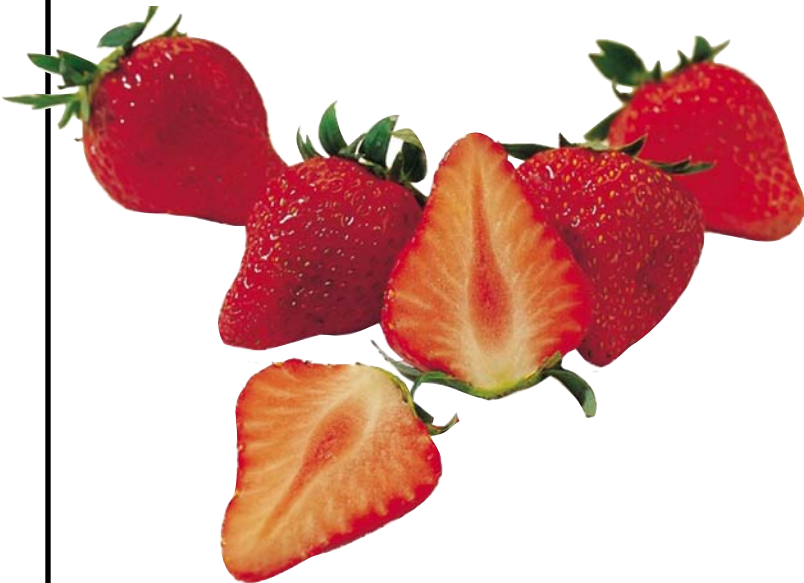




A Garden-Based Learning Program for Preschoolers

STRAWBERRY



Strawberries are members of the **raw fruit team**. The raw fruit team is made up of fruits and vegetables that can be eaten without cooking. These berries may be small, but they are packed with vitamins and minerals. Strawberries are an excellent source of vitamin C. Vitamin C helps with wound healing and promotes healthy gums and teeth. Other vitamins and minerals that are in strawberries are folic acid, fiber and potassium.

MyPyramid suggests that adults eat 2 cups of fruit a day. Children ages 3 to 5 years should eat 1 to 1 ½ cups of fruit a day. Try enjoying strawberries as a snack or in cereal for a sweet breakfast treat. Mix strawberries with other fruits to make a fruit salad. Strawberries can also be a part of salads, smoothies, breads and muffins. The peak of strawberry season is late March to the end of May. However, fresh strawberries are available throughout the summer. Strawberries are also available frozen all year. When purchasing frozen strawberries, choose those frozen without added sugar or with only a small amount of added sugar.

MEALTIME IDEAS

Strawberry-Banana Smoothie (3 servings)

- 2 cups strawberries
 - 2 small bananas
 - 1 cup low-fat milk
 - 1 cup plain nonfat yogurt
- Blender



Directions

Peel and slice bananas. Wash and cut off tops of the strawberries. Put into blender with the milk and yogurt. Blend and serve. Kids love making this healthy treat.

Calories 180; Total fat 2g; Saturated fat 1g; Cholesterol 10mg; Sodium 110mg; Total Carbohydrates 33g; Dietary fiber 4g; Sugar 24g; Protein 9g

Strawberry Pie (8 servings)

- 1 cup graham cracker crumbs
- 4 teaspoons lite margarine
- 1 large box sugar-free strawberry gelatin
- 4 cups fresh strawberries, sliced
- 1 large box sugar-free instant vanilla pudding, made with skim milk
- 1 cup lite whipped cream topping
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 tablespoons coconut, toasted



Directions

Preheat oven to 350 °F. In a large bowl, mix margarine, sugar, and graham cracker crumbs. Press mixture into bottom of a 9 x 13" baking pan and bake for 10 minutes. Allow to cool. Mix gelatin according to package directions. Add strawberries. Mix together. Pour gelatin mixture into crust. Allow to set in refrigerator for 1 hour. Prepare pudding according to package directions. Spread on top of gelatin and top with lite whipped cream topping. Sprinkle with coconut. Refrigerate for an additional 1 to 2 hours before serving.

Calorie 200; Total fat 4.5g; Saturated fat 2g; Cholesterol 0mg; Sodium 210mg; Total Carbohydrates 38g; Dietary fiber 2g; Sugar 14g; Protein 3g

FOOD SAFETY TIP

Remember to wash strawberries thoroughly before use. Strawberries should always be stored in the refrigerator loosely covered.

IN THE GARDEN

Thinking about growing strawberries? Use the following tips to help you grow strawberries for your family:



- Plant in cool weather, two weeks before the last predicted frost, in early spring.
- Plant seeds about 6 inches apart.
- Harvest around June or when fruit is bright red.
- Keep moist, but avoid overwatering.

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I CAN HELP BY

- Washing fruit.
- Cutting fruit with a dull knife (with your assistance).
- Assisting with measuring ingredients.
- Sprinkling strawberry pie with coconut.
- Helping with clean-up after meal.

BUDGET TIP FOR BUYING MORE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Frozen fruits and vegetables store well in the freezer until you are ready to add them to a meal.



LET'S GET MOVING

Try this fun game with your preschoolers:

CAN YOU CATCH?

Materials: soft ball

Take a soft ball and throw it to your preschooler. When the preschooler starts catching the ball frequently, you and the preschooler each take a step back. See if the preschooler will be able to catch the ball at a longer distance. This game can also be played with a group by having everyone form a circle. Have someone in the group become the caller. The caller will determine if the ball will be passed to the person to the right or left and if it will be passed fast, slow, high or low.



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