



PROMOTING OREGON PEARS

Do you know that the pear is Oregon’s state fruit? And February is Oregon’s birthday month. Plan activities in your cafeteria and school to celebrate Oregon’s birthday. Feature Oregon pears on the menu.

Serve Ripe Pears

Make sure the pears you serve are ripe. Students will enjoy biting into a ripe, soft, sweet pear. Purchase pears a few days before you plan to use them. Keep them at room temperature in their box. Pears are ripe when the neck yields to gentle pressure. If the pears ripen before you are ready to serve them, move them into cold storage. They will keep about five days in cold storage. Find more helpful hints about ripening pears at usapears.com.

Celebrate Oregon’s Birthday with Pears

Decorate your cafeteria line with pear balloons, posters, or student drawings of pears. The Pear Bureau has posters for the cafeteria and handouts to send home with your children. Check out “Healthy Recipes for Kids” and “Pear Bear” bookmarks. Remember to feature Oregon pears on your February school menu.

Stamp Oregon Harvest for Schools Passport

As students come through the lunch line, stamp their passport when they take a pear or pear dish. Find information on how to start your Oregon Harvest for Schools Passport on the Oregon Farm to School webpage.

Invite a Farmer to Lunch

Feature a local pear farmer as the VIP in the cafeteria. Invite him or her to eat school lunch with students. Ask if the farmer can give a short presentation at each lunch period. Children will be interested in knowing how pears grow, how many the farmer grows in a year, when pears are harvested, and the farmer’s favorite way to eat pears. Do you have a school newspaper? Ask if a student reporter would like to interview your local pear farmer.

Exploring Oregon Pears

Engage students in learning and increase their interest, awareness and support for eating more fruits and vegetables with a Tasting Table activity.

- Display at least three different Oregon pear varieties (for example, Bartlett, Anjou, Bosc, or Comice) on a table or counter.
- Display each pear whole as well as slices for the students to taste.
- Have the student's smell, feel, and taste each variety of pear
- Let the student's vote for their favorite variety and post the results.

For detailed instructions on planning and setting up a tasting table, see Taste Testing New Foods In the Classroom and Cafeteria at okfarmtoschool.com/pdf/Taste-testing-new-foods.pdf

Find Out More

Learn more about Farm to School at the Oregon Department of Education website www.ode.state.or.us/services/nutrition

Scroll down to “Oregon Farm to School and School Garden Program.” For more ideas on promoting fruits and vegetables, check *Fruits and Vegetables Galore*, USDA 2004

OREGON HARVEST FOR SCHOOLS CLASSROOM ELEMENTS

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Ask teachers to schedule a time each day to discuss the menu with their students. How many times is the featured fruit or vegetable included on the menu? Does each meal include a fruit and a vegetable? Ask which meals they would like to try.

EARLY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Have students write a sentence about the shape of a pear and identify other objects that have a similar shape. If students are not writing yet, have them draw objects with a similar shape.

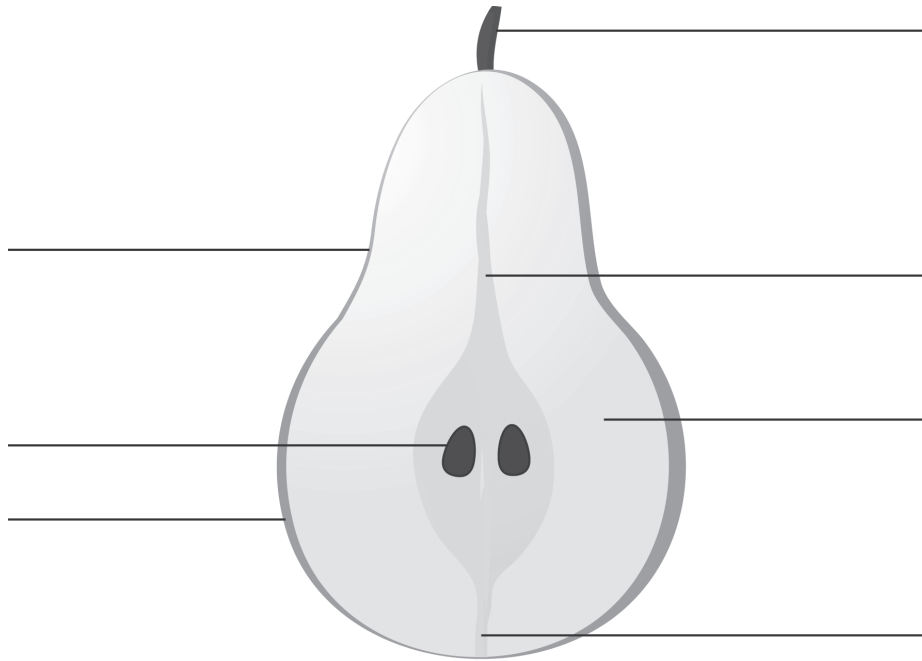
UPPER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

If you are able to taste-test pears in the classroom, offer samples for the students to taste. Have students write a descriptive word or sentence that starts with the letters of PEAR. For example:

P: Plump **E:** Easy to eat **A:** Accessible **R:** Ripe in winter

MIDDLE SCHOOL

- Pears are an excellent source of fiber. Have students research why our bodies need fiber.
- Research and describe the technique called grafting that is used to produce a new pear tree from an existing pear tree. Have students draw what grafting looks like.
- Have students label the parts of the pear fruit.



Left, top to bottom: Shoulder; Seed; Skin.
Right, top to bottom: Stem; Core; Flesh; Calyx

HIGH SCHOOL

- Have students map the various geographical regions in Oregon where pears are grown. Have students determine which region is closest to where they live. For information on regions where Oregon pears are grown, go to Pear Bureau NW's website at usapears.com and click on Facts and Nutrition; Growing Regions.
- What are the top three pear-producing counties in Oregon? When do these regions harvest pears? What is the volume of pears produced?
- Determine what percentage of the pears harvested in Oregon goes into processed foods and juices and how much is available to be sold whole/fresh.
- Interview school nutrition service in your district to find out where they purchase the pears they serve.