



Simply Good Eating
for English Language Learners
Fruits and Vegetables



FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Behavioral Goal: Participants will eat a minimum of 5 cups of a variety of fruits and vegetables every day.

Vocabulary List

canned
dried
fiber
fresh
frozen
seasonal
vitamin A
vitamin C

Teaching Vocabulary

- a. List the vocabulary words on the board or on an overhead transparency at the beginning of the lesson.
- b. Explain each vocabulary word when it is used in the lesson activities. Have participants say each word and read aloud the definition and the example. Repeat if necessary. Do *not* go through the vocabulary words all at once. You may want to check off the words one by one as you move through the lesson activities, or cover all the words and then uncover each one as you teach it.
- c. Pass out copies of the Vocabulary List at the *end* of the lesson.
- d. Encourage the ELL teacher to review the Vocabulary List later.

Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- Identify at least one health benefit of eating fruits and vegetables
- Identify at least two seasonal fruits and vegetables available in local stores or markets
- Identify “5” as the minimum number of cups of fruit and vegetables to be eaten daily
- Prepare one unfamiliar fruit or vegetable



Before You Start: Review the concepts from your last lesson.

Activity 1: What's in My Fruits and Vegetables?

Purpose: To have participants learn that fruits and vegetables are good sources of vitamin A, vitamin C, and fiber and that they should eat a minimum of 5 cups of fruits and vegetables daily

Needed from kit: Materials: Fruit and vegetable food cards that you have cut in half, *Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Photo Cards*, enlarged fruit or vegetable food label with vitamin A, vitamin C, and fiber highlighted

Props: Adhesive bandage, sunglasses, scrub brush, tape measure and 25-foot piece of rope or yarn

Estimated time: 20 minutes

Activity 2: Eating for the Season

Purpose: To enable participants to identify the seasonal cycles of produce and where to find locally grown fruits and vegetables

Needed from kit: Handouts: Seasonal lists of locally grown produce, copies of the *Minnesota Grown Directory* or other directories of local farmers' markets

Materials: A variety of fruits and vegetables (actual foods or food models), one or two grocery bags, food card of a vegetable or fruit grown in your area

Estimated time: 15 minutes

Activity 3: Fruit and Vegetable Identification

Purpose: To increase participant's familiarity with various fruits and vegetables

Needed from kit: Materials: *Yummy Fruit & Vegetable Game* or *Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Photo Cards*, prizes

Estimated time: 15 minutes

Activity 4: Cooking

Purpose: To give participants a chance to try alternatives to fresh produce (canned, dried, frozen) and to try unfamiliar fruits or vegetables

Needed from kit: *Simply Good Eating Recipe Cards*, the cans and packages in which the foods came

Suggested foods and recipes: A variety of fruits and vegetables (including fresh, canned, frozen and dried) for participants to taste, Cabbage and Hamburger Casserole, Pumpkin Bread

Fruits and Vegetables Kit Contents

Handouts

- Seasonal lists of locally grown produce (see Materials section)
- Copies of the *Minnesota Grown Directory* or other directories of local farmers' markets (see Materials section)
- "Fruits and Vegetables Vocabulary List" (distribute at end of lesson)
- "Fruits and Vegetables: Review and Writing Practice" (for ELL teacher)

Materials to Gather (see Materials section)

- Fruit and vegetable cards that you have cut in half
- *Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Photo Cards*
- Enlarged fruit or vegetable label with vitamin A, vitamin C, and fiber highlighted
- A variety of fruits and vegetables currently available in stores (actual foods or food models), including some that are in season locally and some that are from other places
- One or two grocery bags
- Food card of a vegetable or fruit grown in your area
- *Yummy Fruit & Vegetable Game* or *Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Photo Cards* (fruit and vegetable identification game)
- Prizes for fruit and vegetable identification game
- The cans and packages in which the Cooking activity foods came
- *Simply Good Eating Recipe Cards, Volumes 1 and 2*

Props to Gather

- Adhesive bandage
- Sunglasses
- Scrub brush
- Tape measure
- 25-foot piece of rope or yarn

One of the most important things we can do to maintain a healthy diet is consume adequate amounts of fruits and vegetables each day. Fruit and vegetable consumption has been linked to the prevention of certain cancers and heart disease as well as to the general maintenance of health. Many dietary recommendations focus on removing something from the diet, but the emphasis with fruits and vegetables is “more is better.” While fruits and vegetables contain a wide variety of nutrients and phytochemicals, the key nutrients associated with fruits and vegetables are vitamin A, vitamin C, and non-nutritive fiber. Vitamin A keeps skin healthy, promotes growth, increases the body’s resistance to infection, and helps eyes adjust to light. Vitamin C helps cuts to heal, holds cells together, may increase the body’s resistance to infections (like colds), promotes the development of strong bones and gums, and helps the body absorb iron. Fiber cleans the digestive system and prevents constipation.

Since so few Americans eat five or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day, the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* now recommends that most people double the amount of fruits and vegetables they currently eat. To be consistent with the new guidelines, the 5 A Day Program has modified its message to Fruits & Veggies—More Matters™. Yet, many people ask what a minimum number of servings should be. We suggest that you use the USDA MyPyramid recommendation of a minimum of 2 cups of fruit and 2½ cups of vegetables each day. Rounding this figure up from a total of 4½ cups to a total of 5 cups is consistent with past 5 A Day messages and is easier for participants to remember. We have found that many new immigrants already eat 5 cups of fruits and vegetables a day but may be limited in the variety they eat. Therefore, our goal is to have participants increase the variety of fruits and vegetables they eat to meet the 5 cup minimum.

Note: *Fruits & Veggies—More Matters™ provides examples of what counts as “1 cup,” since not all fruits and vegetable servings are the same. For example, 2 cups of leafy greens count as 1 cup of vegetables, and ½ cup of dried fruit counts as 1 cup of fruit. However, we have found that participants may become frustrated and confused if educators try to explain these differences. We recommend that you simply use “1 cup” as the measurement and emphasize variety. For more information, go to www.5aday.gov/what/index.html.*

Although many participants may come from warm climates, you should not assume that a variety of fruits and vegetables were a major part of their diets. Xerophthalmia, blindness due to vitamin A deficiency, is the leading cause of blindness in the world. It is particularly common in developing countries where fruits and vegetables rich in vitamin A are unavailable or unaffordable. Many participants may not be used to eating, or may not even recognize, some of the fruits and vegetables commonly sold in the United States. One purpose of this lesson is to familiarize new immigrants with the fruits and vegetables available to them. As they open cans, thaw frozen fruits and vegetables, and prepare new kinds of fresh produce, participants will be more open to trying different products.

In the **Variety** lesson, you introduced fruits and vegetables as protective foods, because they help fight and prevent illness. You will want to review these concepts in the first activity. It is also important to encourage participants to eat a variety of fruits and vegetables. This will increase their intake of the many nutrients provided by fruits and vegetables.

Activity 1

What's in My Fruits and Vegetables?

Needed from Kit

Materials:

- Fruit and vegetable cards that you have cut in half
- *Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Photo Cards*
- Enlarged fruit or vegetable label with vitamin A, vitamin C, and fiber highlighted

Props:

- Adhesive bandage
- Sunglasses
- Scrub brush
- Tape measure
- 25-foot piece of rope or yarn

Preparation

When selecting cards from the *Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Photo Cards* for the Participant Activity, choose some fruits and vegetables that are familiar to participants and some that are unfamiliar.

1. Introduction

- Pass out the cards of fruits and vegetables that you cut into two pieces. Ask participants to each find the other half of his/her picture. Then ask the pairs of participants to name their foods. As each food is named, ask the full group whether they eat it often. This will give you a clearer idea of participants' current eating habits.
- Show participants how fruits and vegetables are good for us:
 - *Vitamins A and C:* Use an adhesive bandage and sunglasses to demonstrate the protective nature of fruits and vegetables that contain vitamin A and vitamin C. When you show participants the adhesive bandage, explain that vitamins A and C help our bodies fight infections, and vitamin C helps cuts heal faster. When you show the sunglasses, tell participants that vitamin A helps us see at night.
 - *Fiber:* Use a scrub brush to demonstrate the benefit of fiber in the fruits and vegetables we eat. Tell participants that fiber cleans our intestines like a scrub brush cleans our sinks and floors. Use a tape measure and a 25-foot piece of rope or yarn to demonstrate the 25-foot length of an intestine. Explain the role of fiber in getting food through this long, flexible “pipe” in our bodies.

- c. Show the enlarged fruit or vegetable food label. Call participants' attention to the places they can find vitamin A, vitamin C, and fiber on the label. Write on the board, "Good source of vitamin A and vitamin C = 10% or more Daily Value" and "Good source of fiber = 2 grams or more." Ask participants to look again at the fruit or vegetable card they put together and to turn it over. Give them a chance to find the amounts of vitamin A, vitamin C, and fiber on the food card they have in front of them.

2. Participant Activity

- a. Pass out one uncut *Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Photo Card* to each participant, making sure the photo side is facing up. If possible, have participants sit across from each other, so they can exchange cards throughout the activity. Ask one participant to hold up a card and ask, "Does anyone know what this is? Did you grow or eat this in other countries?" Repeat for another food.

Next, show participants the bar graph on the reverse side of the cards you discussed. Ask, "Which of these foods are the best sources of vitamin A? Are you surprised?" Ask the same questions for vitamin C and fiber.

- b. After the discussion, pass out the remaining cards to the participants. Give participants several minutes to look for vitamin A, vitamin C, and fiber on the food cards they have been given. Answer questions that may come up.
- c. Share with participants, "Fruits and vegetables often do not have labels on them. As a general rule, the darker green, orange, and yellow fruits or vegetables are the best sources of vitamins A and C." Use a variety of lettuces as an example. Show participants photo cards of iceberg lettuce, romaine lettuce, and leaf lettuce. Ask participants to guess which has the most vitamin A. After they guess, turn the cards over and let them see the actual amounts. Explain, "Even though a fruit or vegetable doesn't have a lot of vitamin A or vitamin C, it still contains fiber and maybe other nutrients. We need to eat at least 5 cups of fruits and vegetables each day to get the fiber and vitamins we need. Eating a colorful variety of fruits and vegetables gives us a wider range of valuable nutrients."

3. Summary

Remind participants, "Fruits and vegetables are important for our health. We should eat a variety of fruits and vegetables every day and try to get at least 5 cups per day."

Activity 2 *Eating for the Season*

Needed from Kit

Handouts:

- Seasonal lists of locally grown produce (see Materials section)
- Copies of the *Minnesota Grown Directory* or other directories of local farmers' markets (see Materials section)

Materials:

- A variety of fruits and vegetables currently available in stores (actual foods or food models), including some that are in season locally and some that are from other places
- One or two grocery bags
- Food card of a vegetable or fruit grown in your area

1. Introduction

Show participants the grocery bag(s) that contain fruits and vegetables. Explain to participants that they should pass the bags around, but they should not look inside the bags. Ask them to put their hands inside each of the bags, touch the fruits or vegetables inside, describe what they are touching, and guess what they are.

2. Discussion

- a. Ask participants, “What season is this now? Did you have a variety of seasons in other countries? What were they?” Using a mango as an example (or another food familiar to participants), ask, “When were mangos in season in other countries? Was the price the same throughout the year? What did people eat when it wasn’t mango season?”
- b. Explain, “In large cities in the United States, we can usually buy any kind of fruit or vegetable at any time of year. Do things grow well in the winter here? [Response: No.] Fruits and vegetables that we eat in the winter or that do not grow here at all have to be brought from somewhere else. That can make the price high, and the food may not taste as good. Because Minnesota probably has different seasons and different weather than the countries you came from, it helps to know more about the fruits and vegetables grown here. Then you can eat more of them when they are in season.”
- c. Pass out the seasonal lists of locally grown produce and review the lists. Next, start a discussion about seasonal alternatives by showing a food card of a vegetable or fruit grown in your area, such as a cucumber. Ask, “What is the season for cucumbers? Is this the season when they taste best? Are they cheaper or more expensive when they are in season? What vegetable can you buy in the winter if you don’t want to buy cucumbers?” Answer questions participants may have about Minnesota produce or growing seasons.
- d. If you have them available, pass out directories of local farmers’ markets, such as the *Minnesota Grown Directory*. Many immigrants value fresh produce over processed foods and appreciate knowing about local farmers’ markets where they can buy affordable, high quality products. Review the locations of these markets and any other sources of less expensive fresh fruits and vegetables. You may also want to provide suggestions for using frozen, canned, or dried fruits and vegetables as alternatives during the winter months. (See “Activity 4: Cooking”.)

3. Summary

Tell participants, “When you know more about the foods around you and find good places to buy them, it is easier to eat more fruits and vegetables. Today we learned about Minnesota grown fruits and vegetables and local markets where you can buy them.”

Activity 3

Fruit and Vegetable Identification

Needed from Kit

Materials:

- *Yummy Fruit & Vegetable Game* or *Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Photo Cards*
- Prizes

Preparation

There are a variety of games you can play. Decide in advance whether you are going to play the *Yummy Fruit & Vegetable Game*, use the *Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Cards* to play a game (see Participant Activity below), or play some other identification game.

1. Participant Activity

- a. This activity gives participants an opportunity to practice their language skills and to become more familiar with fruits and vegetables. Begin by explaining the game you are going to play.
- b. Play the game. To use the *Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Photo Cards* as an identification game, display on a table 12 cards of less familiar fruits and vegetables. If participants have higher level English skills, ask them to take turns naming the fruit or vegetable on each card. If participants have lower level English skills, ask them to “Find a kiwi” or “Find a turnip,” for example, giving each participant a turn. Repeat the activity if there is time, so participants can practice the new vocabulary.
- c. If possible, bring simple prizes for each participant.

2. Summary

Tell participants, “Remember to eat a variety of fruits and vegetables each day and get at least 5 cups of fruits and vegetables each day. It can be easier than you think.”

Activity 4

Cooking

Needed from Kit

Materials:

- Samples of fresh, canned, frozen, and dried fruits and vegetables for participants to taste, and the cans and packages in which the foods came
- Suggested recipes from *Simply Good Eating Recipe Cards*: Cabbage and Hamburger Casserole, Pumpkin Bread

Preparation

Gather examples of fresh, frozen, dried, and canned fruits and vegetables for participants to taste. Bring the cans or packages to class. You may also prepare dishes that contain fruits and vegetables, such as Cabbage and Hamburger Casserole or Pumpkin Bread. If you want to show participants a wider variety of fresh, frozen, dried, and canned fruits and vegetables than you are able to bring for taste testing, supplement the actual foods with food cards.

1. Introduction

Tell participants, “Sometimes we don’t use foods that are available because we don’t know what they are or how to eat them. Today we are going to try a variety of fruits and vegetables; both fresh and not fresh. Be sure to ask any questions you might have.”

2. Taste Testing

- a. Have all participants (including yourself) wash their hands.
- b. Show examples of fresh, frozen, dried, and canned fruits and vegetables. Explain, “There are really a lot more fruits and vegetables available than we think. How many of you have tried these? Let’s taste some of them.” Encourage participants to taste a variety of canned, dried, and frozen fruits and vegetables that you have prepared. Be sure to place the actual food next to the can or package since some participants may not be familiar with the package and/or what is in it. If time allows, ask participants to help open and prepare the foods and/or prepare one of the suggested recipes.
- c. Once they have had a chance to sample the products, ask participants to report their findings. Ask, “Did you try anything new? Is there a food you would use now but did not use before? Do you have any questions about what we tried or other fruits and vegetables?”

3. Summary

Explain, “You may not know what some fruits and vegetables are. You may even have some products at home that you are not sure how to prepare. Ask other people for suggestions. By using foods that are canned, frozen, and dried in addition to eating fresh fruits and vegetables, we increase the number of fruits and vegetables we can use. In this way we can eat more and eat a greater variety. This makes it easier to eat at least 5 cups of fruits and vegetables each day.”

Suggestions for Follow-up and Review

1. Leave “Fruits and Vegetables: Review and Writing Practice” with the ELL teacher. Encourage the teacher to use it within the next few days.
2. Ask participants to bring in a favorite fruit or vegetable to share. Ask the other participants to try it.
3. Ask, “How many people ate at least 5 cups of fruits and vegetables every day last week? How many people ate 5 cups for more than four days of last week? Did anyone try a new fruit or vegetable?”

Dairy Council Food Cards and/or *Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Photo Cards* (Activities 1 and 2)

You will need photo food cards for three different purposes:

- For the introduction of Activity 1, you will need cards of fruits and vegetables that you have cut into two pieces. These might be from a set of *Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Photo Cards* or from a set of Dairy Council food cards.
- For the participant activity of Activity 1, you will need the *Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Photo Cards*.
- For the participant activity in Activity 2, you will need a food card of a fruit or vegetable grown in your area.

The photo food cards used in these activities may be ordered from the following organizations:

National Dairy Council. *Dairy Council Food Models: For General Audiences*. 0012N. Life-size cardboard photographs of 185 commonly eaten foods, in portion sizes. The backs of the cards contain nutrient information presented in label format. To order, contact the National Dairy Council at 1-800-426-8271 or browse the Nutrition Explorations: Materials Catalog Index at <http://www.nutritionexplorations.org/catalog/catindex.asp>

California Department of Education. *Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Photo Cards*. 001650. Set of 140 photo cards that include names in English and in Spanish on the front and nutrient analysis and other information on the reverse side. To order, contact the California Department of Education at 1-800-995-4099 or access their Educational Resources Catalog at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/rc/>

Enlarged Fruit or Vegetable Label (Activity 1)

Enlarge an actual Nutrition Facts food label, or use the sample orange juice label found in *Simply Good Eating for Health*.

University of Minnesota Extension. *Simply Good Eating for Health*. Item MI-08023. Revised 2006. Available from The Extension Store online at <http://shop.extension.umn.edu/> (and search for 08023), or call toll free at 1-800-876-8636.

Samples of Fruits and Vegetables (Activity 2)

Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables that are currently available in stores. Select some foods that are in season locally, if possible, and some foods that are from other places. Note that the fruits and vegetables used in Activity 2 are meant for touching **not** taste testing, so you may

use food models or actual foods. Put the fruits and vegetables in one or two grocery-style brown paper bags.

If you wish to use models of fruits and vegetables, we recommend the following:

NASCO. *Life/form® Food Replicas and Models*. To obtain a catalog with prices and ordering information, contact NASCO by phone at 1-800-558-9595, or order online at <http://www.enasco.com>

Seasonal Lists of Locally Grown Produce (Activity 2)

If possible, provide participants with lists showing when locally grown produce is in season. Contact your state department of agriculture for information. For example, there is a brief chart in the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's *Minnesota Grown Directory* (see below). Your local WIC office may also have pamphlets or fact sheets available. For Minnesota, you can use the handout "Shopping and Cooking for One or Two Handout 6: What to Buy When" from *Simply Good Eating for Seniors*:

University of Minnesota Extension. *Simply Good Eating for Seniors*. Item MI-08021. Revised 2006. Available from The Extension Store online at <http://shop.extension.umn.edu/> (and search for 08021), or call toll free at 1-800-876-8636.

Minnesota Grown Directory (Activity 2)

Minnesota Department of Agriculture. *Minnesota Grown Directory*. Downloads and information on ordering print copies are available at <http://www.minnesotagrown.com>

Fruit and Vegetable Identification Games (Activity 3)

If you decide to play the *Yummy Fruit & Vegetable Game*, it is available for purchase as described below, or you can use the *Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Photo Cards* to play a fruit and vegetable identification game (see Preparation for Activity 3 and the Participant Activity):

California Department of Education. *Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Photo Cards*. 001650. Set of 140 photo cards that include names in English and in Spanish on the front and nutrient analysis and other information on the reverse side. To order, contact the California Department of Education at 1-800-995-4099 or access their Educational Resources Catalog at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/rc/>

Yummy Designs. *Yummy Fruit & Vegetable Game*. Set includes 80 fruit and vegetable cards and instructions for games, including Bingo. To order, contact Yummy Designs at 1-888-749-8669 (1-888-74-YUMMY) or check online at <http://www.yummydesigns.com/games.htm>

We recommend having simple prizes available for participants, if possible. The Produce for Better Health Foundation is one source of items that make informative, fun, and topical prizes:

Produce for Better Health Foundation. *Catalog*. Promotional items make particularly good prizes and may be found online at <http://www.pbhcatalog.com/acatalog/Promotional.html>

Simply Good Eating Recipe Cards, Volumes 1 and 2 (Activity 4)

University of Minnesota Extension. *Simply Good Eating Recipe Cards, Volume 1*. Item MI-06641. Revised 2000. Available from The Extension Store online at <http://shop.extension.umn.edu/> (and search for 06641), or call toll free at 1-800-876-8636.

University of Minnesota Extension. *Simply Good Eating Recipe Cards, Volume 2*. Item MI-07391. Created 1999. Available from The Extension Store online at <http://shop.extension.umn.edu/> (and search for 07391), or call toll free at 1-800-876-8636.

Handouts

Handout 1: “Fruits and Vegetables Vocabulary List”

Handout 2: “Fruits and Vegetables: Review and Writing Practice” (for ELL teacher)

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES VOCABULARY LIST

canned – a special way to keep foods for a long time by putting them in a can or jar

Example: Andrew eats **canned** peaches with yogurt for an afternoon snack.

dried – a special way to keep foods for a long time by taking out the water

Example: Raisins are **dried** grapes.

fiber – a part of food that helps the digestive system; we get it from whole grains, fruits and vegetables

Example: Apples are good snacks because they have lots of **fiber**.

fresh – straight from the garden or farm, not frozen or canned

Example: I got **fresh** tomatoes today at the farmers' market.

frozen – a way to keep foods for a long time by putting them in a freezer

Example: I use **frozen** spinach in lasagna because it is quick and easy.

seasonal – during a season; fall, winter, spring, or summer

Example: Berries are a summer **seasonal** fruit in Minnesota.

vitamin A – a vitamin that helps us see at night, keeps skin healthy, and helps us grow; we get it from dark green, orange, and yellow vegetables

Example: Carrots are high in **vitamin A**.

vitamin C – a vitamin that helps our bodies heal cuts in the skin, develop strong bones, and absorb iron; we get it from fruits and vegetables such as oranges and tomatoes

Example: We eat fruits and vegetables with **vitamin C** every day.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES: REVIEW AND WRITING PRACTICE

For ELL teacher's use

Tell participants to write EVERY WORD in each sentence they hear. Read a sentence through completely. Then break it into smaller chunks, repeating as many times as needed. Finish by re-reading the full sentence.

If you wish to give students a printed copy to take home, cut copies of the handout on the next page along the dotted line.

1. Try to eat fruits and vegetables more often as snacks and at every meal.
2. We should eat at least 5 cups of fruits and vegetables every day.
3. To save money, buy fresh fruits and vegetables when they are in season.
4. You can usually eat as many fruits and vegetables as you want because “more is better.”
5. The fiber in fruits and vegetables keeps our digestive systems working well.

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