

HARVEST of the MONTH

Seasonal snacks from garden to classroom

April 2018 – Baby Kale

The CSG Educational Roots Framework (RootEd™) is grounded in our core values, and is intended to provide garden-based, experiential learning opportunities and leadership development that: cultivates gardening skills, promotes health, nurtures social & cultural development and enhances academic learning.

Trivia Question and Baby Kale Facts



QUESTION: This leafy green can be eaten when it is small as a baby or when it is large as a mature leaf. When it is small, it has a peppery flavor, similar to that of arugula. The leaf can be eaten raw in a salad, cooked into a stir-fry or baked into chips. **HINT:** This plant has been a Harvest of the Month before!



FACTS:

- For harvesting as part of a salad mix or baby green, kale is planted closely together and picked once it is 4" tall. After harvesting once or twice for the young greens, plants can be thinned and allowed to grow into mature, large kale leaves.
- Kale is part of the cabbage family and is grown for its edible leaves. A kale plant can have green or purple leaves similar to cabbage, but the two differ because kale does not form a head.
- One serving of kale contains more absorbable calcium than a serving of milk.

Garden Lessons and Activities



Dissecting Kale – Science 4.4a, Math 4.8bd

Lesson: During early summer or late fall, have students come out to the garden to pull out old kale plants. As they pull out each plant, students should try to keep them intact and should observe and dissect each one into the parts they can identify--roots, stem, and leaves (be sure not to confuse the stem with the leaf stalk). Have three baskets out, each labeled as roots, stem, or leaves, so students can place each part in the correct corresponding basket. Once the baskets are full, talk with students about the different characteristics they used to identify each part and what each part's purpose is in the life of the plant. Next, have students place a handful of kale leaves from the basket into a bag to weigh on the hanging scale. Explain that our goal is to have 75 grams of kale leaves in each bag (this is the average weight of 3 cups of kale, which is the recommended weekly intake of dark leafy greens). Students will have to decide whether to add or subtract leaves to get 75 grams. Finally, come back together as a group and distribute the bags of kale to the students that would like them. Close the day in the garden by asking what plant parts of the kale they did not see, and why?



Who's Eating the Kale? – Science 3.5

Lesson: Head out to the garden with students in the late spring, and begin by explaining that today we are going to be garden defenders, protecting our plants from other herbivores and omnivores that want to eat and enjoy our vegetables and fruits before we are able to. Task the students with identifying the many animals and insects that might want to eat our vegetables. Students will go out with a partner, a clipboard, and a magnifying glass to find and write down all the animals and insects, and signs of animals and insects (holes, browning, yellowing, eggs, etc), they find in the garden. Next, bring the students back together and have them brainstorm methods we can use to keep our plants safe from each animal and insect they identified and found (removal by hand for small insects, smelly flowers to confuse bugs, fences to keep out deer and groundhogs, scarecrows to keep away birds, row cover to protect from insects, etc). Finally, have the students work together to remove Harlequin bugs (orange and black, ladybug-like), slugs, and snails from our kale plants to defend them.



Storybook Suggestion: *City Green* by DyAnne DiSalvo-Ryan