

# Staff Pages

This Week's Topic: *Growing Goodness*

This Week's Lesson: *Growing  
a Seedling in a Bag*

Today in your classroom children learned how fruits and vegetables grow and that eating fruits and vegetables helps their bodies grow.

- On the back of this page is your lesson plan for this week's lesson "Growing a Seedling in a Bag." Use this lesson to reinforce the concepts from the Eat Well Play Hard in Child Care Settings (EWPHCSS) lesson provided to your class this week.
- Find more garden themed education resources in [Grow It! Try It! Like It! Preschool Fun with Fruits and Vegetables](#) from USDA's Team Nutrition resource library at <http://teamnnutrition.usda.gov/library.html>.
- Attached is a parent letter that explains what the children learned from this lesson and includes a fun activity to complete at home. Please make copies and send home following your lesson.

## 5 Ways to Grow Goodness in Your Classroom



1. **Take your class on a field trip** to a local community garden or farmer's market. Purchase items for them to try at snack (i.e. sugar snap peas, cherry tomatoes).
2. **Take your class to a "pick your own" farm stand** to pick apples or pumpkins.
3. **Invite a farmer to visit your class** and talk about how fresh fruits and vegetables get from farm to table.
4. Children like to try a vegetable they have helped grow and harvest. **Plan an outdoor garden.** Have the children check the progress of the garden during daily walks. Include produce from the garden in meals and snacks.
5. **Start indoor container gardens.** Children can start the plants for the outdoor garden indoors during the early spring.



For more EWPHCSS lessons go to: [http://www.nyhealth.gov/prevention/nutrition/cacfp/ewphccs\\_curriculum/index.htm](http://www.nyhealth.gov/prevention/nutrition/cacfp/ewphccs_curriculum/index.htm)

## This Week's Lesson: Growing a Seedling in a Bag

**Goals & Objectives:** To provide children with an opportunity to see a seed grow.

**Prep Time:** **Day 1 & 2:** 5 minutes for the seed activity **Day 3:** 15 minutes for the food tasting

**Activity Time:** **Day 1:** 20 minutes **Day 2:** 5 minutes **Day 3:** 30 minutes

### Supplies You Will Need

- **Day 1 for Growing a Seedling:** Plastic bag with a zipper style closure, 1-2 sheets of an absorbent paper towel, stapler, masking or strapping tape, dry lima bean or kidney bean seeds (soaked in water overnight)
- **Day 3 for Food Tasting:** Corn tortillas, canned vegetarian refried beans, napkins, serving plate, child-sized tongs, small plates.

### Preparation for Activity

- Read through the entire lesson.

#### Day 1—How to Grow a Seedling in a Bag:

- Soak the lima beans overnight in water to hydrate the beans and speed up the sprouting process.
- Wet the paper towel and place in the plastic bag. Place a row of staples through the bag across the center of the paper towel. (The staples hold the seeds in place, allowing the roots to grow down and sprouts to grow up.)
- Place the soaked beans on top of the row of staples and seal the bag.

**Day 3—Prepare Snack:** Spread 1 corn tortilla with  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup bean spread. Cut tortillas in quarters.

### Activity

#### Day 1

1. **Ask the children what they remember from the nutritionist's visit.** Remind them of the following points:
  - Plants grow from seeds.
  - Farmers plant seeds and grow many of the fruits and vegetables we eat.
  - Eating a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables helps children's bodies grow and be healthy.
2. **Show children the bean seeds you prepared in the plastic bag.** Explain that the water and sunlight are needed for the seeds to begin to grow.
3. **Tape the bag with the seed side facing the room to a sunny southern or western exposure window.**
4. **Have the children check the bean seeds daily.** A sprout should break the seed coat within 3 days.

**Day 3:** Start with a joke: Ask them what kind of bean won't grow in a garden? The answer is jelly beans!

1. **Remove a few of the bean seeds from the plastic bag.** Use a toothpick to gently break the bean apart into 2 halves. Examine each seed half carefully for a little baby plant. Pass around the seed halves with the baby plants for the children to see.
2. **Ask the children to wash their hands.** 
3. **Explain that the bean spread in their snack is made from beans.**
4. **Provide each child with a napkin, small plate, and spoon.**
5. **Pass around the serving plate with the quartered bean tortillas.** Allow children to serve themselves, using small tongs.
6. **Encourage children to look at, touch, smell, and then taste the food** (if they choose to do so). Ask the children: What does it taste like? Did you like it?

Adapted from [Grow It Try It Like It! Preschool Fun with Fruits and Vegetables](#)

### Extension Activity

- Allow children to spread bean spread on the tortillas.
- Plant the unsoaked beans in a pot. Have children continue to observe as the seeds grow into plants.

### Options

For a CACFP creditable snack, spread 3 tablespoons of refried beans on  $\frac{1}{2}$  corn tortilla. Water must be served with snack if no beverage is provided.

## Dear Parent,

Your child is learning how vegetables and fruits grow. Make half your plate fruits and vegetables. Vegetables and fruits are full of nutrients and may help to promote good health.

**Home Activity:** Purchase fresh green beans or peas. Help your child open one and count the seeds. Let your child taste the washed vegetable raw and cooked. Which do they like best?



### Tips

- Try to make half your plate fruits and vegetables.
  - Your children learn from watching you. Eat fruits and vegetables and your children will too.
  - Offer only one new food at a time. Children don't always take to new foods right away. Keep trying!
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## Try these tips to teach your child about fruits and vegetables:

-  Explore fruits and vegetables with your child. Talk about the many colors, shapes, and feels of the fruit and vegetables.
-  Cook together. Let your child help prepare fruits and vegetables. Give them small jobs to do such as tear lettuce leaves, snap green beans, break cauliflower or broccoli, and mash bananas.
-  Children enjoy eating foods they help grow and harvest. Plant and tend a garden with your child.



Directions: Take your child to a local farmer's market or the produce section of a nearby store. Help them choose a fruit or vegetable they would like to try.

The fruit or vegetable my child chose to try is \_\_\_\_\_.