

**Celebrate  
National  
Farm to  
School  
Month  
in October**



# ***FLORIDA CRUNCH!***



**EVENT  
TOOLKIT**



**UF/IFAS Extension  
Family Nutrition  
Program (FNP)**  
*SNAP-Education in Florida*



# CONTACTS AND INFORMATION



**For more information about the Florida Crunch or for help getting started with your event:**



Contact a UF/IFAS Extension Family Nutrition Program staff member in your area at:

[familynutritionprogram.org/about-us/#locations](http://familynutritionprogram.org/about-us/#locations)

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## UF/IFAS Extension Family Nutrition Program (FNP)

FNP has provided SNAP-Education in Florida since 1996. The program partners with community organizations to teach low-income Floridians how to eat healthy and stay active on a budget. FNP's farm to school and community efforts make Florida-grown foods more accessible to SNAP-eligible people in the state. This also benefits Florida farmers and the local economy. FNP is funded by the USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) through DCF (the Florida Department of Children and Families).

## National Farm to School Network (NFSN)

An information, advocacy and networking hub for communities working to bring local food sourcing, school gardens and food and agriculture education into schools and early childcare settings.



**NATIONAL  
FARM to SCHOOL  
NETWORK**  
FLORIDA

## National Farm to School Month

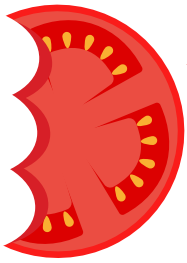
Designated by Congress in 2010 to demonstrate the growing importance of farm to school programs as a means to improve child nutrition, support local economies and educate children about the origins of food.



## Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS)

Supports and promotes Florida agriculture, protects the environment, safeguards consumers, and ensures the safety and wholesomeness of food.





# WHAT IS THE FLORIDA CRUNCH?

**The Florida Crunch is a one-day event** organized by schools across the state to celebrate National Farm to School Month in October.

It raises awareness of Florida-grown produce and healthy eating by highlighting one fruit or vegetable for students to learn about and sample in a taste test.

The event encourages schools to serve more Florida-grown produce in the cafeteria throughout the year.





# CRUNCH IN THE CLASSROOM

You can celebrate the Florida Crunch with a simple taste test in your classroom or go bigger with a schoolwide event!

## BEFORE EVENT

### STEP 1 Check in with colleagues/ administrators

If necessary, get approval and make sure funds are available to buy produce and supplies. Consider teaming up with other teachers or cafeteria staff for a schoolwide event ([See page 5](#)).

### STEP 2 Find Florida-grown produce

Contact your school food service staff 4-6 weeks ahead to learn what **Florida-grown produce** they can provide in October, or visit a local farm or farmers market ([See page 8](#)).

### STEP 3 Recruit helpers

Find volunteers or older students to help you prepare and serve samples on the day of the Florida Crunch.







# CRUNCH IN THE CLASSROOM

## DAY OF EVENT

### **STEP 4 Generate excitement!**

Engage the students in a discussion about Florida agriculture and the produce they will sample. What else grows in Florida? Why is locally grown food important?

[\(See on page 9: Food for Thought\)](#)

### **STEP 5 Promote food safety**

Have everyone wash their hands (or use hand sanitizer) before handling the produce.



### **STEP 6 Prepare produce**

Wash and cut the fruit or vegetable into small slices; place in tasting cups to serve. If a particular vegetable might taste better cooked, consider sautéing and lightly seasoning it.

### **STEP 7 Encourage good manners**

Talk with the students about how to be a good taster and to keep the tone positive for everyone. [\(See on page 5: Don't Yuck My Yum!\)](#)

### **STEP 8 Crunch time!**

Have everyone try their sample at the same time for one big C-R-U-N-C-H!

### **STEP 9 Survey students and reward participation**

Let the students rate their experience. For a fun survey, set up a poster with Tried It, Liked It, and Loved It options. Students can place their sticker under the appropriate header. Consider "I tried it!" stickers, erasers, pencils, or other educational materials as a reward.



# MAKE A BIGGER CRUNCH!

Here are some ways to expand your Florida Crunch event beyond the classroom:

## SCHOOLWIDE TASTE TEST:

- STEP 1** **Plan your budget** and volunteer group. Include teachers from various disciplines.
- STEP 2** **Invite guest speakers** (such as a local farmer or chef) to promote Florida-grown fruits and vegetables.
- STEP 3** **Plan a slide show** with information about the produce to run during the program. These [videos from FDACS](#) also can be played.
- STEP 4** **Promote the event** through school and district channels (newsletter, PA system, website, Facebook, signs and posters, etc.). Invite local media. See [promotional materials](#) on the Marketing Resources page and from the [National Farm to School Network](#).
- STEP 5** **Plan for decorations** and costumes.
- STEP 6** **Post event pictures or videos** on your school and district website and social media with the hashtags:
- |                 |                    |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| #F2SMonth       | #farmtoschool      |
| #FLcrunch       | #farmtoschoolmonth |
| #FLfarmtoschool | #freshfromflorida  |

## DON'T YUCK MY YUM!



Learning to become a "Good Taster" is an important part of the taste test experience.

**Encourage students to use descriptive but polite language when sharing their opinions.** For example: If a student does not like what they tasted, they can say, "No, thank you" or "I will try it again someday."

- STEP 7** **Evaluate the event** with your team. What can you improve for next year?
- STEP 8** **Send thank you notes** or emails to those who helped.



**REMINDER:** Have appropriate school photo release forms for any students featured in your Florida Crunch photos.



Tag us on  
**Instagram:**  
@ufifas\_fnp





# MAKE A BIGGER CRUNCH!

## COOK!



Lead a **hands-on cooking lesson** using local ingredients.

## TEACH!



Teach a **nutrition or gardening activity** (See *Connect to the Classroom*, right).

## TAKE A TRIP!



**Organize a field trip** to a local farm.

## HARVEST!



**Harvest fruits or vegetables** from the school garden, if available.



## SOURCE LOCAL PRODUCE!

Encourage your school food service staff to **serve Florida-grown fruits and vegetables** on the lunch line in October or year-round. (*See page 8*)

## CONNECT TO THE CLASSROOM

FNP offers free nutrition education classes at qualifying schools. Find out more about partnering with FNP on our [website](#).

Bring Florida Crunch into the classroom with these helpful resources for:

### CHILDCARE CENTERS

[Grow it, Try it, Like it!](#)

[Farm to Childcare Curriculum](#)

### ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

[Food and Farm Lesson Plans](#)

[Harvest of the Month  
Published Materials](#)

### MIDDLE SCHOOLS

[Nourish Curriculum](#)

[STEMming Up Gardening](#)

### HIGH SCHOOLS

[Farm to School Youth  
Leadership Curriculum](#)

[Food Span](#)



# FLORIDA PRODUCE IN OCTOBER



**AVOCADO**



**BELL PEPPER**



**CUCUMBER**



**CARAMBOLA**



**GRAPEFRUIT**



**MUSHROOM**



**ORANGE**



**PEANUT**



**SQUASH**



**SWEET CORN**



**TANGERINE**



**TOMATO**

**ZUCCHINI**



## HERE'S AN IDEA!

If your Florida-grown produce is not “crunchy,” consider using a different descriptive word to celebrate your unique National Farm to School Month event. For example, the *Florida Chomp* for citrus fruits or tomatoes.





## FIND FLORIDA-GROWN PRODUCE

Here are a few options for finding Florida-grown fruits and vegetables:



### **Contact your school's produce distributor**

If you are planning a schoolwide event, ask your current distributor or food service management company which Florida-grown produce will be available in October. Encourage them to look at both large- and small-scale farming operations.



### **Connect with a local farmer**

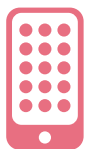
If you are having a smaller event or know of a local farmer who can supply enough to meet your needs, consider purchasing directly from the farmer. For more information about purchasing requirements, check out this helpful [USDA resource](#).

While donations may be used for taste tests, emphasis should be on purchasing from local farmers to lay the groundwork for future purchasing opportunities for your school cafeteria.



### **Contact the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services**

For assistance with finding local farmers, understanding the purchasing process, or identifying a healthy recipe for your Florida-crunch fruit or vegetable, contact Michael.Carter@fdacs.gov or Bela.Delgado@fdacs.gov, farm to school outreach coordinators.



### **Contact the UF/IFAS Extension Family Nutrition Program**

FNP is also here to help you with sourcing locally grown products and can connect you with helpful resources for your Florida Crunch event. Contact an FNP staff member in your area at: [familynutritionprogram.org/about-us/#locations](https://familynutritionprogram.org/about-us/#locations).



**NOTE:** Schools can use funding from programs such as the [USDA DoD Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program](#) to purchase Florida-grown produce.



# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Here are some talking points from FDACS you can use for Florida Crunch Day:

## **ASK:**

Why do you think we are celebrating National Farm to School Month?

## **SHARE:**

Farmers work hard to grow the food and materials we use every day. Every October, kids across the country celebrate those farmers! And today we will celebrate Florida's farmers by tasting one of the many delicious foods they grow for us!

## **ASK:**

Agriculture is very important in Florida. What does the word "agriculture" mean?

## **SHARE:**

Agriculture means growing things like fruits, vegetables, and animals that we can use for food, clothing, and materials. Florida farmers grow food that feeds people all over the country.

## **ASK:**

Can you guess how many farms we have in our state?

## **SHARE:**

There are more than 47,000 farms in Florida!

## **ASK:**

Florida farmers grow a variety of fruits, vegetables, and other crops. Can you name some of the crops that farmers in Florida grow?

## **SHARE:**

Florida farmers grow:

- tomatoes
- corn
- eggplant
- potatoes
- squash
- zucchini
- watermelons
- strawberries
- blueberries
- green beans
- sweet potatoes
- mushrooms
- pumpkins
- peanuts
- cotton
- sugar
- peppers
- cucumbers
- oranges
- satsumas
- grapefruits
- and so much more!



## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

### ASK:

When we aren't at school, where can we go to get local foods?

### SHARE:

If you want to eat food grown close to where you live, you could:

- **Grow a garden at home!** You can start small with a container garden, or plant raised beds like you may have seen at school!
- **Take a trip to a farmers market** where farmers gather to sell their food directly to the community. Don't forget to thank a Florida farmer while you're at the market!
- **Visit a U-Pick farm** where you can harvest your own Florida fruits and vegetables to take home!
- **Look for the Fresh From Florida logo** next time you're at the grocery store. Any product with this logo on it was grown somewhere in Florida!

### ASK:

What are some of the benefits of eating Florida-grown fruits and vegetables?

### SHARE:

Fruits and vegetables that were just picked are loaded with many vitamins and minerals that your body needs to function! Eating foods grown by a Florida farmer also helps support our local economy and can reduce the amount of pollution caused by transporting and storing foods from far away.





# ***HOW OTHER SCHOOLS CRUNCH***

## ***NORTH FLORIDA: SWEET POTATOES***



Students at Carr Elementary and Middle School in Blountstown crunched into sweet potatoes and sampled sweet potato smoothies made with a blender bicycle. A local farmer joined them at their lunch tables to answer questions about Florida agriculture. More than 11 pounds of sweet potatoes were grown in their school garden, while upwards of 70 pounds were donated to students to take home and cook with their families using a healthy recipe. Because of the Florida Crunch celebration, cafeteria management is more familiar with how to procure locally grown produce from Florida farmers and distributors.

## ***CENTRAL FLORIDA: TANGERINES***

Students at 10 schools in Osceola County consumed more than 2,500 Florida tangerines on Florida Crunch Day! The events were held on Halloween using citrus-themed costumes, tangerines with jack-o'-lantern faces, and student art to celebrate National Farm to School Month. The school district's superintendent and the director of food and nutrition services joined in the Florida Crunch Day fun at Central Avenue Elementary School.

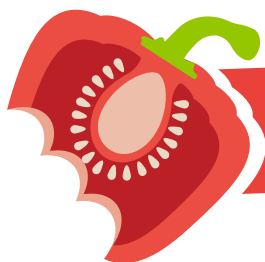


## ***SOUTH FLORIDA: SALAD GREENS***



W.J. Bryan Elementary School in Miami celebrated the Florida Crunch by harvesting produce from the school's food forest garden. Food forest gardens allow edible plants to mimic the growing structure of a forest. Students tasted a variety of crops suited for Miami's tropical climate, including cranberry hibiscus, Okinawa spinach, longevity spinach, and Katuk. Students crunched into the salad that was served with their school lunches while learning all about Florida agriculture!





# MARKETING RESOURCES



FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM



Use to announce the event a **few weeks before**.



Use to announce the event a **few days before**.

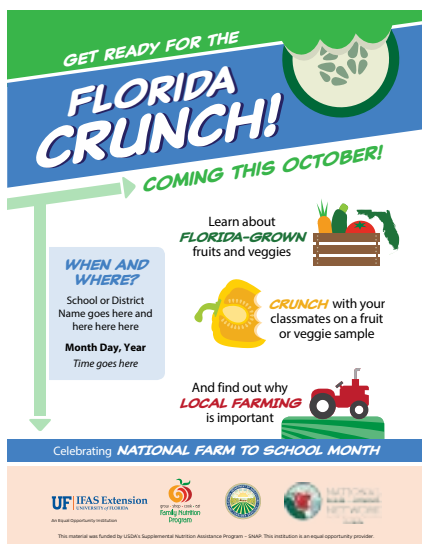


Use on the **day of the event**.

For access to these images and files, contact an FNP staff member in your area:

[familynutritionprogram.org/about-us/#locations](http://familynutritionprogram.org/about-us/#locations)

## FILLABLE FLIERS

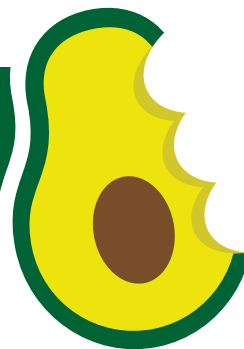


Use to announce the event a **few weeks before**.



Use to **inform others** about the event.

# WEB LINKS IN THIS TOOLKIT



UF/IFAS Extension Family Nutrition Program (FNP): [familynutritionprogram.org](http://familynutritionprogram.org)

National Farm to School Network: [farmtoschool.org](http://farmtoschool.org)

National Farm to School Month: [farmtoschool.org/our-work/farm-to-school-month](http://farmtoschool.org/our-work/farm-to-school-month)

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Sciences: [fdacs.gov](http://fdacs.gov)

FDACS videos: [fdacs.gov/About-Us/Publications/Marketing-Videos/For-Kids-Students-Teachers](http://fdacs.gov/About-Us/Publications/Marketing-Videos/For-Kids-Students-Teachers)

Food and Farm Lesson Plans: [growing-minds.org/exploration-lesson-plans](http://growing-minds.org/exploration-lesson-plans)

Harvest of the Month Published Materials: [fdacs.gov/Food-Nutrition/Nutrition-Education-Resources/Harvest-of-the-Month](http://fdacs.gov/Food-Nutrition/Nutrition-Education-Resources/Harvest-of-the-Month)

Nourish Curriculum: [nourishlife.org/teach/curriculum](http://nourishlife.org/teach/curriculum)

STEMming Up Gardening: [faitc.org/book/stemming\\_up\\_gardening](http://faitc.org/book/stemming_up_gardening)

Farm to School Youth Leadership Curriculum: [iatp.org/files/F2SCurriculum\\_full\\_IATP\\_web\\_0.pdf](http://iatp.org/files/F2SCurriculum_full_IATP_web_0.pdf)

Food Span: [foodspanlearning.org/lesson-plans](http://foodspanlearning.org/lesson-plans)

Farm to Childcare Curriculum: [iatp.org/sites/default/files/2014\\_07\\_16\\_F2CC\\_Curriculum\\_f.pdf](http://iatp.org/sites/default/files/2014_07_16_F2CC_Curriculum_f.pdf)

USDA purchasing requirements: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/f2s/procuring-local-foods>

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program: [fns.usda.gov/fdd/usda-dod-fresh-fruit-and-vegetable-program](http://fns.usda.gov/fdd/usda-dod-fresh-fruit-and-vegetable-program)

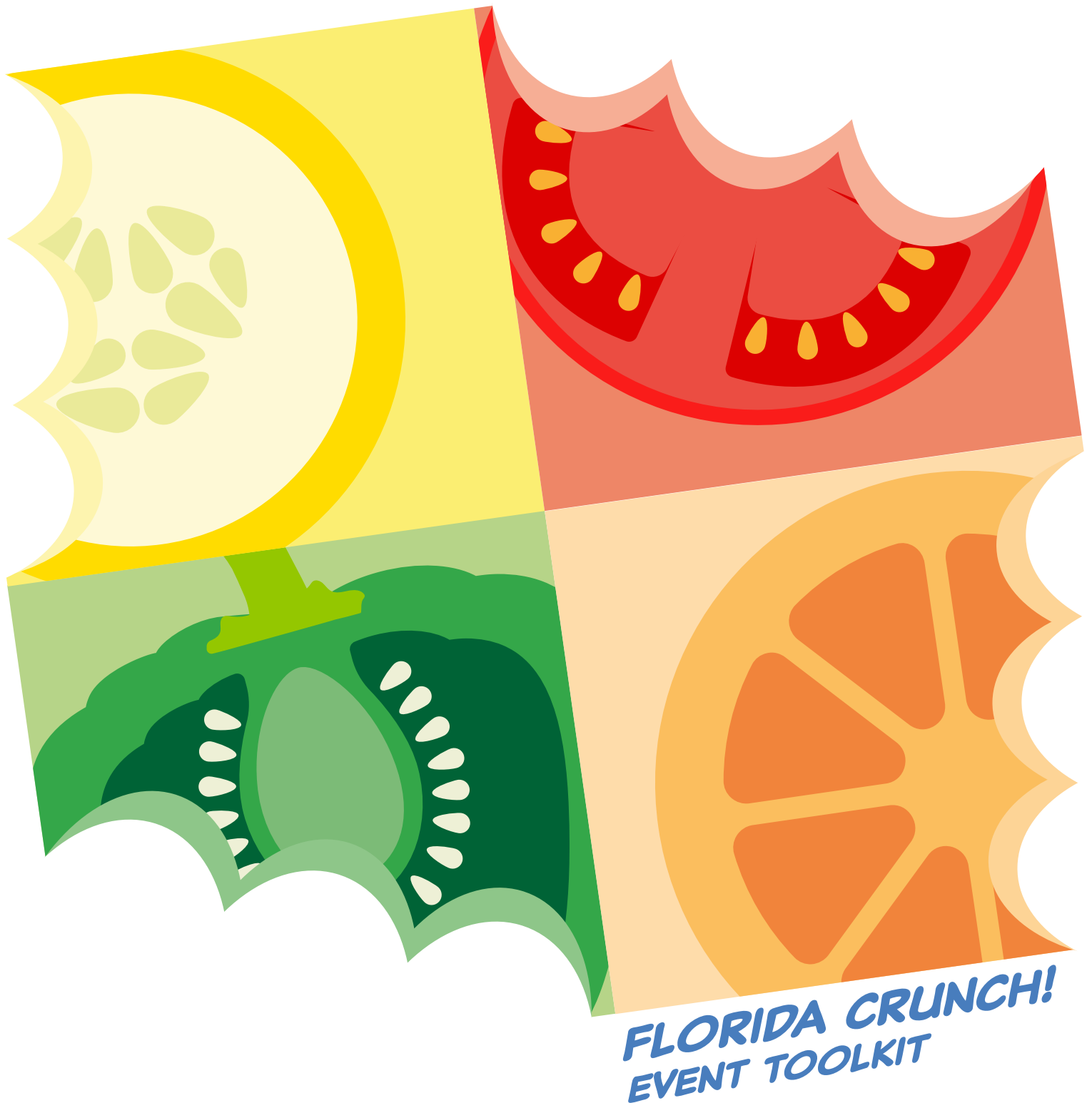
## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

USDA Food and Nutrition Service, Procuring Local Foods: [fns.usda.gov/cfs/procuring-local-foods](http://fns.usda.gov/cfs/procuring-local-foods)

NFSN Getting Started with Farm to School: <https://www.farmtoschool.org/resources-main/getting-started-with-farm-to-school>

NFSN The Benefits of Farm to School: [farmtoschool.org/Resources/BenefitsFactSheet.pdf](http://farmtoschool.org/Resources/BenefitsFactSheet.pdf)

Rutgers University Cooperative Extension: Conducting Taste-Testing Activities in Schools: A Guide for Teachers and Administrators: [njaes.rutgers.edu/fs1210](http://njaes.rutgers.edu/fs1210)



**NOTES:**

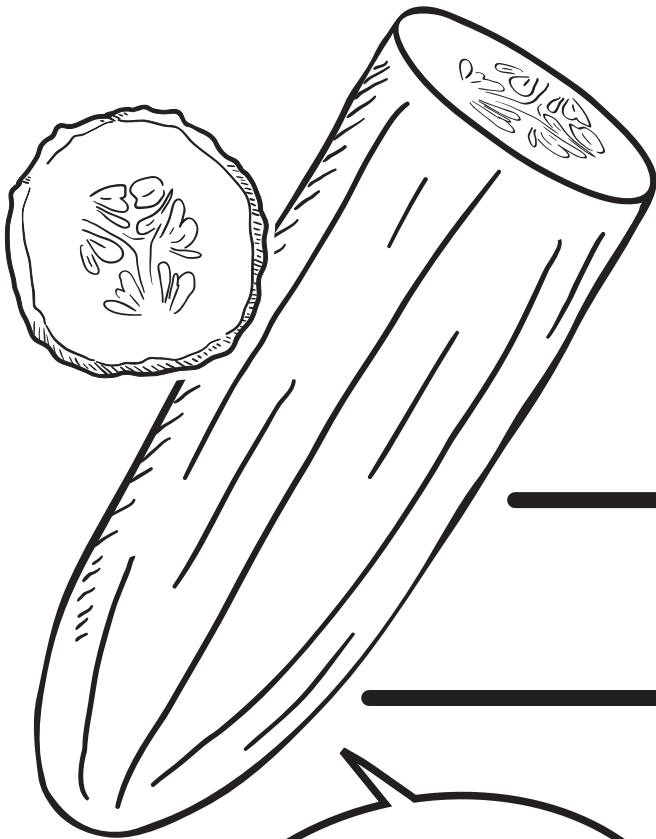




# HELLO

MY NAME IS

## cucumber



Good  
source of  
vitamin K

95% water

Great  
tasting  
veggie

Pick me!

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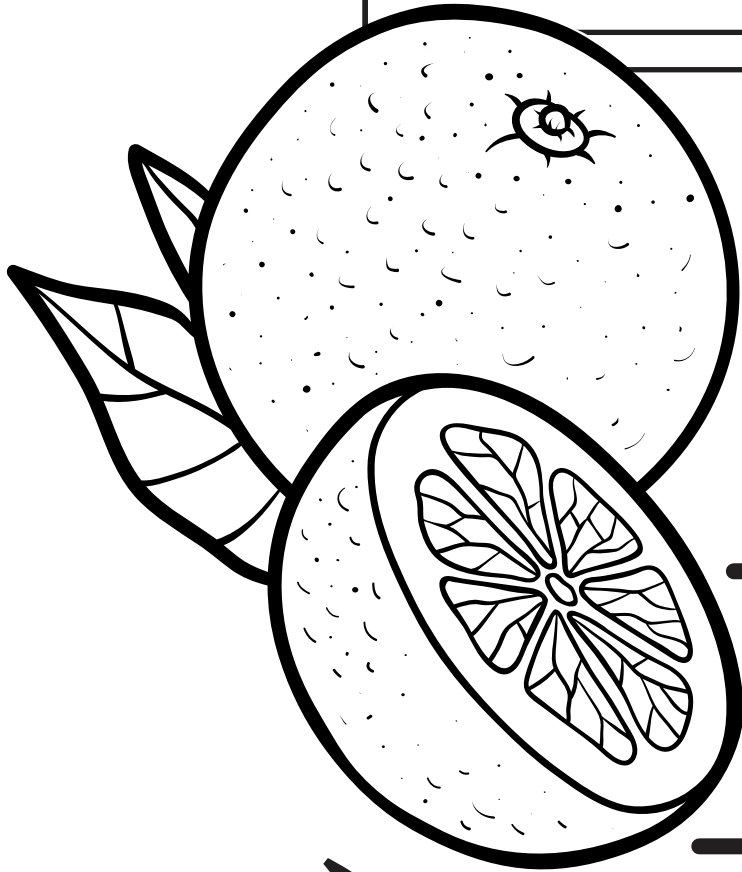
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grow • shop • cook • eat  
Family Nutrition  
Program

HELLO

MY NAME IS

orange



High in  
vitamin C

High in  
antioxidants

Good source  
of fiber

Pick me!

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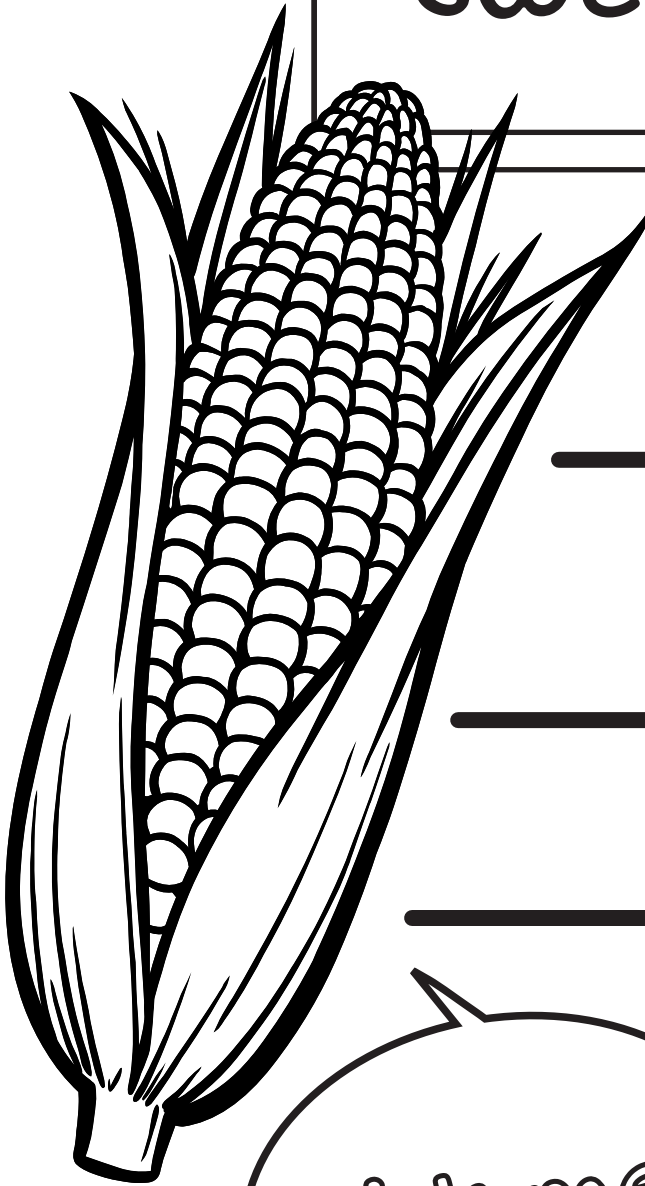
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HELLO

MY NAME IS

Sweet Corn



Crunchy &  
naturally  
sweet

Also called  
maize

Good  
Source of  
B Vitamins

Pick me!

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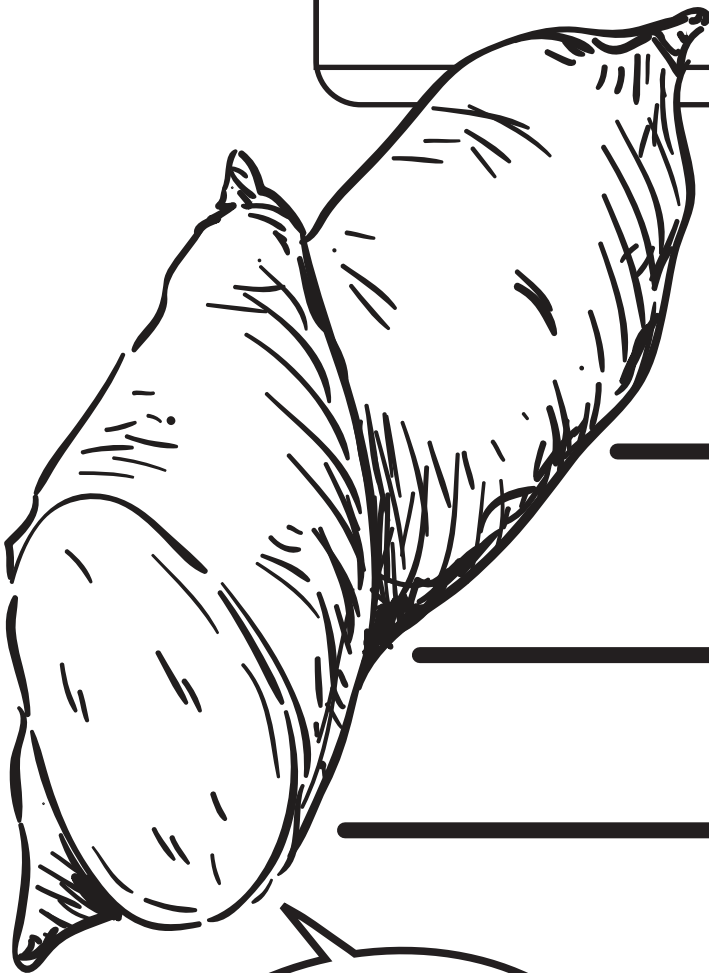
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Program

HELLO

MY NAME IS

Sweet Potato



Good source  
of fiber &  
potassium

High in  
Vitamin C

Rich in  
Vitamin A &  
Beta Carotene

Pick me!

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HELLO

MY NAME IS

Tangerine



High in  
vitamin C

Also called  
mandarin

Good  
source of  
potassium

Pick me!

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grow • shop • cook • eat  
Family Nutrition  
Program

# HELLO

MY NAME IS

kale



High in  
vitamins  
A, C, & K

Good source  
of fiber

Try it raw  
or cooked

Pick me!

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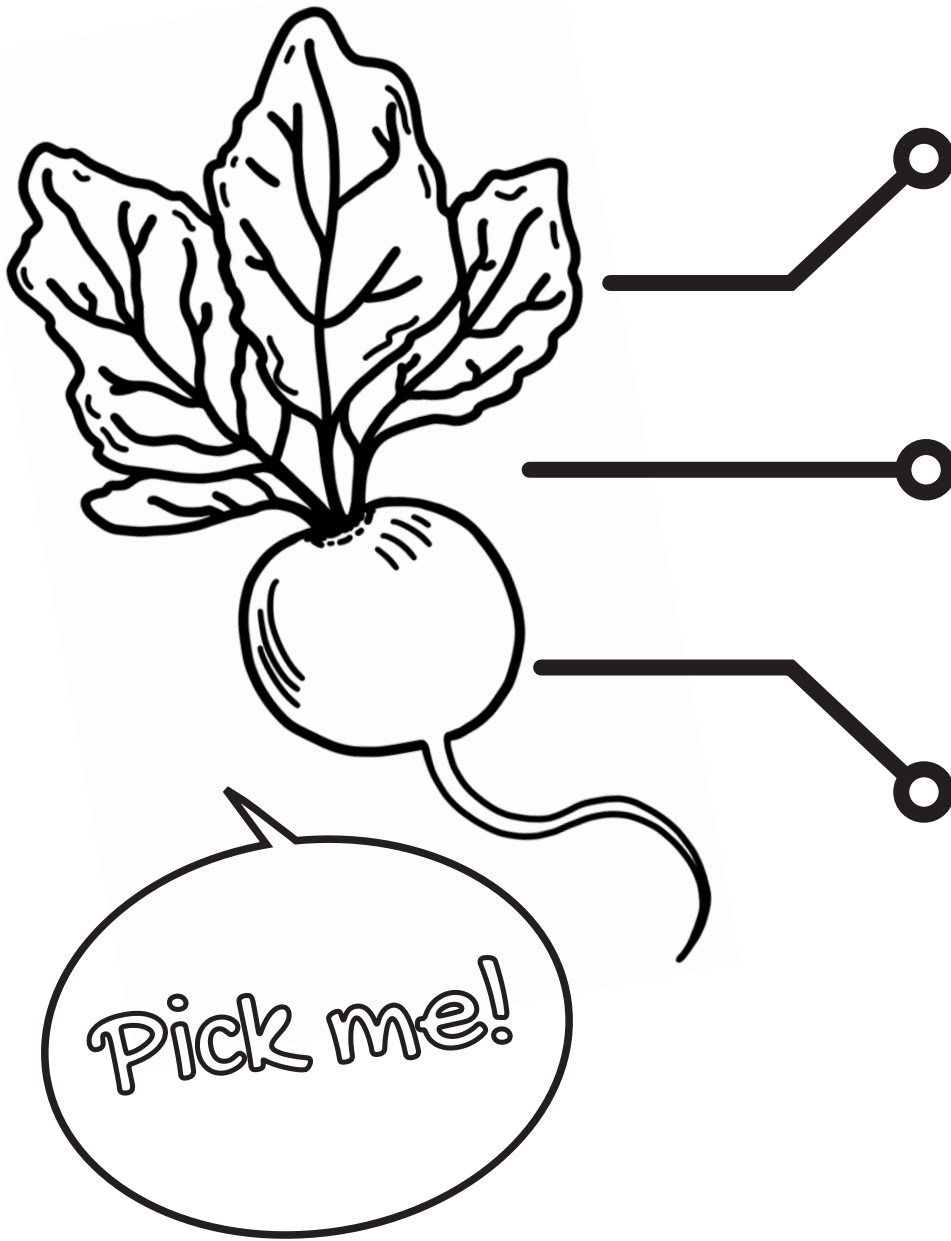
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grow • shop • cook • eat  
Family Nutrition  
Program

HELLO

MY NAME IS

radish



Good  
source of  
vitamin C

Crunchy  
and spicy  
veggie

Try sliced  
on a salad

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Family Nutrition  
Program

HELLO

MY NAME IS

green beans



Also called  
string beans

Can be red,  
yellow, or  
purple

Great  
tasting  
veggie

Pick me!

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