



District of Columbia
Office of the State Superintendent of Education

presents



Strawberries & Salad Greens

[#berriesandgreens](#)

**RESOURCE PACKET FOR EARLY
CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT FACILITIES**



THE BASICS

Since 2011, District of Columbia schools and other educational sites have used Berries & Greens Day as a way to showcase locally grown produce in school meals and educate students about the many benefits of eating foods grown in or near Washington, DC.

Whether you are new to the event or a long-time participant, we hope you will join learners of all ages across the District in this year's Berries & Greens Day celebrations by serving locally grown berries and salad greens during meals, and incorporating related hands-on learning activities throughout the day. For more information and to register, please visit www.osse.dc.gov/service/strawberries-salad-greens-day.

THE BACKGROUND

Early care and education sites across the country are serving local food, leading educational activities related to farming, food, health, and nutrition, and engaging children in hands-on learning through gardening. The nationwide movement to enrich children's bodies and minds at preschools, child care centers, family child care homes, Head Start and Early Head Start programs, and programs in K-12 school districts, while supporting local economies is referred to as "farm to early care and education" or farm to ECE. The farm to school movement in DC was significantly bolstered when the DC Council passed the [Healthy Schools Act](#) of 2010, a landmark law designed to improve the health and wellness of students attending DC public and public charter schools. The [Healthy Tots Act](#) later supported child care facilities in implementing high-quality wellness programming. Together, the Healthy Schools and Healthy Tots Acts support OSSE farm-to-school and farm-to-ECE initiatives, such as educator training and technical assistance in finding and serving local foods and District-wide events such as [Growing Health Schools Month](#) and [Strawberries & Salad Greens Day](#).

THE BENEFITS

According to the [National Farm to School Network](#), farm-to-school and farm-to-ECE events like Berries & Greens Day provide children access to nutritious, high-quality, local food so they are ready to learn and grow and enhance classroom education through hands-on learning related to food, health, agriculture and nutrition. As one component of a comprehensive farm-to-school or farm-to-ECE program, Berries & Greens Day can play a part in increasing students' willingness to try new foods and healthier options, knowledge and awareness about local foods and consumption of fruits and vegetables.

QUESTIONS

Have questions regarding this event? Contact the School Programs Team at osse.nutritionprogram@dc.gov for more information.

CHECKLIST

Please use the checklist below to help you plan and achieve a wonderful and impactful Strawberry & Salad Greens Day event.

STEP 1: REGISTER

Visit www.osse.dc.gov/service/strawberries-salad-greens-day to register and participate in Strawberries & Salad Greens Day.

STEP 2: ORDER

Apart from your students, the stars of Berries & Greens Day are... berries and salad greens. See the following page for tips on getting these local products from your food vendor, distributor, grocery store, or farmer and onto children's plates!



STEP 3: PLAN

Adequate time for planning will help ensure a great day-of event. Invite providers, administrators, other site staff, and parents to share their vision of the best-ever Strawberries & Salad Greens Day. Need some inspiration? Review the [Strawberries & Salad Greens Day website](#), this resource packet, or scroll through social media using the hashtag #berriesandgreens.

STEP 4: PROMOTE

Create excitement before the event through morning announcements, special projects and plenty of reminders.

STEP 5: ENJOY

You made it! Thanks to your efforts, students will be enjoying local berries and salad greens in their program meal and partaking in activities that will help them be proud of the role they play in the local food system. Snap some pictures of those big smiles you are sure to see!

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RESOURCES

The pages that follow contain resources designed to make the most of your Berries & Greens Day - at the table, within learning centers, and throughout the child care site. The included tips, talking points, and activity ideas may be helpful for kitchen staff, teachers, and other site personnel as they prepare for and encourage participation in Berries & Greens Day.

"AT THE TABLE" RESOURCES

The following tips are applicable to anywhere meals are served -- lunch at the kitchen table, breakfast at the classroom table, snack at the picnic table, or any combination.

Remember, the Healthy Schools Act defines local as grown in DC, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Delaware, or New Jersey; however, a preference is given to produce from DC, Maryland and Virginia.

HOW DO I FIND LOCAL STRAWBERRIES AND SALAD GREENS?

- Berries and salad greens can be offered as a part of a reimbursable meal through the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).
- Communicate your interest in Berries & Greens Day to your meal vendor. Chances are your vendor may be aware of the event and are already prepared for you to participate.
- Reach out to your produce distributor for help in sourcing local berries and salad greens.
- Ask your grocery store if they will have local berries and salad greens available in time for the event. They may be willing to provide local products at a discount with enough advanced notice.
- Purchase berries and salad greens from a local farmers' market or farm stand.
- Connect directly with local growers. Use the resources below to find a farmer in your area.
 - DC Greens' Farm to School Approved List: www.dcgreens.org/f2s-approved
 - FRESHFARM Farmers' Markets: www.freshfarm.org/markets
 - Local Harvest: www.localharvest.org/washington-dc/farms
 - USDA On-Farm Market Directory: www.ams.usda.gov/local-food-directories/onfarm
 - Food Hubs & Co-ops: www.ams.usda.gov/local-food-directories/foodhubs
 - USDA's Procuring Local Food for Child Nutrition Programs: www.fns.usda.gov/f2s/procuring-local-foods
 - Maryland's Best: www.marylandsbest.net/ ○ Buy Local Virginia: www.buylocalvirginia.org/

The term "salad greens" encompasses a whole bunch of greens and raw leafy greens. Romaine, arugula, spinach and kale make great options for Strawberries & Salad Greens Day. Have children taste each separately and then mix them together to create a salad of their favorites.

HOW DO I SERVE LOCAL BERRIES AND SALAD GREENS?

"WITHIN LEARNING CENTERS" RESOURCES

Berries & Greens Day is a great time to incorporate agriculture or nutrition lessons into your center's daily routine. Click through the free resources below for a variety of lessons and activities suitable for the early childhood setting. See OSSE's [Nutrition Education Plan](#) for more support in enhancing children's acceptance and consumption of healthy food items, as well as their Whether as a taste test or components of a whole local meal, there are a variety of ways to participate in Berries & Greens Day.

- Service Ideas
 - Highlight two preparations of berries and salad greens, and have students vote on their favorite.
 - Hold a contest to name a special Berries & Greens Day recipe.
 - Consider how your students will be most receptive to berries -- whole, hulled, sliced -- you know your eaters best. Remember to keep the age of your students in mind when preparing strawberries.
 - Post the Berries & Greens Day logo in a highly visible location so students remember that what they see in their lunch, on the salad bar, or at a tasting station are the berries and greens they have been so excited to taste!
- Recipe Inspiration
 - [Strawberry & Salad Greens Day Recipe Book \(2014\)](#):
 - USDA has developed a number of recipes like the [Crunchy Rainbow Wrap](#) and [Rainbow Rice](#) that feature salad greens and meet CACFP requirements. Find them here: www.fns.usda.gov/tn/standardized-recipes-cacfp.
 - Consider bringing Strawberries & Salad Greens Day to breakfast. Use fresh spinach in this [spinach egg bake](#) or swap in fresh strawberries to enjoy a [fruit-a-licious breakfast cup](#) or [Strawberry Smoothie Bowl](#).
 - Think of a new recipe? Showcase it on social media with the hashtag #berriesandgreens.

Reminder: One goal of Berries & Greens Day is to support local farmers by purchasing the fruits (and vegetables) of their labor. Always inquire about purchasing berries and salad greens for your event, but be open to donations if they are offered.

knowledge of nutrition concepts.



EARLY CHILDHOOD

[Got Veggies? ECE Edition!](#)

This ECE edition builds on the lessons and activities in the original “[Got Veggies?](#)” by adopting them to meet best practices for the early care and education setting. [Farm to ECE Resources](#)

Resources to increase access to local foods, improve the nutrition environment, and enhance learning for the children through hands-on learning and play in food and nutrition, inclusion of local foods in meals and snacks, planting and tending to gardens, and family engagement opportunities.

Farm to Head Start

[Lycoming College Edition](#)

The Harvest of the Month program, patterned after the national farm-to-school movement and aligned with the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning framework, was developed in partnership with Lycoming College’s Teacher Certification Program.

North Carolina Farm to Preschool Network

[Farm to Preschool Toolkit](#)

ASAP’s farm-to-preschool toolkit contains information about getting started with farm-to-preschool, rules and regulations, recommendations for local procurement, and monthly resources.

[Reach for the Stars with Farm to Preschool](#)

This resource from the North Carolina Farm to Preschool Network helps child care centers and family child care homes integrate farm to early care and education (ECE) activities into their curriculum while addressing the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS).

Policy Equity Group

[A Guide to Using the Creative Curriculum® for Preschool to Support Farm-to-ECE Models](#)

[A Guide to Using the Creative Curriculum® for Infants, Toddlers, and Twos to Support Farm-to-ECE Models](#)

These resources, developed by The Policy Equity Group, align farm-to-ECE strategies with one of the most widely used ECE curricula—The Creative Curriculum®. The guides explore how teachers can use The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool, and The Creative Curriculum® for Infants, Toddlers, & Twos as a foundation to embed farm-to-ECE learning opportunities into their existing practices.

Ready, Set Grow

[Multicultural Collection of Farm to ECE Books](#)

The Food Trust’s multicultural collection of farm-to-ECE books highlights children’s books that feature characters from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups, many of which are authored by writers of color. The list also includes a number of books that are either bilingual or written exclusively in Spanish. These books cover a wide variety of farm-to-ECE related topics including gardening, farms, cooking, family meals, farmers markets, shopping for food and more.

South Carolina Farm to Preschool

[Taste Test Guide](#)

The Taste Test Guide provides tips for conducting taste tests to reinforce healthy eating messages in a fun, interactive way.

USDA: Grow It, Try It, Like It for Early Centers

[Spinach Lane](#) (Early Care Center)

[The Strawberry Patch](#) (Early Care Center)

Garden-themed activities for children ages 3-5 in early care centers.

[Spinach Lane](#) (Family Child Care)

[The Strawberry Patch](#) (Family Child Care)

Garden-themed activities for children ages 3-5 in family child care sites.

National Agriculture in the Curriculum

[Eating Plants](#) (grades K-2)

Students will identify the structure and function of six plant parts and classify fruits and vegetables according to which parts of the plants are edible.

Massachusetts Farm to School

[Salad Greens Worksheets](#) (grades K-5)

These adapted educational materials provide schools with easy to use teaching points and worksheets for brief nutrition education activities related to salad greens.

Cornell Garden Based Learning

[Seed to Salad](#) (grades K-5)

Seed to Salad is an adaptable project that engages young people in growing salad gardens of their own. This curriculum provides opportunities for youth decision-making and participation in activities that involve nutrition, physical activity, art, planning and problem solving, math, science, and language arts.

Kids Gardening

[Lettuce be Healthy](#) (grades K-5)

The Lettuce be Healthy lesson plan provides ideas for growing salad indoors in a fun, easy, and inexpensive way to bring greenery into your classroom and diet.

Growing Minds, Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project

[Giving Thanks to Farmers](#) (grades K-2)

[Strawberries](#) (grades K-5)

[Greens](#) (grades K-5)

[Eating in Season](#) (grades 3-5)

National Agriculture in the Classroom

[Freshest Fruit](#) (grades K-2)



“THROUGHOUT THE CHILD CARE SITE” RESOURCES

Below are sample newsletter or email announcements to get families and site staff excited for Strawberries & Salad Greens Day.

Before the event: “Believe it or not, there are hundreds of farms within a short drive from our center. Our meals tomorrow are going to feature two local foods – sweet, juicy berries and crisp, cool salad greens! Encourage your child to participate in Berries & Greens Day tomorrow by giving the special berries and salad greens dishes a try!”

Day of: “Today is a berry special day -- lettuce tell you why. It’s Berries & Greens Day! Did you know that strawberries are in the same family as roses? Or that lettuce is a part of the sunflower family? Ask your child about the delicious Berries and salad greens they tried today!”

We love to see your students, teachers and site staff in action on Berries & Greens Day, so please remember to take pictures. If your school uses social media, feel free to use the special hashtag #berriesandgreens See below for some examples.

Leading up to the event: There is just one month until Berries & Greens Day! Did you know strawberries have on average 200 tiny seeds on each berry? #berriesandgreens

We are one week away from Berries & Greens Day! Students will get to try juicy berries and crunchy salad greens. #berriesandgreens

Tomorrow is Berries & Greens Day! We can’t wait for our students to taste & learn about locally grown foods! #berriesandgreens

Day of: Today is Berries & Greens Day! Our students will try locally grown berries and salad greens at lunch! #berriesandgreens

Here are some fun facts to incorporate into your site-wide promotion of Berries & Greens Day.

Nutrition and Fun Facts about Strawberries

- Strawberries have a lot of Vitamin C - One cup can give you more Vitamin C than an orange! They are also high in folate, fiber, potassium, manganese and other antioxidants.
- Strawberries are actually the same type of plant as a rose - they are in the same family.
- Strawberries are the only fruit that wear their seeds on the outside.
- Unlike a lot of other fruits, strawberries do not continue to ripen after picking.
- On average, there are 200 tiny seeds that contain fiber on every strawberry.
- Strawberries are the first fruit to ripen in the spring.
- Strawberries are the most popular berry in the United States.
- California is the largest producer of strawberries in the United States, but strawberries are grown in every US state.
- There are three towns in the United States named Strawberry: Strawberry, AR, Strawberry, AZ and Strawberry, CA.
- The biggest strawberry in history weighed 8 ounces.
- A strawberry takes 30 days to mature from a flower to a fruit.
- California produces 1 billion pounds of strawberries each year.
- There are more than 600 varieties of strawberries.
- Americans consume nearly 5 pounds of strawberries each year!
- Native Americans used to call strawberries, "heart-seed berries."
- There is a legend that strawberries were named in the 19th century by English children who picked the fruit, strung them on grass straws and sold them as "Straws of berries." Another theory is the name was derived from the 19th century practice of placing straw around the growing berry plants to protect the ripening fruit.
- 94 percent of US households consume strawberries.
- There is a museum in Belgium just for strawberries.

- Strawberries at room temperature are sweeter than cold strawberries.
- If all the strawberries produced in California in one year were laid berry to berry, they would go around the world 15 times

Nutrition and Fun Facts about Salad Greens

- Salad greens contain Vitamin A, Vitamin K and Vitamin C. These important vitamins help keep your eyesight strong, among other things.
- Darker greens, like spinach and kale, have more vitamins and minerals than lighter greens.
- The ancient Greeks believed that lettuce induced sleep, so they served it at the end of the meal.
- Iceberg lettuce is the least nutritious salad green, as the largest nutrient it provides is water. Can you name some different types of salad greens? Some examples are lettuce, arugula, collard greens, kale and spinach.
- Lettuce belongs to the sunflower family.
- Americans eat approximately 30 pounds of lettuce each year.
- California is the number one producer of leaf lettuce in the country.
- Popeye the Sailor man was created to increase spinach consumption in the US.
- Kale has been popular in Northern Europe for a long time. So popular that in Scotland, "come to kale" is used as a saying to invite people to dinner.
- Ancient Egyptians first considered lettuce a weed instead of a plant.
- Romaine received its name from the Roman gardens where it was found growing.
- Bright and bold-looking spinach leaves are related to a group of plants called goosefoots because of the shape of their leaves.

For more information and additional resources, please visit www.fruitsandveggies.org/fruits-and-veggies/

Post the DC Healthy Schools Act Seasonality Chart -- [Choose What's in Season!](#)

Contact the School Programs Team @ osse.nutritionprogram@dc.gov for more information.

Choose What's in Season!



Lots of fruits and vegetables are in season throughout the year in the DC area. Choose these in season fruits and vegetables for meals and snacks whenever possible!

Brought to you by the OSSE Farm to School and School Garden Programs

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DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR

Choose [What's in Season!](#) Contact the School Programs Team at osse.nutritionprogram@dc.gov for more information.



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