



PROMOTING OREGON WATERMELONS

Promote Oregon watermelons in your cafeteria. Watermelons come in many different colors, shapes and tastes. Some have seeds. Some don't. Do you have a favorite? Introduce your students to a wide variety of Oregon watermelons.

Easy Marketing with Oregon Harvest for Schools

Display this poster near the serving line. As students come through the serving line, point out the Oregon watermelon. Ask the principal to note the availability of Oregon Watermelons in the morning announcements. Highlight Oregon Watermelon on the district's Facebook page.

So many melons!

Set up a watermelon display in the cafeteria, with several different water melon varieties including melons with red and yellow flesh, with seeds and without seeds. Display the melons open so the flesh shows and include varieties with red and yellow flesh. Label each variety. Offer tastes of the different watermelon to your students.

Salad Bar Special

Feature Oregon watermelon on your cafeteria salad bar. Cut the watermelon in easy to handle wedges and display in a colorful bowl. Display a banner or a table tent with the name of the farm where the watermelon was grown and a picture of the farm.

Seed Estimation Contest

Set up a large uncut watermelon display in the cafeteria. Be sure it is one that has seeds. Have students guess how many seeds are inside the melon. Students can write their names and their guess on a slip of paper and put it in a box near the melon. When it is time to cut the melon open, recruit a team of "seed counters" to count the seeds. Reward them with a watermelon snack using a melon students have not handled. Announce the number of seeds and the students with the correct guess in the morning announcement or on a large sheet of paper at the front of the cafeteria line.

Fun Melon Face

Carve a large melon like a jack-o-lantern and put it on display in the cafeteria. Cut the insides into bite size pieces and offer samples to the students. Post nutrition information found on the Oregon Harvest for Schools poster.

Promote “healthy eating” to kids by hosting a special Watermelon Day Celebration. Students learn about nutrition, participate in educational and fun activities, and of course, enjoy some delicious watermelon. See the Watermelon Day Kit at watermelon.org/Educators/Host-Watermelon-Day.aspx. You will find everything you need to create a fun packed watermelon day at your school.



OREGON HARVEST FOR SCHOOLS CLASSROOM ELEMENTS

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Story Time

Young children will enjoy the two watermelon books listed below. Remember to ask the school librarian to get copies of the books in advance of your cafeteria watermelon promotion.

Anansi and the Talking Melon by Eric Kimmel. This African folktale is about a mischievous little spider that sneaks into a patch of melons and eats so much that he gets too fat to escape from the inside of the melon. The spider then uses his intellect to trick the other characters into thinking that the melon he is stuck in can talk. Will his wit eventually help him to escape from the melon? Read it and find out.

Watermelon Day by Kathi Appelt. Jesse is waiting for the watermelon growing in the garden. Waiting until it is ripe and ready to eat. Waiting until it is ready for her family’s annual Watermelon day. This book is a joyful celebration of gardens, growing things, summer and family. This book is also perfect for talking about patience.

Seeds

Bring in different fruit and vegetable seed packets (including watermelon seeds) purchased at a store or have students bring in the washed seeds of fruits and veggies they have eaten. Discuss how to care for a seed so that it grows into a plant and produces fruit. Use one of these books *The Carrot Seed* or *How Does Your Salad Grow?* for younger students and *Blue Potatoes*, *Orange Tomatoes* or *From Seed to Plant* for older students. Compare and contrast the seeds’ shapes and sizes.

Use Adjectives to Describe Your Watermelon

Have students write six adjectives that describe watermelon.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____
- 6) _____

Ask students to write a letter to a family member about watermelons using three of more of the adjectives on their list. Remember to include how watermelon helps keep kids healthy.

Identify Watermelon Plant Parts

Using an image of a watermelon plant, teach about the parts of a watermelon plant including the root, stem/vine, leaf, flower, fruit and seed. Ask students what part we eat. Have students draw a picture of a watermelon plant, labeling all of the parts. To download reproducible botanical images, visit the Educators' Corner at harvestofthemonth.com.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Quick Math Challenge

Did you know that a watermelon is about 90 percent water? Share this fact with students and challenge them to answer this question "If you ate ten cups of watermelon this month, about how much water would you be eating?" Answer: about nine cups.

The Gourd Family

Watermelons are members of the gourd family. Make a list of other fruits and vegetables that belong to this family. Make a list of the nutrients found in each different fruit and vegetable in the gourd family. Compare and contrast the nutrients.

Marketing Watermelons

Ask the students to write a TV commercial to sell watermelon to their classmates.

Nutrition Posters

Encourage kids to make watermelon posters highlighting the benefits of eating watermelons. Display posters in classroom or cafeteria. You can find nutrition information at these websites: fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov, mypyramid.gov/kids/index.html

HIGH SCHOOL

Research Oregon Grown Watermelons

Have students research facts about Oregon watermelons using the websites below as sources:

~ aitc.oregonstate.edu/resources/pdf/activity/abcsI.pdf

~ co.umatilla.or.us/region.htm

~ blog.oregonlive.com/terryrichard/2009/07/hermiston_watermelons_are_simp.html

~ extension.oregonstate.edu/news/story.php?S_No=564&storyType=garde

~ oregon.gov/ODA/docs/pdf/pubs/ff.pdf

Afterward, give a quiz using these questions. Students should be able to find answers to these questions on the websites above.

1. In which county do most of Oregon's watermelons grow?

Answer: Umatilla County

2. Which city in Oregon is most famous for watermelons?

Answer: Hermiston

3. Why do watermelons grow so well in this area? What is special about the climate?

Answer: the area has hot days and cool nights early in the growing season

4. In what other parts of the state do watermelons grow well? Are these warmer parts of the state or cooler parts?

Answer: The Snake River Valley and the Medford area. These are warmer parts of the state.

5. Name a variety of watermelon that grows well in Oregon

Answer: Crimson Sweet, Charleston Gray, Garden Baby, Sweet Favorite, Yellow Doll, Yellow Baby, Sunshine, Millennium, Summer Sweet 3521Y, Summer Sweet 5544, Sugar Baby, Tiger Baby

6. On the list of Oregon-grown products giving their rank in order of amount sold what number does watermelon rank?

Answer: Watermelon sales in Oregon rank at number 26 of all products grown

A Math Exercise

1. Estimate the circumference, surface area and volume of a watermelon; measure and record.
2. Compare weight and size measurements for a few watermelon varieties (of different sizes).
3. Determine if there is a correlation between weight and size. Why or why not?
4. Determine the edible portion of each watermelon variety and weight, if possible.
5. Compare the ratio of fruit to rind for each watermelon.
6. Estimate and record number of seeds in each variety.

Research Seedless Watermelon

Have students research how seedless watermelons were developed and how they are grown. There is a brief introduction, at urbanext.illinois.edu/veggies/watermelon.cfm but students should be encouraged to do research and discover this on their own.