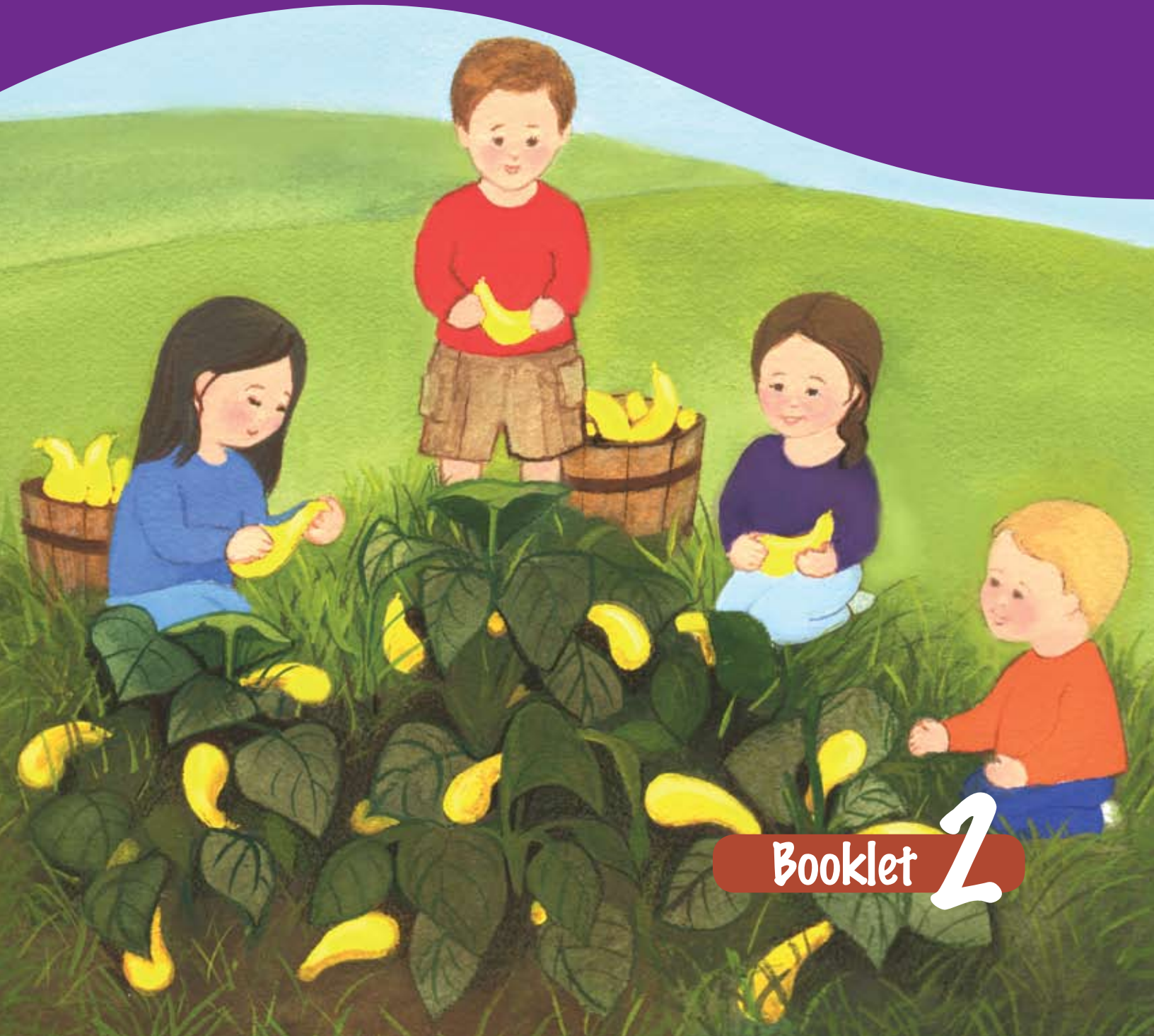




Grow It, Try It, Like It!

Preschool Fun With Fruits and Vegetables

Crookneck Squash Row



Booklet

2

Welcome to... Crookneck Squash Row at Tasty Acres Farm!

There is a curve waiting on the end of the vines at Crookneck Squash Row. It is the yellow, crookneck squash, a vegetable that children find intriguing. The children explore this unique vegetable experiencing how a crookneck squash looks, feels, smells, and tastes. Children learn how crookneck squash are grown, harvested, and shipped from the farm to farmers' markets and stores. Enjoyable tasting activities are also in store. From crookneck squash quick bread to pasta salad, children are treated to a variety of crookneck squash tastes. Growing at Home materials help shape family fun with Crookneck Squash recipes and activities.

Variation: If crookneck squash is not available in your area substitute another summer squash, such as yellow, sunburst, or patty pan squash.

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A Plan for Organizing Crookneck Squash Row Activities

Check with local farms and farmers' markets to find out when crookneck squash are in peak season. Crookneck squash are interesting and seeing crookneck squash growing makes a great farm field trip for preschoolers. If a farm is not nearby, visit a produce stand or farmers' market to see fresh crookneck squash.



Most activities require only 10-15 minutes; pick a few for each day. In this example, all of the activities from the lesson plans are completed, but spaced out over a 5-day period.

The Crookneck Squash Row lesson plans are designed to be used in their entirety but if your center does not have the time, space or resources to do all the activities select the activities best suited to your center's environment and available resources from Section A: hands-on activities, Section B: planting activities, Section C: crookneck squash stories and songs, and Section D: nutrition education activities. Be sure that the activities you choose help the children meet the objectives listed at the beginning of each lesson plan section. If possible, do the planting activities and enjoy crookneck squash for several weeks. It is an easy vegetable to grow and can be planted in a shrub bed or large container.

Here is one way to arrange the activities in your Crookneck Squash Row. Most activities require only 10-15 minutes; pick a few for each day. In this example, all of the activities from the lesson plans are completed, but spaced out over a 5-day period. Additionally, two activities from the Garden Art and Crafts Section in Booklet 1, are added. These activities are fun and useful ways to help reinforce the objectives of each activity. On page 19, it gives tips for creating successful projects and ideas for harvesting fun month after month. The Garden Art and Crafts chart connects the art and crafts to the lesson activities.

Planning Chart for Crookneck Squash Row Activities

Day One	Day Two	Day Three	Day Four	Day Five
A1 Feel That Curvy Shape Hands-on Activity 	A3 Crookneck Squash Sandwiches Hands-on Activity	C1 Cool Puppy Pup Video	B3 Plant a Crookneck Squash Seed or Start Outdoors Planting Activity	D1 Savor the Flavor of Squash Nutrition Education Activity
A2 Crookneck Squash A Look Inside Hands-on Activity	C2 Reading Activity 	B2 Plant a Crookneck Squash Seed 	C3 Old MacDonald Had a Farm Song, Crookneck Squash Style	D2 Gosh, I Love Squash! Nutrition Education Activity 
Garden Art Bookmarks 	B1 Crookneck Squash Start as Seeds Planting Activity	C3 Old MacDonald Had a Farm Song, Crookneck Squash Style 	Garden Craft Seed Art 	C3 Old MacDonald Had a Farm Song, Crookneck Squash Style
Send home Growing at Home Materials #1		Send home Growing at Home Materials #2	C2 Reading Activity 	Send home Growing at Home Materials #3

Revisit the Farm: Rainy Day Fun All Year Long

When the weather changes your outdoor plans, the activities from Tasty Acres Farm provide a welcome opportunity to revisit and remember all the fun and flavor of *Grow It, Try It, Like It!* Sing the songs, watch the video segments, and use the Garden Art and Crafts Section in Booklet I for ideas. Make a rainy day one to reconnect with these fruits and vegetables.

More Ways To Grow – The Crookneck Squash Row unit can be included in other areas of the curriculum. **Complementary themes include:**

Foods – Vegetables **Shapes** – Curves, Circles **Colors** – Yellow, White **Seasons** – Summer

Opposites – Inside & Outside **Plants** – Vines, Squash **Alphabet** – C, S words **Body** – Senses



A. Lots to Know About Squash

Hands-On Activities

Materials Needed

- Two crookneck squash, well-scrubbed
- Container for crookneck squash pieces
- Serving spoon and napkins
- Mystery Box/Bag
- Paper and pencil

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Prepare bite-size pieces of crookneck squash and keep these pieces out of sight.
- Place one well-scrubbed whole crookneck squash in the Mystery Box/Bag.
- Make copies of Crookneck Squash Growing at Home #1—one set per child.
- Review Make a Mystery Box or Bag, as needed (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 45).

Growing at Home Introduction Letter and Hand Washing and Polite Tasting Guidelines: Send a copy of these resources home before starting the first unit in *Grow It, Try It, Like It!* If you have already sent these resources home, you may omit this step. (See Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 42-44.)

Crookneck Squash Growing at Home #1: Send a copy of this resource home with each child at the start of Section A activities.

Variation: Substitute another summer squash, such as yellow, zucchini, sunburst, or patty pan squash for crookneck squash.

A1: Feel That Curvy Shape

Use the Mystery Box/Bag to create interest by having the children feel the outside of a crookneck squash before revealing the “mystery” item to all.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Identify a crookneck squash as a light weight, yellow vegetable with a curved neck;
- Describe the outside appearance and smell of a crookneck squash.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing and Polite Tasting

- Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).
- If this is the first activity involving food tasting, talk with the children about polite food tasting habits (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 44, for details).



Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Introduce the Mystery Box/Bag, or reintroduce it if you have used it before.
- One at a time, ask each child to come and feel inside the box or bag without looking. If a child seems afraid, feel inside the box/bag with the child.
- Ask each child to describe quietly to you what he/she feels.
- After everyone has guessed, reveal the crookneck squash. Let each child hold the crookneck squash if desired.
- Note the children's guesses that were close (curved, crooked, a plant, food) or correct (crookneck squash).
- Talk about the crookneck squash. Ask the questions below and any other questions you like.
 - ▶ Is a crookneck squash a fruit or a vegetable? (Vegetable)
 - ▶ What shape is it? (Curved like a cane)
 - ▶ What color is it? (Light yellow)
 - ▶ How does the outside of it feel? (Smooth)
 - ▶ Is it light or heavy? (Light)
 - ▶ Is it soft or hard? (Hard)
 - ▶ Does it have a smell? (May have no smell or smell earthy)
 - ▶ Has anyone ever tasted a crookneck squash? (Yes or No)

Words To Grow

Vegetable	Curve
Smooth	Light (weight)
Yellow	Crookneck
Squash	

Activity Conclusion—Tasting

- Conclude the lesson by offering the children a piece of crookneck squash to taste.
- As necessary, remind the children how the group follows polite tasting manners.



Materials Needed

- Crookneck squash (can be the one used in Activity A1)
- Sharp knife
- Cutting board or surface
- Damp cloth and dry towel for wiping and drying hands
- Paper plates and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Prepare the crookneck squash—wash the outside of the crookneck squash well.
- Assemble supplies; keep the knife in a safe place until ready to use.

A2: Crookneck Squash...A Look Inside

Engage all the senses! The children will see and feel the inside of a crookneck squash, then smell and taste it.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Describe the appearance, smell, and taste of a crookneck squash;
- Tell that all of the crookneck squash can be eaten including the seeds, flesh, and peel.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing

- Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).



Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Have the children gather around the area with the crookneck squash and cutting board. Review with children how to be safe around sharp knives: only adults use them, children keep their hands away, and do not touch sharp knives.
- Review what was learned about crookneck squash in Activity A1. If you didn't do Activity A1, tell the children you have a crookneck squash to share today.
- Tell the children crookneck squash grow on the ground. We have to wash the outside very well to remove soil and germs before we cut it open. Tell the children you have already washed the crookneck squash.
- Cut the crookneck squash in half to reveal the inside. Let the children know they will get to touch the inside if they want a little later.
- Cut a section of crookneck squash into small wedges with the peel and seeds intact. On a plate, give each child a small wedge of crookneck squash to look at, touch, and smell.

Activity continued...

- Talk with the children about the inside of the crookneck squash. Ask the following questions and ask additional questions if you like.
 - ▶ What color is the inside of the crookneck squash? (White)
 - ▶ What does the inside of the crookneck squash look like? (Seeds and white flesh of the crookneck squash)
 - ▶ How does the inside feel? (The flesh feels smooth and firm, the seeds feel like small, flat bumps)
 - ▶ How does the crookneck squash smell? (Mild, earthy, or no smell)

Words To Grow

Seeds	Flesh
Peel	Smooth
Cool	Yellow
White	Mild
Crunchy	

Tasting Activity

- Once the children have explored their own piece of crookneck squash, invite them to taste the crookneck squash. Tell the children that all of the parts of the squash may be eaten: flesh, seeds, and peel.
- How does the crookneck squash feel in their mouth? (Smooth, firm, crunchy)
- How does the crookneck squash taste? (Mild)
- After everyone has sampled their own crookneck squash wedge, invite the children to come to the board and feel the squash half with the seeds.
- After the children have felt the half with seeds, have the children wipe their hands on the damp cloth and dry with the towel.
- Cover and refrigerate any remaining untouched crookneck squash for use in the next day or two in future activities or snacks.



Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Garden Bookmark Art

Activity: Have the children make Garden Bookmarks, with drawings of crookneck squash on them for a creative connection to this activity (see Booklet 1, Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 28).



A3: Crookneck Squash Sandwiches

The children make sandwiches with crookneck squash slices. They explore the feel, smell, and taste of crookneck squash.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Make a simple snack with crookneck squash;
- Taste a new food featuring crookneck squash.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing

- Explain that we always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).

Materials Needed

- Crookneck squash, about 1-2 inches in diameter
- Mozzarella or cheddar cheese slices
- Plates and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Prepare crookneck squash—wash the outside of the crookneck squash well and cut into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch slices, two per child.
- Cut cheese slices into triangles or squares, one slice per child.
- Prepare a plate for each child with two slices of squash and one piece of cheese on the plate.





Activity Length:
10 minutes

The Activity

- Have each child seated at the table(s).
- Explain that we always wash crookneck squash under running water before they are eaten. Tell the children you have already washed the crookneck squash.
- Give each child a paper plate with at least two thin slices of crookneck squash and one slice of cheese.
- Tell the children they are going to make a sandwich with crookneck squash.
- Show the children how to place the cheese between the crookneck squash slices to make a sandwich. Have the children note the difference in shapes between the round squash slice and the triangle or square cheese slice in the sandwich.
- Remind the children of the interesting curved shape of a crookneck squash.
- After making the crookneck squash sandwiches, invite the children to eat their snack.
- As the children eat, ask them to describe how the crookneck squash:
 - ▶ smells (mild);
 - ▶ feels in the mouth (cool, smooth, firm, and crunchy); and
 - ▶ tastes (fresh).

Words To Grow

Slice	Smooth
Cool	Firm
Crunchy	Round
Triangle	Cheese



B. Crookneck Squash... Where Do You Come From? Planting Activities

Crookneck Squash Growing at Home #2: Send a copy of this resource home with each child at the start of Section B activities.

Materials Needed

- Crookneck squash seed packet
- Yardstick or two 12" rulers
- Drawing of crookneck squash (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, pages 61-62)
- Crookneck squash
- Fork or tongs
- Napkins
- **Optional:** Ranch dressing, or if you have completed the spinach activities, Dilly Spinach Dip (see Spinach Lane Growing at Home #1 Materials, page 31)

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Prepare crookneck squash sticks for tasting.
- Assemble materials in central area.
- Make copies of Crookneck Squash Growing at Home #2—one set per child.

B1: Crookneck Squash Start as Seeds

The children see and touch crookneck squash seeds and learn how far apart to plant seeds.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Describe how a crookneck squash grows from a seed into a plant that produces crookneck squash;
- Describe the resources needed to grow crookneck squash.





Activity Length:
10 minutes

The Activity

- Tell the children they will learn about how crookneck squash grow. Show the children the crookneck squash seeds. Tell them the seeds are similar to the ones from the inside of the crookneck squash. People buy packets of seeds to grow crookneck squash in gardens.
- Pass the seeds around. Let the children touch and count the seeds.
- Explain that the crookneck squash seeds are planted at least 2 feet apart in the soil. The crookneck squash plants need enough room to spread out when they grow. Have two children hold the rulers between them to show the distance. Have the children return to the group.
- Explain that the crookneck squash seeds are planted in the soil in the spring. The sun and rain help them grow into long vines above the ground. Yellow flowers bloom on the vines. Where the flowers bloom on the vines, crookneck squash will grow during the summer. Show drawing of crookneck squash growing on the vine in a field.
- Explain that crookneck squash are picked when they are tender and still have a shiny or glossy appearance. Squash stems and leaf stalks are prickly so it is best to wear gardening gloves when picking squash. Show drawing of ripe crookneck squash in a field. The squash are taken to a store or a farmers' market where people buy them and take them home to eat. Show drawing of crookneck squash at a farmers' market.
- Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).
- Offer crookneck squash sticks for tasting, using a fork or tongs to serve. Note that sticks are straight, not curved like the whole crookneck squash. Serve squash sticks with dip, if desired.

Words To Grow

Seeds	Soil
Sun	Water
Space	Plants



Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Gardening Gloves Craft

Activity: Make Gardening Gloves for growing crookneck squash. Explain to the children that squash stems and leaves are prickly and gloves can protect the hands of those picking squash (see Booklet 1, Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 37).

Materials Needed

- Crookneck squash seed packets
- 5 to 6 ounce paper cups, one per child
- Potting mix or soil
- Water for soil in a small spray bottle
- Plastic spoons or scoops, one per child
- Unsharpened pencils, with a line marking $\frac{1}{2}$ inch
- Water proof pens or markers
- Wooden craft sticks
- Table covers, if desired
- Smocks for the children, optional
- Sunny location and/or fluorescent lights if planning to grow plants indoors

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Prepare potting mix or soil.
- Divide into containers, one for every three children.
- Write Crookneck Squash on the wooden plant marker.
- At the table(s), place a small paper cup, three seeds, and a plastic spoon per child.
- Put a small scoop in each container of potting soil if not using spoons.
- Plan to serve Squash Vegetable Soup at snack or mealtime (see Crookneck Squash Growing at Home #2 recipe, page 34).

B2: Plant a Crookneck Squash Seed

The children plant crookneck squash seeds in the soil and learn what the seeds need to grow. (See Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, Grow Seedlings Indoors, page 53.)

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Describe the resources needed to grow crookneck squash;
- Experience planting a crookneck squash seed.

Optional Activity: How to Grow a Seedling in a Bag (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 52). Display this visual in the classroom. Check daily for progress and compare to the growth of the children's plants



Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Help each child write his/her name on their cup.
- During the activity, help the children:
 - ▶ Fill their cups about three-quarters full with moist potting soil.
 - ▶ Gently tap the sides and bottom of their container with their index finger to settle but not pack the soil.
 - ▶ Poke three holes in the soil spaced around the cup. Use the marked unsharpened pencil to make holes $\frac{1}{2}$ inch deep.
 - ▶ Place a seed in each hole and gently cover the seeds with soil.
 - ▶ Lightly spray water over the top of the soil; help any children needing assistance.
 - ▶ If using wooden plant markers, stick one in the soil close to the inside curve of the cup.
- During the activity, tell the children:
 - ▶ The seeds will grow in the potting soil as plants grow in the soil outside.
 - ▶ The seeds need soil, water, light, and warmth to grow into plants.

Activity continued...

- ▶ Inside, we can use lights to give plants warmth and light, just as the sun helps outside plants grow.
- ▶ The seeds will grow first into very small plants (seedlings), then into larger plants. These larger plants, if planted outside in a garden, will continue to grow with sunlight and water. Crookneck squash will grow on the larger plants.
- Have the children set their cups in a sunny spot or under lights.
- Have the children check their cups weekly to see the progress of the seeds growing into plants.

Activity Connection to Snack or Mealtime

While eating Squash Vegetable Soup at snack or mealtime, talk about how the seeds planted in the soil will grow plants. The plants will grow and produce crookneck squash after a summer of water, sun, and warmth.



Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Decorated Garden Bag:

Have each child make a Decorated Garden Bag by drawing pictures of crookneck squash on them. Use the crookneck squash Decorated Garden Bags to send home each child's cup of planted crookneck seeds (see Booklet I, Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 27).





Materials Needed

- A crookneck squash seed tape
- Garden or flowerbed, 12 feet or longer by 18 inches wide
- Hoe or trowel
- Garden hose with sprinkler nozzle or watering can

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Prepare a seed tape (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, Make a Seed Tape, page 54).
- Prepare garden or flowerbed for planting by tilling (breaking up) and fertilizing the soil (Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, Green Thumb Guide, Gardening Outdoors, page 58).
- Plan to serve crookneck squash at snack or mealtime (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, Ten Terrific Ways..., page 48).

B3: Plant a Crookneck Squash Seed or Start Outdoors

The children plant crookneck squash seeds or plant start(s) and learn what crookneck squash seeds need to grow into plants.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Describe the resources needed to grow crookneck squash;
- Experience planting a crookneck squash seed or start.

Planting Options:

- If you have grown crookneck squash seedlings from seeds inside and hardened the plants for outdoor planting, you can substitute the plants for the seed tape.
- Follow the directions on the back of the crookneck squash seed packet to plant seeds directly into the ground.
- You can also purchase crookneck squash starts at a greenhouse and plant directly into the ground. Refer to starts or plants instead of seeds during the activity.





Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Take the children and the crookneck squash seeds or tape seed outside. Explain that today they will plant crookneck squash seeds and learn what seeds need to grow into plants.
- Point to the sun. Ask the children how the sunlight feels on their skin. (Warm)
- Explain that the light and warmth of the sun helps crookneck squash seeds grow into plants that will produce more crookneck squash.
- Show the children the soil in a garden or flowerbed. Let them touch the soil. Ask them how the soil feels. (Wet or dry, hard or soft) Explain that crookneck squash seeds need soil to grow into plants.
- Run some water from a hose or pour some from a container and let the children touch it. Ask how it feels. (Wet) Explain that water helps plants grow. Explain that water for plants usually comes as rain. Plants like crookneck squash need lots of water so farmers' and gardeners use sprinklers in addition to rain to make sure the plants have plenty of water.
- Have the children help lay the prepared seed tapes in the soil at the preferred planting depth of $\frac{1}{2}$ inch, cover with soil, and water. Remind the children of how far apart crookneck squash are planted (at least 2 feet apart).



Green Thumb Guide

Is space limited? Try planting crookneck squash in an existing shrub bed. Miniature varieties of crookneck squash also will grow in a large container; at least 2 feet deep and 2 feet in diameter (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, Container Gardens, page 55). To adapt this activity to plant in a container, see Plant a Strawberry Jar, Strawberry Patch B3.

Activity Connection to Snack or Mealtime

Talk about the crookneck squash seeds planted while eating crookneck squash at snack or mealtime.



Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Garden Scene Note Cards:

Have the children create a Crookneck Squash Garden Scene Note Card to send to a family member living in another town. The note cards can be mailed with a few seeds and growing instructions (see Booklet 1, Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 30).



C. Crookneck Squash Stories and Songs

C1: Cool Puppy Pup's Crookneck Squash Lunch Party Video

View Cool Puppy Pup's Crookneck Squash Lunch Party Segment with the children. Discuss the crookneck squash facts covered in this delightful video and have them try Cool Puppy Pup's favorite way to eat crookneck squash.

Objective

The children will be able to describe how crookneck squash are grown, harvested, and eaten.

Materials Needed

- Cool Puppy Pup DVD
- TV and DVD Player
- Crookneck squash
- Margarine
- Plates, spoons, and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Cue the DVD to start at the Crookneck Squash segment.
- Prepare cooked and mashed crookneck squash with a little margarine; keep warm in the oven or reheat in the microwave before serving.





Activity Length:
15 minutes

The Activity

- Gather the children and watch the Crookneck Squash segment of the video.
- After viewing the segment, ask the children to name their favorite part of the video. Use their responses to lead into a discussion about the video. During the discussion, include the questions below to review Cool Puppy Pup's main points from the video segment.
- In the video, did Cool Puppy Pup say:
 - ▶ Crookneck squash was a fruit or a vegetable? (Vegetable)
 - ▶ What shape is crookneck squash? (Fat and round on one end, thin and crooked on the other)
 - ▶ What color is the outside rind? (Light yellow) How does it feel? (Smooth)
 - ▶ Cool Puppy Pup said the inside of crookneck squash is what color? (White)
 - ▶ Are crookneck squash's small white seeds on its inside or outside? (Inside)
 - ▶ Did Cool Puppy Pup say we can eat the skin, the insides, and the seeds? (Yes)
- At Tasty Acres Farm the farmer talked about how crookneck squash grow.
 - ▶ Where do crookneck squash grow? (On a farm)
 - ▶ Do crookneck squash grow on vines above or below the ground? (Above the ground)
 - ▶ Where are crookneck squash shipped after they are picked? (To stores and farmers' markets)
- Have the children name some of the ways that crookneck squash can be eaten: with pasta, in soup, in muffins and bread, or cooked and mashed with just a little margarine.
- Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).
- Conclude the activity by telling the children they are going to eat crookneck squash the way that Cool Puppy Pup likes crookneck squash best of all.
- Serve the cooked and mashed crookneck squash.



Connection to Garden Art and Crafts

Make a Scarecrow: Cut a small crookneck squash in half lengthwise so that the flat, cut surface can be dipped in paint while holding onto the outer portion of the squash. Stamp the curvy shape of crookneck squash on the clothing of the scarecrow in waterproof paints (see Booklet 1, Garden Art and Crafts Section, page 38).



C2: Reading Activity

Read story books to the children that are about or include the activities of growing and/or eating fruits and vegetables. Listening to such stories can encourage children to adopt positive behaviors that can last a lifetime, like trying new fruits and vegetables.

Objective

Children will describe the fun and interesting stories about fruits and/or vegetables that were read to them.

Materials Needed

- Books from a library or purchased books
- Space for the children to sit

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Clear a space for the children to sit around you.
- Choose a book from the Harvest of Books list (see the Tool Shed Resources, Booklet 1, page 50).
- Select a book you would like to read and either borrow it from a library or purchase it.
- Use books relevant to fruits and vegetables that may already be available to you.





Activity Length:
10 to 20 minutes
depending on the
length of the book

The Activity

- Have the children sit around you as you read them the book.
- Ask the children to listen for the names of fruits and vegetables as the story is read.

Discussion Questions:

- After reading the story, ask the children which fruits and vegetables were named in the story and what happened to them. For example,
 - ▶ Where were the fruits and vegetables grown?
 - ▶ What happened to the fruits and vegetables after they were picked?
 - ▶ Who ate the fruits and vegetables?

Add other questions that relate to the story.





C3: Old MacDonald Had a Farm, Crookneck Squash Style

The children sing about growing and eating crookneck squash and act out motions to this familiar tune.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Sing and act out motions to familiar tune;
- Say that being physically active helps us feel good.



Activity Length:
10 minutes

Materials Needed

- Crookneck squash lyrics to tune “Old MacDonald Had a Farm”
- Large space for the children to move about

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Become familiar with the words and motions of the song.

The Activity

- Lead the children in singing these new words to the tune “Old MacDonald Had a Farm” and demonstrate the suggested motions or make up new ones.
- Encourage the children to move about as they are singing.
- Explain that skipping, wiggling, stretching, running, jumping, and playing actively every day helps us to feel good and stay healthy.



Old MacDonald Had a Farm, Crookneck Squash Style

The children sing about growing and eating crookneck squash and act out motions to this familiar tune.

1st Verse

Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!
On this farm he grew crookneck squash, EIEIO!
With vines growing here and vines growing there,
Here vines, there vines, everywhere squash vines!
Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!

(Skip in place)

(Pretend to carry crookneck squash)
(Wiggle arms to left and right repeatedly using large, vigorous motions)

(Skip in place)

2nd Verse

Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!
On this farm he grew crookneck squash, EIEIO!
With sunshine here and sunshine there,
Here sun, there sun, everywhere sun shines!
Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!

(Skip in place)

(Pretend to carry crookneck squash)
(Hold hands in circle above head and jump to face 4 corners & sides of room)

(Skip in place)

3rd Verse

Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!
On this farm he grew some squash, EIEIO!
With a harvest here, and a harvest there,
Here a harvest, there a harvest, everywhere a squash harvest.
Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!

(Skip in place)

(Pretend to carry crookneck squash)
(Pretend to wheel a heavy wheelbarrow)
(Pretend to wheel a heavy wheelbarrow)

(Skip in place)

4th Verse

Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!
On this farm he grew some squash, EIEIO!
With a bite, bite here, and a bite, bite there,
Here a bite, there a bite, everywhere a crunchy bite.
Old MacDonald had a farm, EIEIO!

(Skip in place)

(Pretend to carry crookneck squash)
(Pretend to eat crookneck squash)
(Pretend to eat crookneck squash)

(Skip in place)





D. Introducing... MyPyramid for Preschoolers Nutrition Education Activities

Crookneck Squash Growing at Home #3: Send a copy of this resource home with each child at the start of Section D activities.

Materials Needed

- *MyPyramid for Preschoolers* poster (see Booklet 1)
- Crookneck squash and zucchini squash, at least two of each type of squash
- Plates and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Review the foods and activities depicted on the poster.
- Display the poster.
- Add a photo or illustration of crookneck squash to the Vegetables group of the poster.
- Cut a crookneck squash and a zucchini squash in half.
- Prepare slices of crookneck squash and zucchini squash with the skin and seeds intact, at least one per child.
- Make copies of *MyPyramid for Preschoolers* coloring page (new or use copies from a previous D1 activity), one per child.
- Copy Crookneck Squash Growing at Home #3—one set per child.

D1: Savor the Flavor of Squash

Introduce the children to the *MyPyramid for Preschoolers* poster. The children find crookneck squash and other summer squash (zucchini) in the Vegetables group of *MyPyramid for Preschoolers*. They taste the difference between zucchini and crookneck squash.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Say that crookneck squash is found in the Vegetables group of *MyPyramid for Preschoolers*;
- Say that eating vegetables like crookneck squash help keep us healthy;
- Compare crookneck squash to zucchini squash;
- Say that being physically active every day helps us feel good and is fun;
- Say that eating foods from the different food groups each day helps us grow and be healthy;
- Identify a food from each of the five food groups.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing and Polite Tasting

- Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43, for directions).
- If necessary, remind the children about polite food tasting habits (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 44, for details).



Activity Length:
25 minutes; 30 minutes
if optional coloring
activity conducted

The Activity

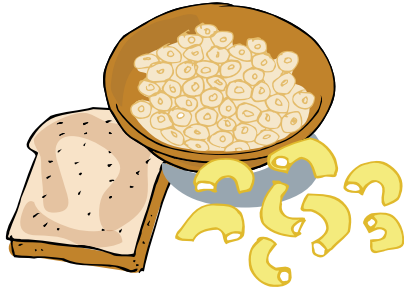
Learning the Food Groups of MyPyramid for Preschoolers

- Seat the children in a semicircle on the floor in view of the *MyPyramid for Preschoolers* poster.
- Tell the children today they are going to learn about ways to be healthy and have fun every day. Tell the children that the best part is they like to do what helps them be healthy: they like to eat a variety of foods and they like to play.
- Point out the *MyPyramid for Preschoolers* poster to the children. Ask the children to tell you what they see on the poster. Accept all correct answers, such as food, specific foods by name, children playing, and specific activities by name, etc.

This activity continues on the following pages.



Grains



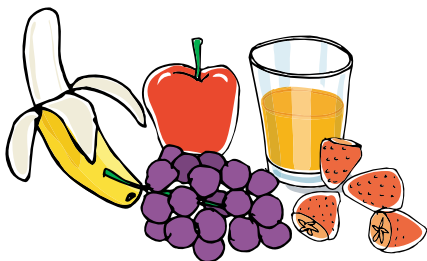
- Point to the orange band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (orange). Tell the children that foods made from grains are in the Grains group represented by the orange color band. Point to the bread and the cereal in the Grains group below the orange band of the poster and state that bread and cereal give us energy to play. Ask two children to come to the poster, point to a food in the orange section, and name the food. After each child names a food, repeat the name of the food, and state that _____ (the food named) and other foods from the Grains group also give us energy to play.
- Children this age may not know what a grain is. Tell them grains come from plants such as wheat, oats, and corn. Grains are used to make foods like cereal, bread, and pasta.

Vegetables



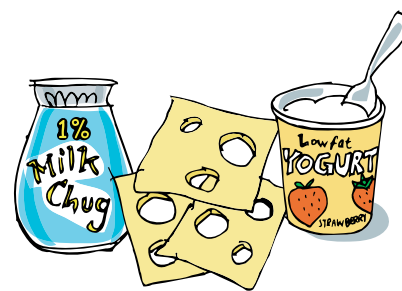
- Point to the green band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (green). Tell the children that foods from plants called vegetables are in the Vegetables group represented by the green color band. Point out the crookneck squash in the Vegetables group below the green band of the poster. Ask the children to name this vegetable (crookneck squash). Ask the children to name a crookneck squash's color (yellow). Explain that eating a yellow/orange-colored vegetable, like a crookneck squash, often is a way to be healthy. Ask two children to come to the poster, point to a vegetable below the green section, and name the vegetable. After each child names a vegetable, repeat the name of the vegetable and state that _____ (the vegetable named) and other foods from the Vegetables group also help keep us healthy.

Fruits



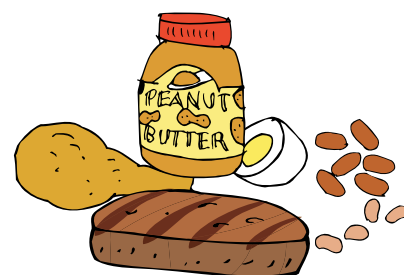
- Point to the red band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (red). Tell the children that foods from plants called fruits are in the Fruits group represented by the red color band. Point to the peaches and strawberries shown in the Fruits group below the red band of the poster and state that peaches and strawberries help keep us healthy. Ask two children to come to the poster, point to a fruit in the red section, and name the fruit. After each child names a fruit, repeat the name of the fruit, and state that _____ (the fruit named) and other foods from the Fruits group help keep us healthy.

- Point to the blue band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (blue). Tell the children that milk and foods made from milk are in the Milk group represented by the blue color band. Point to the milk and yogurt in the Milk group below the blue band and state that milk and yogurt help us build strong bones. Tell the children that it is good to choose lowfat and fat-free milk, yogurt, and cheese when given a choice. Ask two children to come to the poster, point out a food in the blue section, and name the food. After each child names a food, repeat the name of the food, and state that _____ (the food named) and other foods from the Milk group also help us build strong bones.



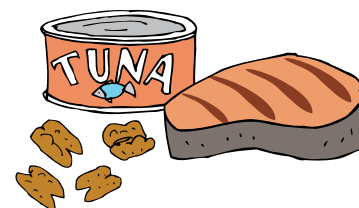
Meat and Beans

- Point to the purple band of color on the poster and ask the children to name the color (purple). Tell the children that foods from animals and some plants are in the Meat and Beans group represented by the purple color band. Point to sliced meat, fish, egg, and peanut butter in the Meat and Beans group below the purple band and state that they help our muscles grow. Ask two children to come to the poster, point out a food in the purple section, and name the food. After each child names a food, repeat the name of the food, and state that _____ (the food named) and other foods from the Meat and Beans group also help our muscles grow. (Note: if only foods that come from animals are selected, point out a food from plants and name it. If only foods from plants are selected, point out a food that comes from animals and name it.)



Oils

- Children may be curious about the yellow band of color on *MyPyramid for Preschoolers*. Tell them it is not a food group but represents oils. Everyone needs some oils; good ways to get oils are from eating fish, nuts, and seeds.





Review Activity

- While the children are still seated, point to each food group color band on the *MyPyramid for Preschoolers* poster.
- Ask the children to name the food group each color represents and to name a food from that group.

- **Orange** – Grains group
- **Green** – Vegetables group
- **Red** – Fruits group
- **Blue** – Milk group
- **Purple** – Meat and Beans group

- If the children mention the yellow band for oils, remind them that oils are not a food group but everyone needs some oils.

Tasting Activity

- Show the children the crookneck squash and zucchini. Tell the children that zucchini is a squash similar to crookneck squash but different in color.
- Give the children squash samples to taste. Note both are firm, crunchy, and taste mild.
- After tasting the samples of squash, invite the children to feel and smell the different squash halves. Discard halves at end of lesson or reserve to use for Stamped Wrapping Paper.
- Ask the children to name different ways to eat vegetables like squash at different meals and snacks. Accept all answers such as fresh slices or sticks, in vegetable salads, baked in muffins, etc.

Be Active–Crookneck Squash Skip

Note to Caregiver: The *2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommends that children engage in at least 60 minutes of physical activity on most, preferably all, days of the week.

- Point to the various activities depicted on the *MyPyramid for Preschoolers* poster. Ask the children to tell you why it is important to be physically active and play every day, i.e., it helps you be strong and healthy, and is fun. Tell the children that today they will learn to be physically active in a way that reminds them of the crookneck squash they just tasted.

- Take the children to a large open space or outdoors. Ask the children to stand in a large circle, standing so that one arm can be extended into the circle and one arm can be extended outside of the circle. Show the children how to extend the arm on the outside of the circle over the head and curve in toward the inside of the circle, similar to the curve of a crookneck squash. Tell the children they are going to skip around the large circle with their arms curved like crookneck squash while you call out the word “squash.” When the children hear you say the word “squish,” they will stop skipping and lower their arms. The children turn to face the opposite direction and curve the opposite arm over their heads like the curve of a crookneck squash. The children skip around the large circle as you call out the word “squash.” When they hear the word “squish,” the children stop, change directions, and curve the opposite arm over their heads to repeat skipping until the activity is concluded.
- Have the children curve their arms like crookneck squash, and say, “1, 2, 3, Squash, Squash, Squash. (repeat saying squash several more times)... Squash!”
- Continue to have the children skip in a large circle for several minutes. If desired, increase the activity difficulty for older children by occasionally asking the children to skip backwards in the large circle for one round of skipping.
- Conclude the activity by telling the children it is fun to eat squash and be physically active by doing a Crookneck Squash Skip.

Optional Concluding Activity: Have the children sit at tables with coloring supplies. Distribute a copy of *MyPyramid for Preschoolers* coloring page (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 83) to each child. Ask the children to color the Vegetables group band green and draw and color a crookneck squash near the Vegetables group or use the Blackline Master of a crookneck squash (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 74) and have the children color the crookneck squash. With older children have them copy the dot-to-dot outline of the word “Vegetables” in the box under the Vegetables band. Ask the children to color the girl shown on the side of the *MyPyramid for Preschoolers* graphic and draw a favorite way they like to be physically active on the page. If desired, collect the sheet for use in future fruit and vegetable units in *Grow It, Try It, Like It!*



Materials Needed

- Pasta Salad Recipe ingredients—see the Child Care Center version of this recipe on page 28
- Plates, spoons, and napkins

What To Do Ahead of Time

- Prepare the recipe.
- Prepare table(s).

D2: Gosh, I Love Squash!

The children taste a new crookneck squash recipe and talk about different ways to eat crookneck squash.

Objectives

The children will be able to:

- Taste crookneck squash in a combination food, Crookneck Squash Pasta Salad;
- Describe many different ways to eat crookneck squash.

Before the Activity—Hand Washing and Polite Tasting

- Explain that we should always wash our hands before preparing and eating food. Have the children wash their hands (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 43 for directions).
- If necessary, remind the children about polite food tasting habits (see Booklet 1, Tool Shed Resources, page 44, for details).





Activity Length:
10-15 minutes

The Activity

- Seat the children at the table(s).
- Ask the children to share what they remember learning about crookneck squash.
- Encourage responses such as how and where crookneck squash grows; how it looks, feels, smells, and taste; and other material covered in the unit.
- Tell the children that the unit on crookneck squash ends with a celebration of a new way to eat crookneck squash. Crookneck squash can be part of a mixture of other foods.
- Show the children the Crookneck Squash Pasta Salad and talk about the other foods in the salad.
- Serve the children Crookneck Squash Pasta Salad.
- As the children are eating, ask:
 - ▶ What crookneck squash recipes have they made with their parents?
 - ▶ What different ways have they eaten crookneck squash?
 - ▶ What new ways do they think crookneck squash could be eaten?
- Give suggestions such as soups, salads, or as a side dish (e.g., squash and apples), in breads and muffins, and also cut into sticks and served with lowfat dip.

Words To Grow

Salad	Crookneck Squash
Carrot	Pasta
Mixture	



Crookneck Squash Pasta Salad

For the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Preparation Time: 20 minutes, including cooking time

Yield: 10 ½-cup child-size portions (may vary slightly depending on type of pasta used) ½ cup serving provides the equivalent of ¼ ounce of cooked lean meat alternate and ⅛ cup of vegetable towards CACFP meal pattern

- ½ cup pasta (macaroni, rotini, small shells), uncooked
- 1 small crookneck or yellow squash (approximately 1 cup)
- 1 medium carrot (approximately ½ cup)
- 1 ½ cups fresh spinach leaves, washed and dried, and stems removed
- 4 oz lowfat or fat-free cheddar cheese, cubed (1 cup)

Dressing:

- 5 Tbsp reduced-fat or fat-free mayonnaise
- 1 ½ Tbsp orange juice
- ½ tsp dried sweet basil
- ½ tsp prepared mustard
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- ¼ tsp black pepper

1. Cook pasta with water according to directions on the package.
2. Drain pasta. Chill in refrigerator if desired while preparing vegetables.
3. Wash the squash and carrots under cool tap water and scrub with a vegetable brush. Trim ends and remove any bad spots. Do NOT peel either the squash or the carrots.
4. Dice the squash and shred the carrots then place them in a medium-size bowl.
5. Wash the fresh spinach in cool tap water with a salad spinner or colander and thoroughly dry. Remove stems and any bad leaves. Stack several spinach leaves on top of each other and roll together. Slice crosswise through the roll, making very thin slivers of spinach.
6. Add the pasta, spinach, and cheese to the squash-carrot mixture; toss to combine.
7. Make the dressing in a small bowl. Thoroughly blend the mayonnaise, orange juice, dried basil, prepared mustard, garlic, and black pepper.
8. Pour dressing over the salad mixture and toss to evenly distribute the dressing.
9. Serve immediately or refrigerate and serve chilled.

Variation: Substitute another summer squash, such as zucchini, sunburst, or patty pan squash for crookneck squash. Substitute your favorite Italian salad dressing for a change of taste.

Cooking with Children

Young children can:

- Help wash and scrub carrots and squash
- Help use a salad spinner to wash spinach
- Dry spinach leaves washed in a colander between sheets of paper towel
- Wipe up spills

Adults should cook pasta and use a sharp knife to cut all vegetable pieces, make dressing, and toss salad



Nutrients per 1 child-size serving of ½ cup (using elbow macaroni):

Calories 65, Protein 3.9 g, Carbohydrate 7.4 g, Total Fat 2.3 g, Saturated Fat .7 g, Cholesterol 5 mg, Vitamin A 1935 IU, Vitamin C 4.1 mg, Iron 0.6 mg, Calcium 60 mg, Sodium 140 mg, Dietary Fiber 0.8 g

Growing at Home Materials...

for Crookneck Squash Lessons



Squash Quick Bread

Preparation Time: 20 minutes

Cooking Time: 20-25 minutes for muffins,
35-40 minutes for bread

Serves: 24 child-size servings of ½ of a ¾"-thick slice of bread or ½ muffin

Serves: 12 adult-size portions of one ¾"-thick slice of bread or 1 muffin

- 1½ cups shredded crookneck squash, 3 to 5 small squash, see Tip below
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup whole-wheat flour
- 1 Tbsp baking powder
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ cup sugar
- ¾ tsp ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp ground nutmeg
- 1 large egg, beaten
- ¼ cup canola oil
- 1 cup lowfat or fat-free milk
- Nonstick cooking spray

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Wash the squash and trim ends. Do NOT peel. Shred squash. Press the shredded squash between paper towels to remove excess moisture, if necessary.
3. Into large mixing bowl, mix flours, baking powder, salt, sugar, cinnamon, and nutmeg until blended. Add shredded squash and toss with dry ingredients to coat shreds.
4. Into small mixing bowl, beat the egg with fork.
5. Add canola oil and lowfat or fat-free milk to beaten egg and mix.
6. Add egg/oil mixture to dry ingredients. Mix only until ingredients are combined. The batter should be slightly lumpy.
7. Spray a 9"x5"x3" loaf pan with nonstick cooking spray. For muffins, spray a 12-cup muffin pan or line pan with paper baking cups.
8. Pour mixture into loaf pan or muffin pan, filling each cup about ¾ full.
9. Bake for 35-40 minutes for loaf or 20-25 minutes for muffins, or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean and bread is lightly brown.
10. Cool in pan for 10 minutes. Remove from pan and cool completely before slicing loaf into 12 ¾" slices and serve. Muffins can be served warm.

Variation: Substitute 2 cups 100% whole-wheat pastry flour for the all-purpose and whole-wheat flours. Use a mini-muffin pan and reduce the cooking time to 10-12 minutes. Substitute zucchini for yellow summer squash.

Tip: It is best to purchase small squash because they contain smaller seeds and have less water. If large squash are used, remove the seeds before grating. Purchase one pound of squash for each loaf or dozen muffins. Try this recipe with zucchini or summer squash for a change.

Cooking with Children

Young children can:

- Help wash squash
- Help dry shredded squash between paper towels
- Help mix dry ingredients
- Help beat egg

Adults should cut and shred squash, combine wet and dry ingredients, transfer batter to pan(s), and do all steps involved with hot oven.



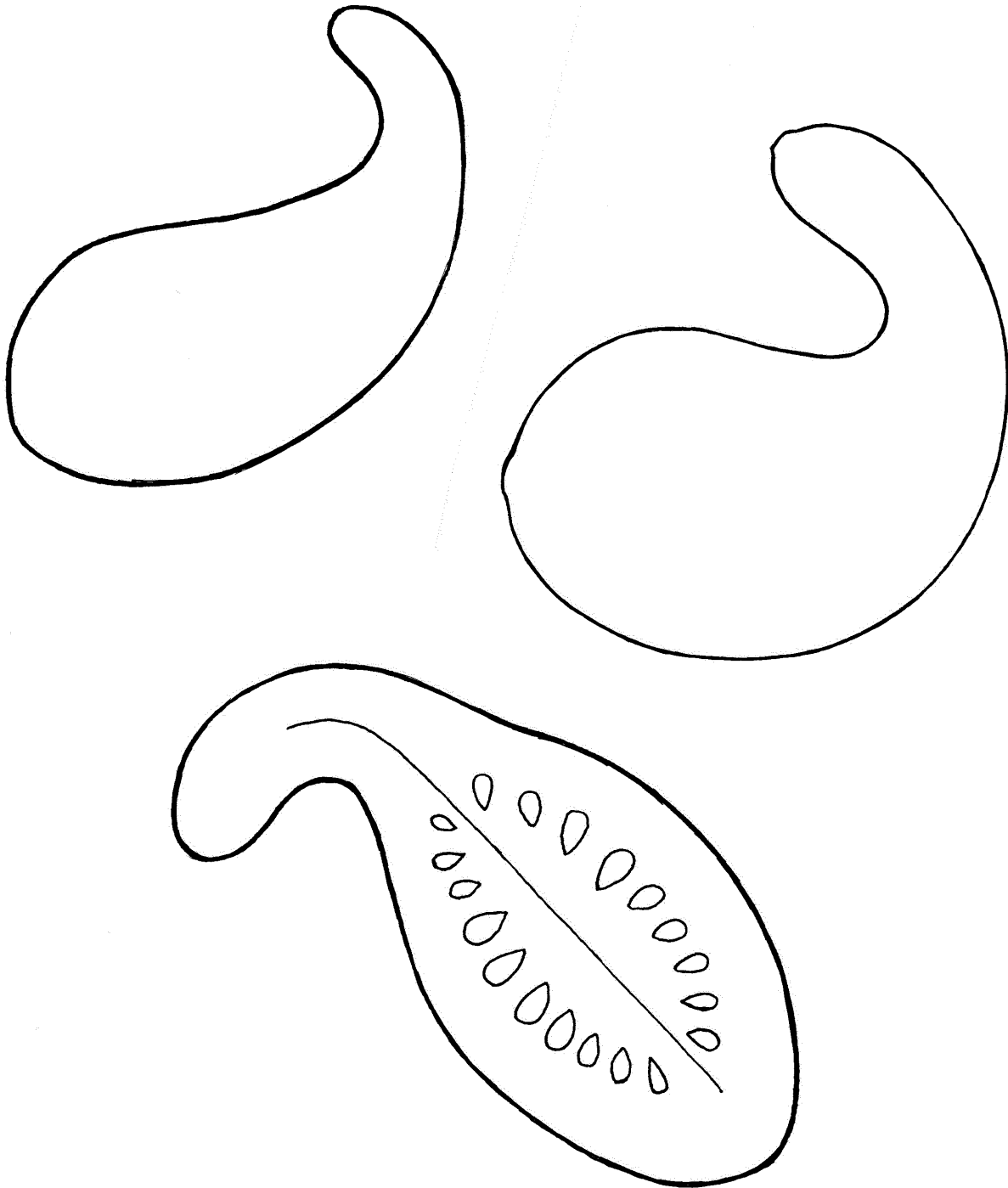
Nutrients (using lowfat milk) per 1 child-size serving of ½ of a ¾" thick slice of bread: Calories 74, Protein 2 g, Carbohydrate 10.7 g, Total Fat 2.8 g, Saturated Fat 0.3 g, Cholesterol 10 mg, Vitamin A 48 IU, Vitamin C 1.2 mg, Iron 0.6 mg, Calcium 52 mg, Sodium 118 mg, Dietary Fiber 0.9 g

Crookneck Squash Are Fun To Color!

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Crookneck squash is a light yellow color. Young squash has smooth skin. As the squash grows, the skin becomes slightly bumpy. The inside of the squash is white and firm. Crookneck squash has flat, white seeds on the inside. Help your child color

the drawings of crookneck squash below. After the activity, taste slices of raw crookneck squash with your child's favorite dip or even peanut butter. Raw vegetables like squash are a great snack choice.



Crookneck Squash Growing at Home #2

Home Activities From Grow It, Try It, Like It!

Dear Parents and Guardians:

We have learned more about crookneck squash! We are learning how to grow these curvy vegetables.

Today your child learned how crookneck squash is grown and harvested. He/she has learned that crookneck squash:

- Start from the flat white seeds found inside the squash;
- Grow on vines above the ground;
- Need soil, water, sun, and time to grow;
- Have stems and leaf stalks that are prickly; and
- Are picked when they are tender and shiny.

Help your child continue learning about crookneck squash at home by making the colorful **Squash Vegetable Soup** recipe. Your child will enjoy helping make this recipe; the entire family will enjoy eating it. It is sure to become a favorite family recipe featuring crookneck squash.

What Crookneck Squash Needs To Grow activity (attached) gives your child the opportunity to share with you what plants need to grow. Your child loves to tell you what he or she has learned. Talking about how plants like crookneck squash grow reinforces the activities we have completed. Take this opportunity to support the learning and tasting activities we promote daily.

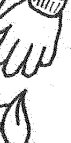
Please call if you have questions about this activity or want more information.

Sincerely,

Child Care Center Director

Tip:

Help your child experience the same food in different ways. For example, serve crookneck squash raw for a snack, dice it fine to add to tossed salad, and add chunks to soup. What ideas do you have?



Squash Vegetable Soup

Preparation Time: 25-35 minutes

Serves: 16 child-size ½-cup servings

Serves: 8 adult-size 1-cup servings

- 1 Tbsp canola oil
- ½ cup chopped onion
- 1 tsp minced garlic, fresh or from jar
- 2 15-oz cans of low-sodium chicken or beef broth
- 1 15-oz can diced tomatoes with Italian seasoning in juice
- 2 cups cubed crookneck squash, ½ inch cubes or smaller
- 1 12-oz bag frozen mixed vegetables (peas, carrots, and corn)
- 1 15-oz can small white beans, drained
- Shredded lowfat or fat-free mozzarella cheese and croutons for garnish, if desired

1. In large pot or Dutch oven, heat oil over medium heat. Add onions and cook until tender.
2. Add garlic and cook 2 more minutes.
3. Add broth, tomatoes with juice, cubed squash, and frozen vegetables; bring to a boil.
4. Reduce heat to medium low, cover, and simmer for 15-20 minutes until vegetables are tender.
5. Add white beans and heat for 5-10 minutes until heated through.

Ladle into soup bowls. Garnish with shreds of mozzarella cheese and croutons, if desired.

Variation: Substitute another summer squash, such as yellow, zucchini, sunburst, or patty pan squash.

Option: Substitute 2 tablespoons dried minced onion and 1/8 teaspoon dried minced garlic for fresh. Omit oil and start at step 3; add dried onion and garlic with other ingredients.

Cooking with Children

Young children can:

- Help wash squash
- Help ladle cubed squash and frozen vegetables into cool broth/tomato mixture in pan
- Wipe up spills
- Sprinkle cheese and croutons gently over soup bowls

Adults should do all steps involving the stove.



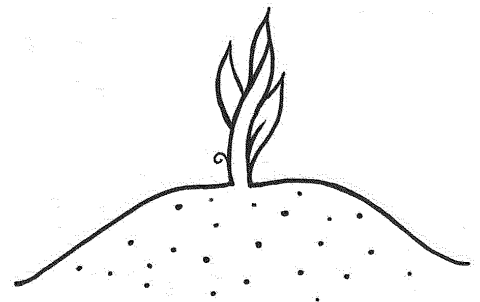
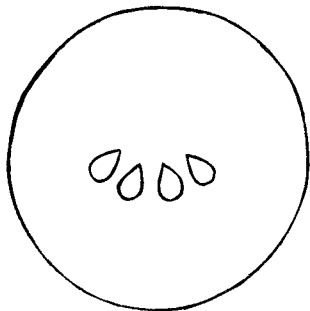
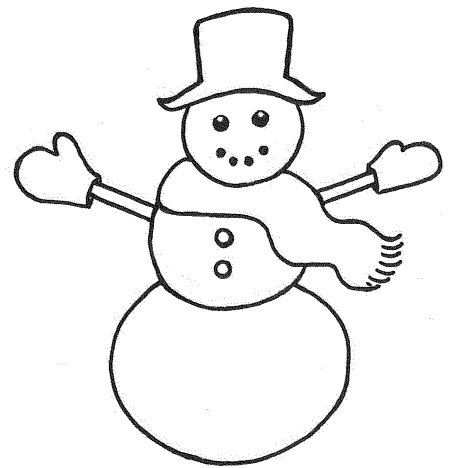
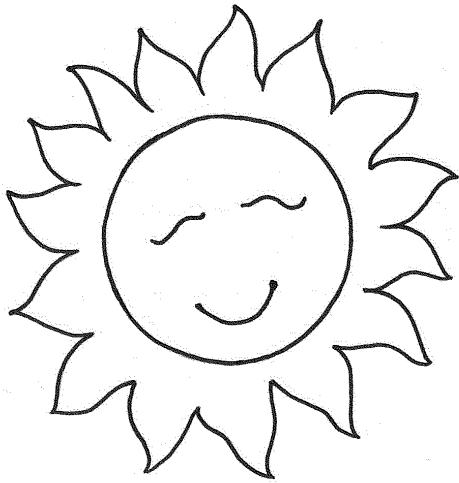
Nutrients per 1 child-size serving of ½ cup: Calories 64, Protein 3.8 g, Carbohydrate 9.8 g, Total Fat 1.4 g, Saturated Fat 0.2 g, Cholesterol 0 mg, Vitamin A 1132 IU, Vitamin C 6.1 mg, Iron 1.2 mg, Calcium 38 mg, Sodium 64 mg, Dietary Fiber 2.7 g

What Crookneck Squash Needs To Grow

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Crookneck squash plants start from the flat white seeds found inside the squash. Squash grow on vines above the ground. They can grow in home gardens or on large farms. Squash grows fast, particularly in hot weather. Squash stems and leaf

stalks are prickly so it is best to wear gloves when picking squash. Squash is picked in late summer or early fall. Ask your child to look at pictures below and draw a circle around the things a crookneck squash needs to grow.



1. sun, 2. rain, 3. soil

Crookneck Squash Growing at Home #3

Home Activities From Grow It, Try It, Like It!

Dear Parents and Guardians:

The crookneck squash unit we have enjoyed in our daily activities is completed. We finished our lessons on this vegetable today.

Ask your child about crookneck squash and how this vegetable is prepared and served. He/she has learned that crookneck squash can be:

- Cut into slices or sticks and served with lowfat dip;
- Added to soups, salads, or cooked as a side dish i.e., squash and apples;
- Baked in products such as quick breads and muffins.

You can help your child continue learning about different ways to use crookneck squash at home by making the attached recipe, **Crookneck Squash Pasta Salad**. Ask your child to help prepare this or a family recipe that includes crookneck squash. It's a sure-fire way to encourage your child to eat a new food.

Talking about crookneck squash with your child provides many ways for him/her to show what they've learned. The activity **Counting Crookneck Squash Seeds** is a great activity to do with your child. After you count the seeds, count how many different fruits and vegetables your child likes to eat. Encourage your child to try new and different foods at child care—and at home!

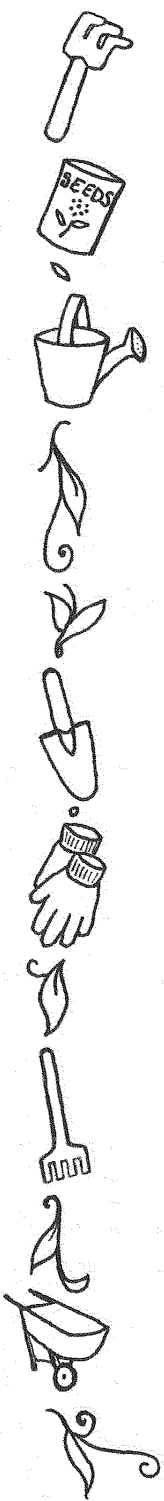
Please call if you have questions about this activity or want more information.

Sincerely,

Child Care Center Director

Tip:

Ask your child to be on spill patrol when a recipe calls for steps only an adult can do. Armed with a paper towel or damp cloth, your child can help keep the counter neat and the conversation sweet while you cook.



Crookneck Squash Pasta Salad

Preparation Time: 20 minutes, including cooking time

Serves: 10 child-size ½ cup servings,

Serves: 5 adult-size 1 cup servings

- ½ cup pasta (macaroni, rotini, small shells), uncooked
- 1 small crookneck or yellow squash (approximately 1 cup)
- 1 medium carrot (approximately ½ cup)
- 1 ½ cups fresh spinach leaves, washed and dried, and stems removed
- 4 oz lowfat or fat-free cheddar cheese, cubed (1 cup)

Dressing:

- 5 Tbsp reduced-fat or fat-free mayonnaise
- 1 ½ Tbsp orange juice
- ½ tsp dried sweet basil
- ½ tsp prepared mustard
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- ¼ tsp black pepper

1. Cook pasta with water according to directions on the package.
2. Drain pasta. Chill in refrigerator if desired while preparing vegetables.
3. Wash the squash and carrots under cool tap water and scrub with a vegetable brush, trim ends and remove any bad spots. Do NOT peel either the squash or the carrots.
4. Dice the squash and shred the carrots then place them in a medium-size bowl.
5. Wash the fresh spinach in cool tap water with a salad spinner or colander and thoroughly dry. Remove stems and any bad leaves. Stack several spinach leaves on top of each other and roll together. Slice crosswise through the roll, making very thin slivers of spinach.
6. Add the pasta, spinach, and cheese to the squash-carrot mixture; toss to combine.
7. Make the dressing in a small bowl. Thoroughly blend mayonnaise, orange juice, dried basil, prepared mustard, garlic, and black pepper.
8. Pour dressing over the salad mixture and toss to evenly distribute the dressing.
9. Serve immediately or refrigerate and serve chilled.

Variation: Substitute another summer squash, such as zucchini, sunburst, or patty pan squash for crookneck squash. Substitute your favorite Italian salad dressing for a change of taste.

Cooking with Children

Young children can:

- Help wash and scrub carrots and squash
- Help use a salad spinner to wash spinach
- Dry spinach leaves washed in a colander between sheets of paper towel and
- Wipe up spills

Adults should cook pasta and use a sharp knife to cut all vegetable pieces, make dressing, and toss salad



Nutrients per 1 child-size serving of ½ cup (using elbow macaroni):

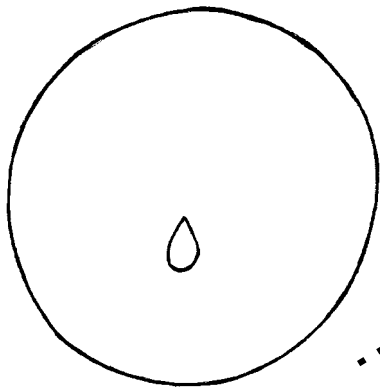
Calories 65, Protein 3.9 g, Carbohydrate 7.4 g, Total Fat 2.3 g, Saturated Fat .7 g, Cholesterol 5 mg, Vitamin A 1935 IU, Vitamin C 4.1 mg, Iron 0.6 mg, Calcium 60 mg, Sodium 140 mg, Dietary Fiber 0.8 g

Counting Crookneck Squash Seeds

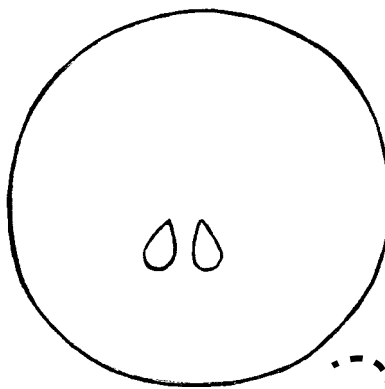
Dear Parents and Guardians:

When children are familiar with new foods, they are more willing to taste new foods. In child care, your child has learned what the inside of crookneck squash looks like. Crookneck squash have many white, flat seeds. Help your child count the number of seeds in each squash half and trace the numbers

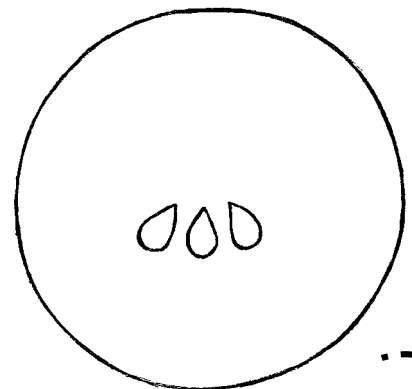
under each picture. Guide their hand as they trace the numbers, if necessary. Have your child count different ways to enjoy eating crookneck squash. Write those ideas on the lines below the traced numbers. Make a plan to enjoy a crookneck squash recipe this week!



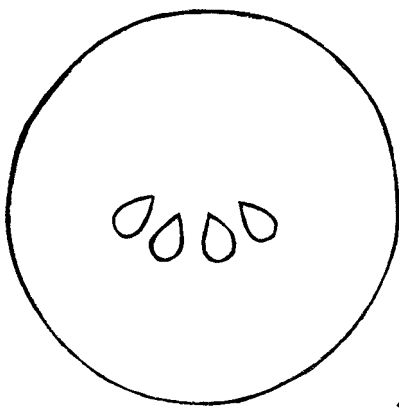
1



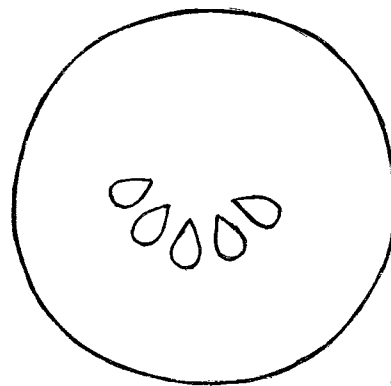
2



3



4



5



United States Department of Agriculture • Food and Nutrition Service
Find more fun resources at these Web sites:

teammnutrition.usda.gov
mypyramid.gov/preschoolers

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