



Vegetable tasting

Suggested participants – First and second level

Vegetable tasting is an easy and effective classroom activity that links directly to Health and Wellbeing outcomes. It encourages learners to explore a variety of flavours and supports discussions around food origins and the journey from farm to plate. You can use vegetables harvested from your school's growing area or source a selection of seasonal produce from a local supplier. The activities are designed to inspire healthy snacking.

What this pack contains:

- All the resources to undertake the 'Vegetable Tasting' activity with your class.
- Learning Intentions, Success Criteria and Suggested Experiences & Outcomes.
- Learning for Sustainability links.
- Lesson plan.
- Suggested additional activities.
- Teacher information and learner vegetable tasting worksheet.

Learning Outcomes

- We are learning to appreciate a diversity of foods.
- We are learning how vegetables contribute to a healthy diet.
- We are investigating where different foods come from.

Success Criteria

- I can try new foods.
- I can share information about where different foods come from.
- I can understand the role of vegetables in a healthy diet.

Experiences and Outcomes

- **HWB 1-30a** By investigating the range of foods available I can discuss how they contribute to a healthy diet.
- **HWB 2-30a** By applying my knowledge and understanding of current healthy eating advice I can contribute to a healthy eating plan.
- **HWB 1-35a / HWB 2-35a** When preparing and cooking a variety of foods, I am becoming aware of the journeys which foods make from source to consumer, their seasonality, their local availability and their sustainability.
- **SOC 1-09a** Having explored the variety of foods produced in Scotland I can discuss the importance of different types of agriculture in the production of these foods.

Learning for Sustainability

- **Goal 2 Zero Hunger** End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.
- **Goal 4** Quality education: achieve literacy and numeracy.

Introduction

- Share/discuss the learning intentions and success criteria.
- Find out more about different vegetables, how they are grown and when they are in season using our [Seasonal Vegetables in Scotland calendar resource](#).
- Talk about our sense of taste and introduce the five tastes: Sweet, Sour, Salty, Bitter, and Savory.
- Have a go at tasting some different vegetables using our [teacher information](#) and [learner worksheets](#).

Suggested discussion points

- What vegetables have you tried before?
- How many portions of vegetables should we eat each day? Why are vegetables good for us? What vegetables are in season just now? How are the vegetables grown? Encourage pupils to **observe how the vegetables are presented** – what **preservation methods** have been used (e.g. **canning, freezing, pickling**)? Have any **additional ingredients** been added (e.g. **vinegar, salt, sugar**) to preserve them? Do these ingredients **affect the taste**?
- Does the **preservation method** change the **texture** of the vegetable? Are the preserved versions **softer, wetter** or **less firm**?
- Focus on **taste** – can pupils describe what they notice? Are the vegetables **sweet, sour, salty, bitter** or **savoury (umami)**?
- Discuss how **peeling** vegetables can remove a lot of their **vitamins**, many of which are found in the **skin**. **Freezing** helps to **preserve vitamins**. Discuss the use of **vegetable skins** to make **stock** for **soups** as a way to reduce waste and retain nutrients.

Learning

- **Health & Wellbeing:** The ability to explore and discover where foods come from.
- **Social studies:** The ability to discuss the importance of different types of agriculture in the production of these foods.

Additional tasks

Tasting Vegetables with Vegetables Why not use vegetables as a way to taste other vegetables?

- **Dip carrot sticks into pesto** – highlight that **basil**, a herb, is a **key ingredient** in most green pesto recipes.
- Try making [pea hummus](#) – use a **blender** for a smooth texture, or simply **mash with a fork** for a **coarse, chunky version** if no blender is available. The video provided via the link provides step by step instructions.

These simple tasting ideas help pupils explore **flavour combinations, textures and ingredients** in a hands-on, engaging way.

Pick up our [Pea STEM Investigations pack](#) and get growing your own pea pods for tasting in class. Collaborate on a vegetable display for your class wall or plant your own rhubarb and download our [Discover Rhubarb](#) resource pack for a wide range of learning opportunities linked to social studies, maths, health & wellbeing and science.

Make your own **vegetable crisps**: thinly slice carrots, beetroot, parsnips, pat dry with kitchen towel, toss in a little Scottish rapeseed oil and a little salt and air fry at 180°C for 15 minutes turning frequently to prevent burning.

More information

- You can find a wide variety of learning resources in our [Story of Vegetables padlet](#).
- You can request a farmer to talk to your class about vegetables [via this link](#).

Social media

Please tag [therhet.bsky.social \(Bluesky\)](#) or [@TheRoyalHighlandEducationTrust \(Facebook\)](#) in your lesson photos/comments.



Vegetable tasting Teacher Information

Where possible, the best option is to use **vegetables grown in your own school garden**. However, if this is not possible, the suggestions below provide a variety of **easy-to-source vegetables** suitable for **classroom tasting**. When buying vegetables, opt for those that are **in season, local** and if packaged, look for the **Saltire** or **Union Jack**.

Try our **simple classroom activity** that gets pupils **tasting a variety of vegetables** while building their confidence with **basic data handling and maths skills**.

This is a great way to encourage pupils to try vegetables they may not have tasted before, while using their senses to explore different **flavours and textures**. Pupils will then **record their preferences in a visual, easy-to-understand way** ([learner worksheet](#)).

Decide what you want to compare - it could be as straightforward as their **favourite vegetable**, or more specific, like which **method of preserving onions** they preferred.

After the vegetable tasting you can graph your results. Download a copy of the blank bar graph template - add the vegetables you tasted along the x axis and colour the number of pupils liking the vegetable on the y axis. Each pupil colours a **block above their choice**, creating a **class graph** you can **discuss together**. A brilliant opportunity to talk about **data, preferences** and **healthy food choices** in one simple activity.

Resources required

- Tin opener
- Chopping board
- Sharp knife
- Paper plates or bowls
- Data collection templates

Optional

- Air fryer
- Blender

Suggested vegetables to taste



Carrots

Use **fresh** and **tinned carrots** to explore how **taste varies** with **storage** or **preparation**. Cut fresh into **batons** or use **pre-prepared** for convenience. Look for the **Scottish** or **UK flag** on packaging. **Homegrown** carrots can be eaten raw – just **clean thoroughly** with a **nail brush**.



Beetroot

Use **cooked beetroot** (vacuum-packed) or try **pickled** varieties: **straight cut**, **crinkle cut**, or **whole baby beetroot**. Compare **textures** across different cuts.



Potatoes

Tinned potatoes are quick and easy – just cut into **bite-sized pieces**.

For a cooked option, try:

- **Wedges or chips** (air fryer)
 - **Mashed potatoes** (microwaved)
- Experiment with **seasoning, salt, or butter** – does it affect pupils' preferences?

Vegetable tasting Teacher Information



Peas

Compare **fresh**, **tinned** (garden or marrowfat), and **defrosted frozen peas**.
Check for **Scottish** or **UK sourcing** on packaging.
Use **cocktail sticks** or **spoons** for hygienic tasting.



Broccoli

Use a **whole head** or pre-cut **florets**.
Look for **locally sourced** broccoli (Scottish or UK).



Spinach

Compare **fresh leaves** with **tinned spinach purée**.



Sweetcorn

Taste **fresh (corn on the cob)**, **tinned** and **defrosted frozen** sweetcorn.
Use **cocktail sticks** or **spoons** to serve.



Onions

Compare **brown**, **red**, **spring** and **pickled onions** (sliced red, silverskin, original).
Check labels for **Scottish** or **UK origin**.



Rhubarb

Taste **tinned** and **fresh** rhubarb (slice and roll fresh in **sugar** or **sweetener**).



Swede (Neep)

Try **raw** and **cooked** swede.
For a fun method, make a **"singing neep"**:

- Trim the top, microwave whole on a plate.
- Start with **15 minutes**, then test every **5 minutes** until soft.
- Scoop out the **flesh**. It may **whistle** as it cooks!



Herbs

Taste **parsley**, **mint**, **basil** and **chives** – all suitable to eat **raw**.
Can be easily **grown in school** or **bought locally**.
Look for the **Scottish** or **UK flag** on packaging.



Vegetable Crisps (Second Level learners)

While not fresh, **vegetable crisps** offer great discussion points:

- **Ingredient lists** – % of actual vegetable
- **Nutritional content** – added ingredients?
- **Eatwell Plate** – where do they fit?
- **Comparisons** – with regular crisps
- **Sensory evaluation** – can pupils **identify the vegetable**? What enhances **flavour**?

Vegetable tasting Learner Worksheet



Name of vegetable

What does the vegetable look like?

Which of the following describes the vegetable?

- ☐ Fresh and raw
- ☐ Frozen
- ☐ Pickled
- ☐ Tinned
- ☐ Cooked

Describe the taste of the vegetable

Describe the texture of the vegetable

What did you think of the vegetable?

- Dislike ☆
- Ok ☆ ☆
- Liked ☆ ☆ ☆

Which part of the plant are you eating?

- ☐ Root
- ☐ Stem
- ☐ Leaves
- ☐ Seeds
- ☐ Flowers

Draw a picture of your vegetable