students will...
* understand that cucumbers grow in gardens and on farms.
* prepare and taste a cucumber salad.

Students will…
* understand that cucumbers grow in gardens and on farms.
* prepare and taste a cucumber salad.
Sunomono (Sweet Asian Cucumber Salad)

Serves 8 · Prep time: 20 minutes · Cook time: None

Ingredients:
- 2 medium cucumbers
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 1/4 cup toasted sesame seeds
- Rubber band (optional)
- 1/3 cup rice vinegar
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- Disposable wooden chopsticks in paper wrapper (optional)
- 2 cups Steamed rice

Directions:
1) Whisk together the rice vinegar, sugar and salt in a bowl large enough to hold the sliced cucumber.
2) Slice the cucumber into thin circles.
3) Add the sliced cucumber to the bowl and let marinate in the refrigerator (if there is not enough time to let it marinate, use refrigerated cucumbers)*
4) Remove the marinated cucumbers from the refrigerator and spoon into small bowls.
5) Sprinkle the salad with the toasted seeds.

*Optional: While the cucumbers are marinating, make the chopsticks.

Have each student unwrap the disposable chopsticks, taking care not to tear the paper wrapper too much.
Help students fold over the end of the wrapper about 1/4 inch, then fold the other way another 1/4 inch. Continue folding in an accordion pattern until the wrapper is completely folded.
Help students gently separate the chopsticks.
Place the folded wrapper between the two chopsticks about 2-3 inches down from the top (the thick end).
Holding the wrapper in place, carefully twist the rubber band around the chopsticks just above the wrapper until tight.
Show the class how to use the chopsticks by holding them below the wrapper and squeezing to pick up a piece of food.

Recipe from www.education.com

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**MATERIALS NEEDED**
- Knife
- Bowl

**CHEF’S NOTES**
- Shred or grate some cucumbers to add texture

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NUTRITION FACTS

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Vitamin A 2%  Vitamin C 4%  Calcium 2%  Iron 4%

Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

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A ✅ indicates that this food group qualifies for CACFP crediting. If two categories are checked off, then the recipe qualifies for CACFP reimbursement. The nutrition facts are provided to you for CACFP creditable recipes.
## CUCUMBERS

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<th>Check inside</th>
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Adapted from *Preschool Pathways to Science*. Gelman, Brenneman, MacDonald & Roman
WEEK 1 (optional)

**Cool as a Cucumber Stretch**

This exercise is meant to get your students moving. Studies have shown that Physical Activity breaks increase student concentration and attentiveness throughout the day.

**COOL AS A CUCUMBER**
1. Reach all the way to the sky
2. Take a deep breath
3. Reach down to toes
4. Repeat 10 times

Tutti Frutti Instant Recess [http://toniyancey.com/IRResources.html](http://toniyancey.com/IRResources.html)

WEEK 2 (optional)

**“Cool” Cucumber (like “Hot Potato”)**

Have the students sit in a circle
Play some music
Using a fresh cucumber or toy cucumber, pass the cucumber around in the circle
When the music stops, whoever is holding the cucumber has to say an important feature about the cucumber
“The cucumber has/is _________”

**Cabbage, Cabbage, Cucumber!**

Sit in a circle as a class or in small groups and play "Duck, Duck, Goose" but instead say "Cabbage, Cabbage, Cucumber!"

WEEK 3 (optional)

**Cucumber Discovery Lab**

After conducting the Taste Test (Food Experience), place a whole cucumber on the table for the students to examine.
Slice crosswise and lengthwise, observe and record internal structure.
If available offer different types of cucumbers to investigate: English cucumber, Persian baby cucumber, Armenian cucumbers, lemon cucumber.
Encourage students to use all their senses to investigate.
Make scientific tools available, such as measuring tapes/rulers, a scale, magnifying glasses, tweezers.
Make paper, pencils, and crayons available for students to draw their observations. Teachers can write down the students’ observations on each student’s paper or collectively on one large paper.

WEEK 3 (optional)

Re-read the book, *Up, Down and Around*

Ask the class to stand up before you read the book.
Each time when you say “Up,” have the students reach up. When you say “Down,” have the students bend down and when you say “Around,” have students spin in a circle.
Citrus Cucumber Salad

Serves 10 · Prep time: 15 minutes · Cook time: None

Ingredients:
- 5 cups cucumbers
- 1 ¼ teaspoons chili powder
- 5 cups oranges (tangerine)
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2-3 limes

Directions:
1) Wash the cucumbers, oranges and limes under cold running water.
2) Slice the cucumbers. Peel and cut the oranges into small pieces.
3) Place the cucumbers and oranges in a medium sized bowl.
4) Add the chili powder, lime and salt.
5) Mix and serve.

Nutrition Facts

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<td></td>
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Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

Materials Needed
- Knife
- Bowl
- Plates

Chef’s Notes
- Squeeze a citrus fruit to add a different flavor

Recipe adapted from OCDC Network for a Healthy CA, PreK Harvest Tools, April-August 2010

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Cucumber-Watermelon Agua Fresca

Serves 10 · Prep time: 10 minutes · Cook time: None

Nutrition Facts

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<td></td>
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|                | Iron 2%            | 2 % | Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

Directions:
1) Combine 2 ¼ cups chopped cucumbers, 2 cups of water, 1 cup of ice cubes, ½ cup of sugar, 1/3 cup of the lime juice and 1 pinch of salt in a blender.
2) Blend the mixture until the sugar dissolves and the mixture is smooth but slushy, about 2 minutes.
3) Transfer the mixture to a pitcher. Repeat the process with the remaining ingredients.
4) Fill small cups with the cucumber drink to serve.
5) Enjoy!

Recipe from www.epicurious.com

Ingredients:
- 1 cups cold water
- 3 cups ice cubes
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 5 cups Watermelon
- 2/3 cup fresh lime juice
- 1 tsp Salt
- 5 cups of coarsely peeled, seeded and chopped cucumbers (about 4 medium sized ones)

MATERIALS NEEDED
- Knife
- Blender
- Cups

CHEF’S NOTES
- Use a seedless variety of watermelon

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