January Harvest of the Month

Sweet Potato

Illustration by Katherine McGrath, Charlottesville City Public Schools.

Try sweet potatoes at home!

Health and Nutrition

* Sweet potatoes have a lot of health benefits!
* They have:
  + Vitamin A - which makes your eyes strong.
  + Vitamin C - to help your immune system fight to keep you healthy.
  + Potassium - to help your heart and muscles work better.

Did You Know?

George Washington Carver, a famous scientist, developed 118 products from sweet potatoes including glue for postage stamps and starch for sizing cotton fabrics.

Reading Together

Check out our featured book: *Sweet Potato Pie* by Kathleen D. Lindsey.



February Harvest of the Month

Butternut Squash

Illustration by Helen Buzzoni, Charlottesville City Public Schools.

Try butternut squash at home!

Health and Nutrition

* Butternut squash is fat-free, cholesterol-free, sodium-free, and a good source of fiber.
* Butternut squash even has more potassium that bananas!
* They also are a source for vitamins and minerals like vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium, iron, and magnesium.

Did You Know?

Butternut squash seeds can be eaten as a nutritious snack food, just like pumpkin seeds.

Reading Together

Check out our featured book: *Sophie's Squash* by Pat Zietlow Miller and Anne Wilsdorf.



March Harvest of the Month

Kale

Illustration by Whitney McDermott, City Schoolyard Garden, Charlottesville City Public Schools.

Try kale at home!

Health and Nutrition

* Kale is one of the most nutrient-packed foods on the planet!
* The leaves of kale are edible and provide an excellent source of: Vitamin A, Vitamin C, Vitamin K, Calcium, and Iron.
* In addition to these beneficial nutrients, kale is rich in antioxidants, which have been shown to have anti-cancer and anti-inflammatory effects on the body.

Did You Know?

Kale is in the Brassica family and its Latin name means "cabbage of the vegetable garden without a head". There are many varieties. Red Russian kale is the most tender, while Lacinato (or Dinosaur) kale feels almost like plastic between your fingers!

Reading Together

Check out our featured book: *Captain Kale and the Superfoods* by Amy Roth.



April Harvest of the Month

Lettuce

Illustration by Tiona Burroughs, Richmond City Public Schools.

Try lettuce at home!

Health and Nutrition

* Lettuce has no fat and is a source of vitamin A, potassium, and fiber. The spine and ribs of lettuce provide dietary fiber while vitamins and minerals are concentrated in the delicate leaf portion.
* The darker the leaf, the more nutrients it has!
* Red leaf and Romaine lettuces are nutrient-dense choice.

Did You Know?

Lettuce started out as a weed in the Mediterranean and is now the second most popular fresh vegetable in the United States (behind potatoes).

Reading Together

Check out our featured book: *Lettuce Grows on the Ground* by Mari Schuh.



May Harvest of the Month

Strawberries

Illustration by Whitney McDermott, City Schoolyard Garden, Charlottesville.

Try strawberries at home!

Health and Nutrition

* Strawberries are not only delicious, but a fantastic source of vitamin A, vitamin C, vitamin E, manganese, and potassium.
* One cup of strawberries contains over 100 percent of your recommended intake of vitamin C!
* Vitamin C helps your body fight off infections and can help increase the absorption of iron from foods.

Did You Know?

The average strawberry has 200 seeds coating the outside of it!

Reading Together

Check out our featured book: *The First Strawberries* by Joseph Bruchac.



June Harvest of the Month

Cucumbers

Illustration by Emmanuel Quezada-Romero, Charlottesville City Public Schools.

Try cucumbers at home!

Health and Nutrition

* Cucumbers are low in fat, sodium, and calories.
* One half cup of sliced cucumbers has just eight calories.
* The skin of the cucumber is a great source of dietary fiber, too.
* Cucumbers also contain: Vitamin C, Vitamin K, Potassium, Chlorophyll, Vitamin A, Magnesium, and Phosphorus.

Did You Know?

If you're feeling tired in the afternoon, grab a cucumber! There are enough carbohydrates and B vitamins to give you a long-lasting and healthy boost of energy.

Reading Together

Check out our featured book: *Phil Pickle* by Kenny Herzog.



July Harvest of the Month

Zucchini

Illustration by Ariela Milstein, Charlottesville City Public Schools.

Try zucchini at home!

Health and Nutrition

* Due to its high water content, zucchini is low in calories, carbs, and sugars.
* It is also a good source of dietary fiber.
* Zucchini is high in essential nutrients and antioxidants like: potassium, manganese, vitamin C, and vitamin A.

Did You Know?

Biggest is not the best. The most flavorful zucchinis are small to medium-sized and the darker the skin, the richer the nutrients.

Reading Together

Check out our featured book: *Carlos and the Squash Plant* by Jan Romero Stevens.



August Harvest of the Month

Tomato

Illustration by Lila Jaranden, Henrico County Public Schools.

Try tomatoes at home!

Health and Nutrition

* Tomatoes are low-calorie vegetables that are rich in lycopene, an antioxidant that's good for the heart and effective against certain cancers.
* They are also packed with healthy vitamins and minerals, including: vitamin A, vitamin C, vitamin K, folate, calcium, and potassium.

Did You Know?

Tomatoes are 93-95 percent water, a higher percentage of water than watermelon!

Reading Together

Check out our featured book: *I Will Never Not Ever Eat a Tomato*  by Lauren Child.



September Harvest of the Month

Sweet Bell Peppers

Illustration by Katherine McGrath, Charlottesville City Public Schools.

Try sweet bell peppers at home!

Health and Nutrition

* Sweet bell peppers are low in calories and an excellent source of dietary fiber.
* They are also packed with healthy vitamins and minerals, including: vitamin C, vitamin B6, vitamin A, folate, and molybdenum.
* Compared to green bell peppers, the red ones have almost 11 times more beta-carotene and 1.5 times more vitamin C, and they are sweeter!

Did You Know?

Green peppers are simply red, orange, yellow, or purple peppers that have not ripened.

Reading Together

Check out our featured book: *A Fruit is a Suitcase for Seeds*  by Jean Richards.



October Harvest of the Month

Virginia Grown Apples

Illustration by Emily Morris, Charlottesville City Public Schools.

Try Virginia grown apples at home!

Health and Nutrition

* Apples are low in fat and calories, and they are completely free of cholesterol.
* They are a good source of fiber to help your gut and they can help keep your body strong!
* Apples are high in vitamin C.

Did You Know?

Apples originated in Kazakhstan in central Asia. Winesap, Gingergold, and Stayman are apple varieties that grow well in Virginia.

Reading Together

Check out our featured book: *Up Up Up! It's Apple-Picking Time*  by Jody Fickes Shapiro.



November Harvest of the Month

Cabbage

Illustration by Caroline McLellan, Charlottesville City Public Schools.

Try cabbage at home!

Health and Nutrition

* Cabbage is a good source of: vitamin K, vitamin C, fiber, electrolytes, and minerals.
* Which cabbage you choose makes a difference in its health benefits.
* Lightly steamed cabbage has cholesterol-lowering and high fiber benefits.
* Red cabbage has high levels of vitamins.
* Savoy cabbage has shown unique cancer preventative properties.
* Raw cabbage is low in saturated fat.
* The take away - enjoy a variety of cabbage types several times a week.

Did You Know?

The heaviest cabbage ever recorded was 138.25 lbs. and was grown in 2012 in Palmer, Alaska.

Reading Together

Check out our featured book: *Katie's Cabbage* by Katie Stagilano.



December Harvest of the Month

Spinach

Illustration by Maya Wimer, Charlottesville City Public Schools.

Try spinach at home!

Health and Nutrition

* Spinach is low in calories and has a substantial amount of dietary fiber.
* One cup of spinach contains 181 percent of daily vitamin K, 56 percent of daily vitamin A, 15 percent of daily folate, and 14 percent of daily vitamin C recommendations.
* It also contains: riboflavin, vitamin E, vitamin B6, manganese, magnesium, iron, and potassium.

Did You Know?

When choosing spinach, pick the most tender, brightest green leaves because they have the highest concentration of vitamin C.

Reading Together

Check out our featured book: *Sylvia's Spinach* by Katherine Pryor.

