

NAPA CABBAGE & CARROT

SLAW

GRADE: 3rd

LENGTH: 45 minutes

Essential Question

How does knowing about plant life cycles help us determine when to harvest plants for cooking?

Alabama Curriculum Standards

Sci 3.6.2 Differentiate among stages of the life cycle of various organisms.

Recipe

Ingredients:

- 1 medium Napa cabbage
- 3-5 medium carrots
- 5-8 springs of cilantro
- 1 Tbsp. honey
- ¼ cup rice vinegar
- 1 ½ tsp. toasted sesame oil
- 2 Tbsp. soy sauce

Directions:

1. Slice or shred Napa cabbage and carrots into bite size pieces. Collect the pieces in a large mixing bowl.
2. Tear cilantro to small pieces.
3. Add honey, rice vinegar, toasted sesame oil, and soy sauce to a small jar, screw lid on tightly and shake to combine.
4. Pour the dressing over cabbage and carrots and toss with tongs until all pieces are coated.
5. Sprinkle cilantro over top and toss gently.
6. Serve and enjoy!

Preparation

Acquire all lesson materials. Photocopy recipe cards. Set up cooking area inside or outside. Set up a wash station, if harvesting veggies during the lesson. Recruit an extra adult or two for help before, during, and/or after the lesson. Review basic food safety. Watch our YouTube video [Cooking in the Classroom](#). Have students wash their hands with warm soapy water before class begins.

Objectives

- To describe the life cycle of various plants.
- To follow a recipe.
- To practice basic food preparation skills, including knife safety.

Materials

- Recipe cards
- Kid-safe knives
- Cutting boards
- Large mixing bowl
- Measuring cups
- Measuring spoons
- Jar with lid
- Tongs
- Serving plates and forks
- Box grater (optional)

Vocabulary

- life cycle
- growing stage
- flowering
- fruiting

Opening Circle

- Ask students to recall the stages of a plant's **life cycle**. (*See Teacher Background.*)
- Ask students if there are any vegetables from the garden, they think are ready to harvest. Have students think, pair and share.
- Tell students that today they will work together to prepare a recipe using ingredients from the garden.
- Explain to students that there will be many steps to preparing our recipe, and everyone may not have the same job, but if we work together, we will be able to enjoy a snack together.

Activity

PART 1: HARVEST AND WASH

- 1 Lead students to the garden to harvest Napa cabbage, carrots and cilantro.
 - Discuss the life cycle of each plant. (*See Teacher Background.*)
 - What stage is each plant currently in?
 - What stage would happen next if we left the plants to keep growing?
 - Why do you think we harvested the plant during this stage?
 - Do you think plants taste different at different stages of their life cycle?
- 2 Lead students to the washing station to wash their vegetables.
- 3 Collect all washed vegetables and return to cooking area.

PART 2: PREPARING THE RECIPE

- 4 Pass out recipe cards or direct students' attention to the recipe written on a board. Read through the recipe ingredients and instructions as a class.
- 5 Complete the steps of the recipe, calling on students as needed. (*See Teacher Background for an example of how students may participate.*)
- 6 After measuring each ingredient for the dressing, ask students to predict how it will affect the flavor of the dressing. (*Soy sauce will add saltiness; sesame oil will add a neutral nutty flavor; rice vinegar will add a sour flavor; honey will add a sweet flavor.*) Ask students to predict how the sauce would taste if you left an ingredient out.

PART 3: TASTING

- 7 Remind students to be respectful and curious when tasting. (*See the Cooking Promise in Chapter 1 for more ideas on how to encourage students to try new foods.*)
- 8 Serve everyone a sample. While waiting for everyone to be served, students can use their senses to experience their sample.
 - Can you identify each vegetable? By color, by shape, etc.
 - How does it smell? Can you smell any one ingredient the most? Are there any ingredients that you don't see or smell?
- 9 Taste and enjoy!

Closing Circle

Prompt students in a discussion about the following:

- Which flavors did you taste the most? The least?
- Would you create this recipe again at home?
- Would you change anything about the recipe? Add more of something, less of something? Swap ingredients?

Extension

- 1 Many of the fall and spring vegetables are harvested in the growing stage, prior to flowering, fruiting, and seed development. Ask students what other vegetables we harvest in the growing stage and research what time of the year they are harvested. Research what vegetables are harvested in the summer and at what stage of growth. Discuss your findings.
- 2 Research the history and characteristics of slaws and have students create their own slaw recipe.
- 3 Have students go home and ask for a family slaw recipe. Bring them all back to school and create a “3rd Grade Slaw Cookbook”.

teacher

BACKGROUND

HARVESTING

For specific information on when and how to harvest and wash each vegetable included in this recipe, see the Appendix.

A PLANT'S LIFE CYCLE

SEED – Many plants begin their life as a seed. A seed has enough nutrients stored within the seed coat to germinate.

SEEDLING – When a seed germinates, the roots are the first to emerge and grow, followed by the shoot and cotyledon (a pair of embryonic leaves). As the seedling grows, the shoot will become the stem and the true leaves will emerge above the cotyledon.

GROWING – The plant will continue to produce new leaves and stems as it matures. For many plants, such as kale, collards, and cabbage, new growth occurs in the center and older leaves are on the outside.

Napa cabbage, carrots, and cilantro are all usually harvested during their growing stage. It is best to wait until the end of the Napa cabbage's growing stage to give it more time to form a compact "head." The longer carrots grow, the larger they will be. If carrots are left to grow too long, they may develop a woody center that is not very tasty. Cilantro may be harvested young or left to grow taller.

FLOWERING – As new leaf production wanes, the plant will begin to put all of its energy into making seeds. In some vegetables this is called "bolting," when it sends up a tall, flowering stalk from its center. The leaves on this stalk will be smaller, narrower, and bitter-tasting. During this stage, pollination, the transfer of pollen from the stamen to the pistil, may occur with the help of bees, wasps and other pollinators.

Cilantro flowers are edible. Once cilantro flowers, the leaves begin to lose flavor.

FRUITING – After pollination, the flowers will produce a fruit to protect the seeds as they form. Some plants hold their seeds in individual seedpods. Immature seedpods will be green in color. As the pods mature, they will turn yellow and dry out. Seeds can be harvested from the pods when they are brown and a little brittle.

Cilantro fruits and seeds are also known as the popular spice called coriander. Both the immature, green seedpods and the mature, brown seeds are edible.

MAKING THE NAPA CABBAGE & CARROT SLAW

Engaging students:

- Have several students slice Napa cabbage. Divide leaves among students.
- Have several students slice carrots.
Tip: Slice carrots in half lengthwise for students so that they can lay the carrot flat on their cutting board.
- Have one student tear cilantro and set aside for later.
- Have 1-4 students help prepare the dressing.
- Have 1-2 students toss the slaw and dressing together.
- Have a couple students help serve.

DISCUSSION IDEAS

For more discussion questions to ask students throughout the lesson or to use as a writing prompt see page 83

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