



PROMOTING OREGON TOMATOES

Promote Oregon tomatoes in your cafeteria. Plan activities that help students learn about the colors, varieties and differences in taste among tomatoes.

Sneak Preview Day

The week before you serve Oregon tomatoes, offer a “sneak preview.” Tomatoes come in different colors, shapes and sizes. Place different varieties of tomatoes on a table for students to see. Label each one. Offer tastes of the different tomatoes to your students.

Decorate

The cafeteria atmosphere is important. Be sure to surround students with colorful visual images of fruits and vegetables. Use the Oregon Harvest for Schools Tomato poster found on the Oregon Child Nutrition Programs website. Team Nutrition’s Feed Me poster is very popular with older children. Find it at fns.usda.gov/tn.

Oregon Salsa Day!

Feature a salsa made with fresh Oregon tomatoes on your variety bar. Offer an Oregon salsa with your baked potatoes. Showcase your own Oregon salsa with tacos or burritos. Hang a banner in the cafeteria announcing your Oregon Salsa Day event.

Student Passports

Create an Oregon fruit and vegetable “tasting passport.” Stamp the passport in the lunchroom whenever a student tries the featured local fruit or vegetable. Contact your Oregon Farm To School and School Garden Coordinator for information on starting an Oregon Harvest for Schools Passport in your school. Another option is to have students track the number of times they eat Oregon tomatoes at school. At the end of the month recognize students who tried the Oregon grown tomato each time it was offered.

Play Tomato Trivia in the Cafeteria or Classroom

Post a trivia question in the cafeteria or in a classroom. Provide students with slips of paper and a box for their answers. Every few days, feature a Tomato Trivia winner or post the Tomato Trivia winners names (and photos) in a prominent place. Potential trivia questions include:

Are tomatoes a fruit or vegetable?

Answer: Fruit

Name at least three key nutrients found in tomatoes.

Possible answers: Lycopene, Vitamins C, K, B6 and A, Potassium, Folate, Niacin

Where can the first tomatoes be traced back to in history?

Answer: The first tomatoes can be traced back to the Andes in Peru, where they grew wild as cherry-sized berries. As early as 700 A.D., the Incas and Aztecs began cultivating tomato plants.

Name at least two colors of tomatoes:

Possible answers: Red, Yellow, Orange and Green

Name three different ways tomatoes can be prepared.

Possible answers: fresh, baked, roasted, sauteed, sauce, soup, salsa

One of our Founding Fathers grew tomatoes. Do you know which one?

Answer: Thomas Jefferson was one of the first Americans to grow tomatoes at his Virginia home as early as 1781.

How many pounds of tomatoes does the average American eat per year?

Answer: 22 pounds

Which US state is the only one to not grow tomatoes?

Answer: Alaska, it's too cold to grow tomatoes there.

Find Out More

Visit Oregon Department of Education Child Nutrition Programs at

www.ode.state.or.us/services/nutrition

Look for Oregon Farm To School and School Garden Program under Associated Topics.

OREGON HARVEST FOR SCHOOLS CLASSROOM ELEMENTS

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Vote for Your Favorite Tomato Name!

Write a list of tomato names on the board and read it to the students. Have them vote for their top two names. Tally up the numbers and share more information about the two top vote getting tomato names. Some fun variety names are:

Legend

Chocolate Cherry

Early Girl

Better Boy

Fourth of July

Sun Gold

Sugar Lump

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Activities:

- Place different varieties of Oregon grown tomatoes on a table. Give students a list of the tomato varieties you display. Have students see how many tomato varieties they can correctly guess.
- Research the nutrients found in a tomato and how those nutrients help keep kids healthy.
- Have students visit their local grocery store during tomato season to look for Oregon tomatoes. If they don't find any, students can write letters to the grocery store advocating for selling local tomatoes.
- Have students keep a tally of how many Oregon tomatoes they eat during the month.

HIGH SCHOOL

Activities:

- What is the origin of the word "tomato?" What are some other names for the tomato?
- List five processed tomato products available in most grocery stores.
- List three nutrients found in a tomato. Name some of the health benefits of these nutrients.
- Describe the impact of processing, if any, on each nutrient.
- Write a letter to a friend encouraging them to eat more fruits and vegetables every day.