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## Lesson 1: Cooking in the Classroom

### Objective

To provide students with hands-on cooking experiences that will strengthen their knowledge of healthful foods, and to give them the skills to prepare nutritious meals.

**Materials:** Vary with recipe

**Standards Addressed:** [click here](#)

### Background

For guidelines and recommendations related to cooking in the classroom, check out the [Food-Safe Schools Action Guide](#).

### Laying the Groundwork

- Talk about the [USDA Food Pyramid](#) and identify what types of foods you should eat every day.
- If possible, harvest fresh ingredients from your school garden or involve students in procurement of ingredients.
- Give students a clear set of safety and cooking instructions before passing out the equipment and ingredients.



### Exploration

Here are a few recipe ideas you may want to try in your classroom. Be sure to ask parents and students about food allergies before you begin.

**Grow It, Know It, Eat It, Love It: A Cookbook and Planting Guide** was published by the youth gardeners of the Hillside Junior Garden Club of Montclair, New Jersey. The recipes in this beautifully illustrated book are organized by edible plant parts: fruits, leaves, flowers, roots, tubers, bulbs, seeds, flowers, and stems. In addition to recipes it also includes planting instructions and fun facts about fruits and vegetables. If you'd like to purchase a copy please visit the [Watching Bookseller Web site](#).

- **Class Question:** Ask students to figure out in which plant part chapters the following recipes could belong.



### Roasted Vegetables

- 1 cup chopped parsnips
- 1 cup chopped potatoes
- 1 cup chopped carrots
- 1 cup chopped sweet potatoes
- 1 cup chopped Brussels sprouts
- 1 cup chopped onion

Use one or any combination of these vegetables to make as a side for dinner. Preheat oven to 350F. Coat baking pan with olive oil. Combine vegetables and toss in olive oil, salt, and pepper. Spread in baking pan and roast for 1 hour or until soft. Stir occasionally.

- **Class Questions:** According to the [USDA Food Pyramid](#), how many servings of vegetables are there in this recipe? How many batches would you need to make to be sure that everyone in the class gets at least two servings from this meal?

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### COMMENTS?

We welcome your questions and comments about this newsletter or your membership. Please reply to: [NGA editor](#).

### Easy Pesto with Basil from your Garden!

1/3 cup olive oil  
1/4 cup parmesan cheese  
1/4 cup chopped parsley  
1 large garlic clove  
1/2 cup fresh basil  
1/2 tsp. salt  
1/4 tsp. nutmeg

Place all ingredients into a blender or food processor and blend until pureed. Serve over favorite pasta and enjoy! Makes 4 servings.

### Our Garden Club Salsa

1/4 cup cilantro leaves  
1 small red onion  
Juice of one lime  
2 large tomatoes  
1 green onion top  
1 jalapeno pepper  
1 tsp. salt

Chop and mix all ingredients. Let marinate for 30 minutes before serving. Serve with tortilla chips or as a relish on tacos. Also good as a tortilla topping with a handful of sharp shredded cheddar cheese and baked until bubbly. Makes 4 servings.

### Recipe from Wild Oats Market Place

[Wild Oats Markets, Inc.](#), is a nationwide chain of natural and organic foods markets in the U.S. and Canada founded on the vision of enhancing the lives of its customers with products and education that support their goals for health and well-being. Wild Oats is the sponsor of the Wild Oats Gardening with Kids award which will give 10 schools and youth organizations in select locations supplies to establish kitchen gardens, and provide tools and training for preparing nutritious meals with the resulting produce. [Click here for more details.](#)

### Sautéed Zucchini and Green Beans

1 tsp. Wild Oats Organic Extra Virgin Olive Oil  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1 small organic zucchini, thinly sliced  
10 organic green beans, stemmed and sliced in half  
1/4 to 1/2 c. organic vegetable broth  
1 tsp. thyme  
sea salt and pepper to taste

Heat sauté pan over medium heat. Add oil and garlic. Cook for one minute. Add zucchini and green beans. Add broth. Cover and cook for 2 minutes. Add thyme, salt and pepper.

- **Class Question:** This recipe is for a single serving. Ask students to use their math skills to figure out how much of each ingredient they need to feed the entire class.

### Recipe from 10 Terrific Vegetables

This great NGA resource contains basic gardening information, plus historical and cultural connections to deepen kids' appreciation of the 10 crops highlighted. Line-art reproducibles and classroom activities reach across the curriculum. [Click here to order.](#)

### Garden Stir-fry

1 large head broccoli, broken into small pieces  
1 large red pepper  
2 cups snow or snap peas  
1 small garlic clove, minced  
1 tablespoon fresh basil  
salt and pepper to taste  
dash of cayenne

Sauté broccoli in small amount of oil for 10 minutes. Add red pepper, sautéing until it's just tender. Add peas, garlic, and seasonings. Cover and simmer on low heat for 3 to 4 minutes. Be sure not to overcook the peas. Serve over rice or linguini. Serves 6.

### Making Connections

- Analyze the nutrient content of the recipe you made and discuss how it fits into the [USDA Food](#)

## [Pyramid.](#)

- Make a shopping list and create a budget for one or more of the recipes in this lesson.
- Send a copy of the recipe home so students can try it with their parents.

## Branching Out

- Explore food traditions in your community using the [Food and Culture Classroom Project](#). Ask each student to bring in a copy of their family's favorite recipe for a special class cookbook.
- Explore the sensory activities on Kidsgardening.com, [Feeding the Whole Child](#)
- Save seeds from some of the fruits and vegetables you use in your recipes and plant in a classroom window or GrowLab. Track the development of your new plants. Discuss the importance saving seeds has had for humanity throughout history.
- Ask students to plan a day's menu in line with recommendations from the [USDA Food Pyramid](#). As a follow up, ask them to research the cost of the foods.

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