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is for Spinach

- Spinach is a dark green leafy vegetable and may be flat or curly.
- Spinach became popular when Popeye ate it.
- Spinach is an excellent source of vitamins A and K.



Photos: Network for a Healthy California

For more information, visit:

www.harvestofthemonth.com
www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov



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Spinach Seasonal Salad

Makes 25 tastes at ¼ cup each.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 cups fresh spinach
- 2 cups diced apples or pears
- ½ cup dried cranberries
- orange dressing:
 - 2 large oranges, juiced (two oranges yield about 1 cup juice)
 - 1 teaspoon sweet mustard
 - 2 tablespoon apple vinegar

SUPPLIES:

- 1 large plastic salad bowl, 1 small bowl
- 1 and ½ cup measures, 1 teaspoon, 1 tablespoon
- Whisk, juicer, colander, paper towels
- Paper plates and plastic forks
- Cutting board, paring knife (for teacher)

PREPARATION:

1. Ask children to help wash spinach, apples (or pears) and dry with paper towels
2. Have the children remove the spinach leaves from the stems, tear the leaves into pieces, and place in the large bowl.
3. Chop apple (or pears) into small pieces. Add to the bowl of spinach. Add cranberries.
4. Whisk together the dressing ingredients in the small bowl. Pour over the salad. Mix together with forks. Serve.

Nutrition information per serving:

Calories 19, Carbohydrate 6 g, Protein 0 g, Total Fat 0 g, Saturated Fat 0 g, Cholesterol 0 mg, Sodium 6 mg, Dietary Fiber 0 g

Source:

NETA, University of California Cooperative Extension - Alameda County.

Cooking in the Preschool Classroom

provides many benefits to children

- Children can help measure ingredients.
- Children can help squeeze the oranges with their hands or use juicer.
- Let children tear the spinach into small pieces.
- Children can help mix dressing and salad together.

Food Safety and Sanitation

- Wash spinach well.
- Wash hands well before preparing and tasting the salad.

Create a Child-Friendly Environment

Be aware that children may have some food restrictions, due to cultural, religious, allergies, or other factors

Activity:

Spinach Helps You Grow Up!



Children will learn the importance of eating spinach while learning about team work and coordination. They will also learn the magic of cooking.

MATERIALS

- Picture of several leafy green vegetables: Romaine, salad savoy, spinach, Swiss chard, greens, and watercress.
- Plastic cups
- Microwave safe bowl
- Microwave

WHAT TO DO NEXT?

1. **Before children arrive:** Have a bowl of different leafy vegetables. It's best to have a microwave available, but if not boil some spinach ahead of time and have it for display.
2. **Circle Time:** Explain to the children the importance of eating spinach. Some cartoon heroes like Popeye promote eating spinach to be strong to fight enemies. Do you think the cartoon heroes are right?
3. **Compare and contrast:** Use fresh produce or a poster for the vegetables. Teacher will compare and contrast leafy greens in the poster or display. If the answer is "the same", children will bow. If the answer is no, they'll move their head right to left. If they "do not know," they'll shrug their shoulders.
4. **Show and Tell:** Ask children to pull off the leaves of the spinach. Press as many as you can inside a small bowl (be sure to wash the leaves before using them). Tell them that magically, the small bowl of spinach will reduce to only a cup. Place spinach with a small amount of water in small plastic microwave safe container. Microwave less than one minute. Show children the result. Ask children what happens to the leaves.
5. **Explain:** One cup of spinach will cook down into only $\frac{1}{2}$ cup. There are many other green leaves that do the same.
6. **Cooking:** Ask them to wash their hands and help prepare recipe from the front page.

Ready, go:

Spinach and Swiss chard are the same.

(Answer: No)

Watercress and turnip greens are the same.

(Answer: No)

Romaine and iceberg are the same. Answer:

Yes (because they are in same family "lettuce")

Kale and Swiss chard are the same. (Answer: No)



Connections to California Department of Education

Child Desired Results: 3 Years to Pre-K

Activity: CDR 1: Self-Regulation 9, 10, 11; Language 12, 13, 14, 15; Learning 16, 17; Cognitive 18; CDR 3:

Cooking in the Classroom: CDR 1: Self-Regulation 9, 10, 11; CDR 3: Motor Skills 35, 36; CDR 4: Safety and Health 39

For important nutrition information, visit www.oachampionsforchange.net. For food stamp information, call 877-847-3663. Funded by the USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, an equal opportunity provider and employer.