



Harvest of the Month



September is Tomatoes

Nutrition & Health Benefits

- **Potassium** - Helps maintain normal blood pressure
- **Vitamin C** - Helps wounds heal, is important for the immune system, and is an antioxidant, which protects our cells from damage.
- **Lycopene** - an antioxidant which gives them their bright red color and may help prevent some cancers

Preparation & Cooking Tips

Select - Choose tomatoes with bright skin and firm flesh.

Store - Keep at room temperature and away from sunlight for up to one week.

Prepare - Rinse under cool, running water and enjoy!

Did you know?

- Tomatoes are technically fruits since they contain the plant's seeds. However, in 1893 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled the tomato is a vegetable.
- Fresh tomatoes grown in Wisconsin are available from mid-July through September.

Fun Facts

- Tomatoes are the most popular garden vegetable in America.
- Tomatoes are native to Mexico and the Andean regions of Peru, Ecuador, and Bolivia in South America.
- The Incas and Aztecs have cultivated tomatoes since 700 AD.

TASTE

taste testing



Select several varieties of tomatoes for kids to try. Encourage kids to use their five senses to observe, smell, feel, listen, and taste the tomatoes. Note observations on the board and discuss similarities and differences between the varieties. Is there a favorite?

You can also make a quick and easy fresh tomato salsa or Pico de Gallo. Dice a few tomatoes and add garlic, onions, peppers, cilantro, or basil and you have a perfect snack to eat with whole grain tortilla chips!



fit families

Eat healthy • Be active • Your kids are watching

FUN



Nutritious,
Delicious,
Wisconsin!

activity: The Five Senses

Objective: Kids will use all of their senses to explore foods, especially ones that are new or previously not favored.

Read book: *I Will Never Not Ever Eat a Tomato* by Lauren Child

Discussion: Talk about the five senses and how you can use all five when trying a new food.

- What does the food look like? (Describe color, shape, size)
- What does the food smell like? (Examples: sweet, earthy, floral)
- What does the food feel like? (Examples: smooth, bumpy, fuzzy, rough)
- What does the food sound like? (Examples: crunch, snap, sizzle)
- What does the food taste like? (Examples: sweet, salty, sour - try to be positive!)
- Why is it important to try new foods?

It is important to eat a variety of fruits and vegetables because they provide different nutrients to keep you healthy. Also, tastes change over time. A food you did not like last year might be your favorite food this year! Trying new foods does not mean that you need to eat the food if you do not like it. Use as many senses as you can to "observe" the food. Look at it, smell it, touch it, and maybe give it a small nibble if you are nervous to taste it.

— Credit: Jennifer Whitty, Health and Well-Being Extension Educator

This activity can be done in multiple settings: classroom, outdoors, garden, or virtual.

Tips for adapting to virtual learning: Share a video of *I Will Never Not Ever Eat a Tomato* read aloud: <https://youtu.be/taDxllhL3mU>

Share pictures and engage with the Wisconsin Harvest of the Month community by using #WIHarvestoftheMonth on social media.

READ



books

- *Fruit is a Suitcase for Seeds* by Jean Richards
- *I Will Never Not Ever Eat a Tomato* by Lauren Child
- *Little Yellow Pear Tomatoes* by Demian Yumen
- *Tomatoes Grow on a Vine* by Mari Schuh
- *Oh No Monster Tomato* by Jim Helmore and Karen Wall
- *Burnica's Tomatoes* by Gawri Manecuta



Tomato Pops

Ingredients:

- 1 pint cherry tomatoes
- 1 cup mozzarella balls or cubes
- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- kosher salt
- handful fresh basil leaves
- wooden skewers

Preparation:

1. Wash tomatoes and remove green tops. Put into a large bowl.
2. Drain the mozzarella balls, then add to the tomatoes.
3. Add the oil and salt to the tomatoes and mozzarella. Stir to combine.
4. Skewer the tomatoes, mozzarella and basil leaves, alternating between them.
5. Serve the skewers in a small glass, vase, or cup.



Information adapted from Wisconsin Harvest of the Month.

Source: <https://www.superhealthykids.com/10-different-ways-to-eat-a-tomato-and-picky-eater-strategy/>