



Growing with MO

Harvest of the Season

A Missouri Farm to Preschool Newsletter

August

Bell Peppers

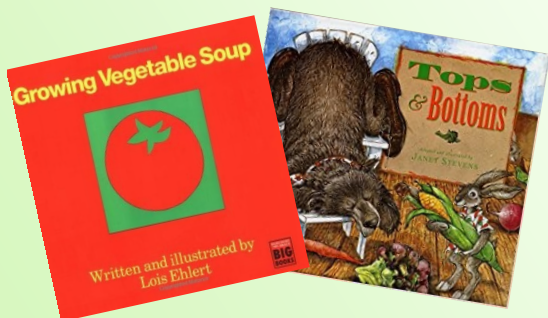


Did You Know?

Red bell peppers are green bell peppers that have been allowed to ripen.

Red, yellow and orange peppers taste sweeter than the green ones.

A red pepper has more vitamin C than an orange.



Read Together

Growing Vegetable Soup by Lois Ehlert

Tops & Bottoms by Janet Stevens

In the Garden

August can be a challenging month in a Missouri garden. Between the heat, weeds and bugs, that lovely spot in the sun might not look as great as it did a month or two ago. It may be time for a garden makeover. If you have plants that are looking sad and are not producing anymore, you might want to pull them up and make room for a fall garden. August is a great time to plant cool season vegetables like spinach, lettuce, broccoli and many others.

Remember to water! If you don't get at least 1 inch of rain in a week, get out the hose and give your plants a good soaking. The water needs to go deep enough to keep the roots moist. Plants in containers dry out very quickly when it's hot and may need to be watered every day.

Cook Together

Confetti Stuffed Peppers

4 large bell peppers
12 oz. bag frozen mixed vegetables
1 cup cooked brown rice
1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
½ cup parmesan cheese
8 oz can tomato sauce
Black pepper to taste



1. Cut peppers in half lengthwise. Remove seeds and membranes and place in oiled 9x13 pan.
2. Combine cooked rice, mixed vegetables, tomato sauce and half of the cheeses and spoon mixture into the peppers.
3. Pour ¼ cup water in pan around peppers. Cover with aluminum foil and bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes. Remove foil.
4. Top with remaining cheeses.
5. Bake uncovered another 5 minutes until cheese melts.

When you see this symbol in the recipe it means it is a great opportunity for children to lend a hand in the kitchen.

Recipe from thekidscookmonday.org

Shop Together

Choose firm peppers that have thick, shiny and smooth skin with a solid color. Stems should be green. Red, yellow and orange peppers usually cost more than green because it takes them longer to ripen. Try different colors and see which ones your children like best. At 15 calories and a day's supply of vitamin C in a half cup, bell peppers are a nutritional bargain!

Explore Peppers



Peppers grow from little white flowers on a small plant. They are actually the fruit of the plant.

Cut one in half and ask children to describe it.

What color is it?

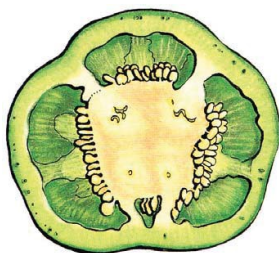
Is it wet or dry inside?

How does it feel?

What does it smell like?

What are those tiny white things? (seeds)

Why is there empty space inside? (we don't know, but kids might have an answer!)



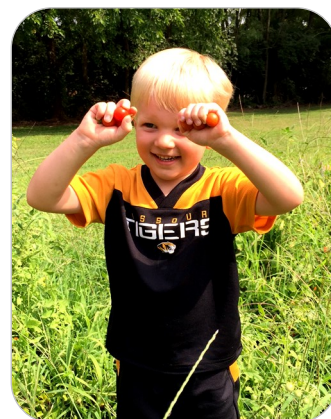
From the Field

Stories from Missouri Child Care

The kids at Rebecca Mohr's Kids Klub House in Columbia have enjoyed taste testing over 20 fruits and vegetables from asparagus to zucchini. Everybody takes a little bite at the same time. Then they each vote on how they liked it by putting a sticker on a chart that Ms. Becky made. Looking at a list of fruits and vegetables that grow in Missouri, Rebecca said "I never would have tried some of these with the kids. I was surprised they even liked beets! Some kids said that the taste testing was their favorite part of the year." After learning what the children like, Rebecca has permanently changed her menus to add more raw fruits and vegetables at breakfast, lunch and snack.

"They think of anything little as 'party food', so they love the cherry tomatoes we grew. We can't wait to try stuffed peppers from the tiny peppers that are still growing in our garden."

Parents are always welcome to visit the garden and help with whatever tasks they enjoy. Extra food from the harvest is put on the porch for families to take home at the end of the day.



"I don't hold them too hard."

Tips for Using Bell Peppers

- Cut raw peppers into strips and dip in ranch dressing or hummus.
- Add chopped peppers to scrambled eggs or tossed salads.
- Cut peppers into slices, top with chili or cheese and bake.
- Roast whole red peppers in the oven until they are wrinkled and charred. Remove the skin and seeds and enjoy the smoky sweetness on sandwiches and in other dishes.

Growing with MO Harvest of the Season is a project of the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services Team Nutrition Program. Young children learn about Missouri grown fruits and vegetables through preschool classroom experiences, gardening, field trips and through eating these foods in meals and snacks when they are in season.



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