

SASSY SWEET POTATOES



Classroom Activities

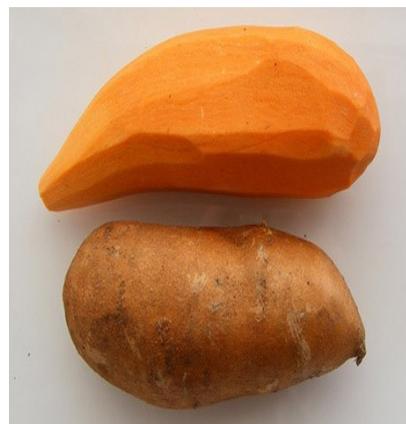
Taste Testing

Good nutrition & physical activity are vital to a growing mind and body. It is important to eat at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables every day for a healthy body. Fruits and vegetables are a fantastic source of vitamins and minerals and they help to protect you from getting sick.

Giving children the opportunity to taste test healthy foods exposes them to options they may not have known before.

What to do:

- Have children wash their hands.
- Pass around a whole cooked sweet potato.
- Have children smell and taste their piece.
- Discuss what they observed, smelled, tasted (is it hard or soft, smooth or bumpy, etc.).
- If they liked the potato, what about it did they like?



Sampling Sweet Potatoes

Sweet potatoes are a part of the morning glory flower family. They are a type of vine with white flowers, but the part that we actually eat is the root of the vine plant. Sweet potatoes grow to generally be around the size of a white potato and are available all year long, but are most

abundant in the fall and early winter.

Sweet Potatoes are **native** to Central and South America. North Carolina, Louisiana, California, Georgia and New Jersey are the major states for growing sweet potatoes. The

major suppliers of sweet potatoes include China, Indonesia, Vietnam and Uganda.

Sweet potatoes are often confused with yams, but yams are actually starchy roots grown in Africa and Asia. Yams can grow to be 100 pounds and are rarely available in American supermarkets.

Food Safety Tip

Remember, sweet potatoes should be scrubbed before use. Sweet potatoes do not have to be stored in a refrigerator, but they should be kept in a dark and dry place.

Children can help by:

- Washing and scrubbing potatoes well under cold water.
- Assisting with time-keeping to let an adult know when potatoes are fully cooked and ready to eat.

Did you know?

When you are eating a sweet potato, you are actually eating a root.

Sweet Potato Facts

- Sweet potatoes are one of the most nutritious vegetables you can eat as part of your 5 a day.
- Loaded with vitamin A which is good for your eyesight and keeping a healthy heart.
- High in vitamin C which protects your body against sickness.

Word of the Day

Native: a place where something was started.



This material was funded by USDA's SNAP and other HealthMPowers partners. SNAP provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help individuals buy nutritious foods for a healthy diet. For more information go to www.compass.ga.gov or call 1.800.georgia (1 800.436.7442). In the Atlanta area, call 678.georgia (678.436.7442). This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

SASSY SWEET POTATOES



For Older Children (GELDS)

Motor Skills:

Tell the children they are going to use the sweet potatoes to play a game called “Pass the Sweet Potato” Have the children sit in a circle. Give every fourth child a sweet potato. When the music starts they are to pass the potato to the person on their right. When the music stops the teacher gives special directions such as children with sweet potatoes must jump up and down or wave their hands in the air. Children without sweet potatoes must march in place or switch seats, etc. Continue the game with a variety of physical activities, such as pretend jump rope, jogging, jogging in place, or even dancing. **(PDM5.4a, PDM5.4b)**

Measurement and Comparison:

Observe a whole sweet potato. Draw a picture of an object from your classroom that is larger than the sweet potato. Draw a picture that is smaller than the sweet potato. Now draw a picture of an object from your classroom that is heavier than the sweet potato and one that is lighter. **(CD-MA3.4b)**

Living Creatures:

Stick three toothpicks in the sides of an old sweet potato. Set it in a glass of water with the toothpicks resting on the rim of the glass. The water should just cover the tip of the sweet potato. Put the glass in a place where the vine will get filtered sunlight. Pin up some strings so the plant can climb. In a few weeks, roots will form and leaves will sprout at the top. Discuss with the children why a plant is a living thing (because it grows when you give it sunlight and water) Have the students draw 3 pictures of living things (plants, worms, pets, etc) and three nonliving things (rocks, paper, pencil, etc) on a sheet of paper. **(CD-SCI.4a, CD-SC3.4a, CD-SC3.4b)**

For Younger Children (GELDS)

Motor Skills:

Tell the children they are going to use the sweet potatoes to play a game called “Pass the Sweet Potato” Have the children sit in a circle. Give every other child a sweet potato. When the music starts they are to pass the potato to the person on their right. When the music stops the teacher gives special directions such as the child with the sweet potatoes must jump up and down or wave their hands. Children without sweet potatoes must march in place. Continue the game with a variety of simple physical activities, such as marching, flapping arms, toe touches, wiggling, etc. **(PDM5.3a, PDM5.3b)**

Measurement and comparison:

Cut a sweet potato into different size straws. Give each child 4 to 5 pieces of potato straws. Set out the straws on a table and have the children count how many straws they have. Next have the children place the straws in order from longest to shortest or from shortest to tallest. **(CD-MAI.3b, CD-MA3.3b)**

Living Creatures:

Stick three toothpicks in the sides of an old sweet potato. Set it in a glass of water with the toothpicks resting on the rim of the glass. The water should just cover the tip of the sweet potato. Put the glass in a place where the vine will get filtered sunlight. Pin up some strings so the plant can climb. In a few weeks, roots will form and leaves will sprout at the top. Discuss with children why a plant is a living thing (because it grows when you give it sun and water. Its babies are the seeds). Have each child draw a picture of the growing plant. **(CD-SC3.3a, CD-SC3.3b)**



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