

HARVEST *of the* MONTH

Seasonal snacks from garden to classroom

MARCH 2015 – Fresh Radishes

CSG uses our **Educational Roots (RootEd)** frame to design lessons for our gardens.

The four core areas of RootEd are intended to enhance academic learning and include: cultivating gardening skills, providing experiential learning opportunities, promoting health and fitness, and nurturing social & cultural development.

Trivia Question and Radish Facts



QUESTION: “This vegetable is one of the first to be planted at the start of the season. It is crunchy and spicy and you can eat it straight out of the garden. You may recognize it by its brightly colored root.”



FACTS:

- Radishes grow quickly, making the time between planting the seed and harvesting short.
- The more time radishes spend growing, the spicier they get. Their flavor comes from the same compound that is present in mustard, horseradish, and wasabi.
- Radishes grow into all different shapes and sizes (short and round or tall and narrow). Daikon radishes are often used to loosen compacted soil because of their long, slender, deep-reaching taproot.
- Radishes are mostly made of fiber and water, which help to cleanse and hydrate the body.

Garden Activities



Radical Roots:

- ① Have students go out and dig up several different kinds of roots to compare what they see. Consider digging up the taproot of a dandelion, the fibrous roots of clover, and the wiry roots of mint. Discuss the functions of roots (nutrient and water uptake, plant propagation, erosion control).
- ② Hand out a small, nonedible gift to each student. Give them 60 seconds to find a place in the garden to store their gift to keep it safe. Ask them how they decided where to store their gift (on the ground, underground, behind a structure). Explain that plants think about the same things when deciding where to store nutrients and they often use their roots in the ground because of the protection it offers for their nutrients.



Soil Stories:

- ③ Have students dig holes in the garden to think about the structure of soil and to imagine how roots grow and move underground. Have students try digging with different types of tools (drinking straw, plastic spoon, metal trowel, etc.) and observe what works in different places. Discuss how plant roots dig through soil to gather nutrients and water, and that they adapt in different ways based on the soil where they grow. Discuss how gardeners can build healthy soil for roots to grow more easily.
- ④ Starting at the top of a hill, have students act like water droplets by taking one step in the direction water would travel from where they are standing each time you say “drip, drop”. Continue to say “drip, drop” as students move downhill. Every time a student hits bare ground, have them pick up a piece of brown paper representing soil, and carry it with them. At the end of the activity, look at all the soil they carried and discuss the importance of plants and their roots in minimizing erosion.



Plant Families:

- ⑤ Plant radishes in the garden. Prepare the soil and discuss the requirements of radishes and other root crops. Explain that they will grow and can be harvested just one month later.
- ⑥ Plant one garden bed full of different plants from the brassica family (radishes, broccoli, turnips, collards, etc). Explain the similarities and differences amongst these plants (ex: the leaves of each are edible) and have them observe the differences in form that become apparent as they grow. Have students taste parts from each plant to notice similarities.