

FOCUS ON FRUITS



Begin each nutrition education lesson with a short physical activity break from the card set provided by IDPH. Have fun and get active with your students!

Objectives

Learn the special characteristics of cranberries and pears.

Learn that cranberries and pears are colorful and easy to eat as snacks.

Learn that sugar is provided naturally in fruits.

Supplies Needed

November

Pick a **better snack™** & **Act** bingo card

Orange

Knife

Orange Food Coloring

2 Glasses

Sugar

Tasting Opportunities

Featured Fruits:

Cranberries

Pears

Background

Cranberries: Cranberry plants have drooping, pink flowers, and small, sour, seedy fruit. The small, or European, cranberry grows wild in marshlands of temperate and colder regions of Europe and North America. The large, or American, cranberry is cultivated in the northeastern United States in sand-covered bogs that can be flooded or drained at will. Flooding protects the vines from frosts and freezing weather and destroys insect pests. Most of the cranberry crop produced in the United States each year is canned as sauce or jelly or bottled as juice.

Why do cranberries remain tart, even after they ripen, unlike other fruits? The difference is that as most fruit ripens in the wild, it relies on animals to disperse the seeds. The fruit has to tempt animals – and to taste good, it has to be sweet. Cranberries, however, don't need animals to spread their seeds. They grow naturally along the banks of streams, where ripe berries can simply plop into the water and float off to a new location.

Pears: Pears are a pome fruit relative of the apple. Pears rank second to the apple as the most popular fruit grown in the United States. They can be eaten and used in a lot of the same ways as the apple. One distinct feature of the pear besides the shape is the soft texture. This soft texture is the result of the starch converting to sugar after being picked from a tree to ripen. There are more than 3,000 known varieties of pears in the world. U.S. production comes from states in the Northwest, plus New York, Pennsylvania, Michigan, and California. Imports come from South America, Canada, New Zealand, and South Africa. Varieties of pears include Anjou, Bartlett, Bose, Comice, Forelle, and Seckel. Pears have a sweet, rich flavor and come in a variety of colors including green, golden yellow and red. Among varieties there are only subtle differences in flavor and texture.

Web Site Resources

www.idph.state.ia.us/pickabettersnack
www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org
www.choosemyplate.gov

**Do the Activity:
Orange Squeeze**

Demonstrate making 100% orange juice by squeezing an orange into a glass. In another glass, mix water, sugar and orange food coloring making an orange drink. Compare eating an orange (juice plus section membranes), drinking the squeezed juice, and drinking soda pop or fruit flavored drinks.

Strain the juice to show students what pulp is. Note that sugar does not need to be added to orange juice to make it sweet.

A small amount of orange juice and orange drink could be placed in two small paper cups for each child to compare the tastes.

If children drink 100% juice, it counts on their bingo card.

Talk It Over:

Ask the students which they like best: orange sections, orange juice or orange drink.

Not all fruits are naturally sweet. Have the students tasted a raw cranberry? They are very tart. What about a dried cranberry? They may taste sweet, but that is because sugar has been added. A plain cranberry may be too tart for most people.

Pears come in many colors: green, yellow and red. Pears may be hard when you buy them in the store, but they will get softer and sweeter as they ripen. Then you can eat them. They may change color as they ripen.

Fruit is good for your body. Think about eating fruit for snacks every day.

Apply:

Pick a **better** snack™ reminds you that it is easy to eat fruits as snacks.



Tasting Opportunity

Cut up a pear for the students to sample. Sample a fresh cranberry and compare to a dried cranberry. Note the dramatic differences between the two tastes. They can then put an "X" through the bingo square of the fruit that they sampled.

How would you get a pear ready to eat as a snack?
Pear – **Wash. Eat. (How easy is that?)**

How would you get dried cranberries or cranberry juice blends ready for a snack?
Cranberries – **Open. Eat. (How easy is that?)**
Juice – **Pour. Drink. (How easy is that?)**

On the back of the Pick a **better** snack™ & **Act** bingo card for each month, there is information for their parents and grandparents. Send the bingo card home and ask students to encourage their family to pick out a snack idea to try at home.

Extend the Activity



Art, Music & PE

Place construction paper, scissors, and glue or glue sticks in a learning center. Encourage the students to make their own funny face out of fruits and vegetables that they create such as on the activity sheet. Felt cutouts of different fruits and vegetables could be used with a flannel board.



Language Arts & Reading

Ask "When does your family eat cranberries? Does your family drink cranberry juice? Does your family eat pears? Do they like fresh pears or canned pears?"

Write a story about cranberries (class activity).



Math

In small groups, have children count how many physical activities are on the bingo card this month. Which fruits are offered twice? How many squares are on the bingo card. (Copies of the bingo card can be printed from the Pick a **better** snack™ web site:
http://www.idph.state.ia.us/pickabetersnack/bingo_cards.asp)



Science & Health

Have the children guess whether they think the cranberry, pear or small pumpkin will sink or float in a bowl of water or classroom sink. The cranberry and pumpkin will float because they have air inside.

Read Summer by Ron Hirschi, Cobblehill Books, 1991. Baby animals grow, play, and learn from their parents.



Social Studies

Study where pears and cranberries grow. Find those places on a map.