



## **Basic Vegetable Gardening**

### **Lesson 14: Vegetable Nutrition**

**Lesson Summary:** Members will design a poster to promote the nutritional value of a fruit or vegetable. They will explain their poster and “teach” the benefits with the whole group.

**Intended Learning Outcomes:**

Members will learn about the nutrition of different fruits and vegetables.

**Length:** 50 minutes

**Materials:**

- One piece of paper (A4 or larger) for each pair
- Pencils
- Colored pencils, markers, chalk or paint (optional)
- Vegetable flash cards
- Information on vegetable nutrition – such as the *Teachers’ Manual* or *Pocket Guide*

**Background:** An important part of gardening is to grow fruits and vegetables that give nutrition and health to us and our families.

**Lesson Steps**

**1. (5 minutes) – Introduction**

Welcome the members and discuss the current state of the garden. Is there produce that needs to be harvested? Are there any other garden tasks that need to be discussed?

**2. (20 minutes) – Make posters to encourage members to eat fruits and vegetables.**

Explain that today the members will be learning about the nutrition of a variety of fruits and vegetables. They will work in pairs to make a poster about one fruit or vegetable. The poster should include all of the important nutritional information about the fruit or vegetable they choose.

Members may look at the Pocket Guide, Teachers’ Manual, or other resources to find out more information about many different types of produce. The posters members make should have the name of the fruit or vegetable at the top of the poster, a drawing of the produce, and information about the health benefits of that produce.

Members can use the vegetable flash cards or the Pocket Guide to help them with their drawings.



**3. (10 minutes) Share posters with whole group.**

Members should share their poster with the whole group by holding it up and telling the other members about the benefits of eating that piece of produce. Take time to discuss the health benefits as boys and girls are teaching or presenting.



**4. (10 minutes) Optional:** If you have time, have the boys and girls **group their posters** by plant families, the types of nutrition the food provides (for example, foods high in Vitamin C; or foods high in calcium), or by foods they like or do not like. Discuss.

**5. (5 minutes) - Summary and Debrief**

Ask the members these questions:

- Why did we learn about vegetable and fruit nutrition today?
- What are some things that you learned today?  
*Answers:* Will vary. Review a few of the important items covered in the members' posters.
- Which vegetables and fruit are important to eat?  
*Answers vary,* but a wide range of food gives us a lot of different vitamins and minerals.
- Even though many people know about nutrition, they do not eat a variety of fruits and vegetables. Why?  
*Answers may be:* They don't know how to prepare the food. It's not part of their tradition. They are not familiar with it and therefore don't like it.

Discuss what to do with the posters. Is there a place to post them in a classroom? Should they be saved for future lessons about gardening or nutrition?

**6. (1 minute) - Close**

Encourage the members to plant a new vegetable in the garden the next season that will provide some good nutrition for them.

Tell members when the next meeting will be and what the lesson will be about.



## Nutritional Benefits of Common Fruits and Vegetables

Amaranth	Good source of Vitamin A, B, C, calcium, and iron
Banana	High in potassium and energy Easily digested (good for infants and elderly persons) Small amounts of vitamin A and C
Cabbage	Vitamin A, C, zinc, and fiber
Carrot	Excellent source of vitamin A
Cassava	High in Vitamin C, good source of fiber and some energy
Citrus	Excellent source of vitamin C
Collards	Excellent source of vitamin A and C, iron and calcium Some vitamin B and K, folate and potassium
Corn (Maize)	Energy, potassium, fiber, vitamin B
Cucumber	High in potassium and fiber, some vitamin A, B, C
Eggplant	High in potassium
Endive	Vitamin A, C, K, iron, calcium, potassium, and folate
Green Bean (French Bean)	High in fiber, iron, zinc, and potassium
Gumbo (okra)	Vitamin C, iron, calcium, potassium
Mango	Excellent source of vitamin A and C, and potassium
Onion	Vitamin C and potassium
Papaya	Excellent source of vitamin C, high in vitamin A Contains papain, an enzyme which aids digestion
Peanut (ground nut)	Excellent source of protein, fat, iron, and vitamin B
Pepper (green or red)	Excellent source of vitamin A, high in vitamin C Mostly useful for adding flavor
Pineapple	High in vitamin C
Plantain	High in vitamin A and C. Some iron
Pumpkin	High in vitamin A and energy
Sorrel	Some vitamins, minerals, and fiber
Spinach	Excellent source of vitamin A, high in many other vitamins and nutrients, including vitamin B, C, K, iron, calcium, folate, and potassium
Sweet Potato	Excellent source of vitamin A and C Raw leaves are rich in iron, vitamin A and C, and energy
Tomato	High in vitamin A and C and lycopene
Yam	Good source of vitamin C

