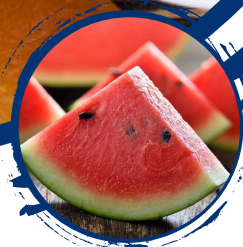




# FRESH FRUIT & Vegetable Program



**A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY TO PROVIDE FRESH  
FRUITS AND VEGETABLES, FREE OF CHARGE,  
TO ALL PRE-K TO 5TH GRADE STUDENTS. TRY SOMETHING NEW!**



## **SERVICE DATES 2025:**

### **MAY:**

- 1st** (Red, Green, & Yellow Peppers),
- 6th** (Blueberries),
- 8th** (Celery Sticks),
- 13th** (Pineapple Chunks),
- 15th** (Strawberries),
- 29th** (Watermelon)

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

Food Services Dept: 845-563-3424  
or [DJackson@necsd.net](mailto:DJackson@necsd.net)

WEB: <https://www.cn.nysed.gov/ffvp>

**NEWBURGH**  
ENLARGED CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT



#### BACKGROUND:

- All selected schools are expected to widely publicize within the school the availability of free fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetables (FFV) cannot be served as a component of the reimbursable meal or during meal service, or at the same time as the service of the breakfast or lunch or afterschool/ extended day snack program.
- **All FFV are served free of charge to all enrolled children in pre- kindergarten-5th grade.**
- Other products on their own or commingled with other foods, such as in trail mix, are not allowed.
- FFV must be available to ALL students (PK-5) any time during the school day.
- Leftovers may be recycled; however, every effort should be made to use fresh fruit and veggies in the FFVP.
- FFV must be served at least two days a week
- FFV cannot be used as a reward or gift.
- Children cannot be denied access to the FFVP for disciplinary reasons.
- Teachers directly responsible for serving the fruit or vegetable to their students in a classroom setting may consume the FFV since they are role models. The FFVP is not available to the general teacher population and other adults in the school.
- The FFV must be consumed at school, not taken home.
- Mixed fresh fruit salads made by the school **are allowable.**
- Dips for fresh vegetables **are allowed** but should be low fat and in minimal portion. (A maximum serving size of 1-2 tablespoons of dip is recommended.)
- Salsa made at the school as part of a nutrition lesson is allowed.

Nutrition Education Schools that participate in the program are expected to implement or continue nutrition education. There are several ways that FFVP can be incorporated into the existing nutrition education curriculum. Activities should fit the students and the school community. For example:

- Plant a school garden or participate in a community garden.
- Schedule the service of fresh fruits and vegetables as classroom nutrition education activities where children can prepare the FFV with their classmates and teachers.
- Plan assemblies and/or health fairs. Have students create displays or newsletters.
- Promote FFVP on monthly menus.
- Adopt school lesson plans to include nutrition education.
- Use student address systems and student broadcasts to share educational information about the importance of eating healthy.
- Consult FFVP partners to obtain low cost or no cost promotional items (posters, banners, fliers, pamphlets, buttons).
- Hold a poster contest to promote healthy eating.

#### IMPACT ON STUDENTS:

- Students ate more fruits and vegetables.
- Students consumed less high calorie, high fat vending machine snacks.
- Students had better attention spans and were less hungry throughout the day.
- There were fewer discipline problems.

NYSED would like to hear about the impact FFVP has on schools throughout NYS. Please send in pictures and best practices: [FFVP@nysed.gov](mailto:FFVP@nysed.gov)



## ALL ABOUT *Bell Peppers!*

### DID YOU KNOW?

The bell pepper is a variety of capsicum annum, a family that also includes varieties like jalapeño, cayenne pepper, chili pepper, and a few other hot peppers. While there are plenty of other pepper types that are red in color, only the red bell pepper is colloquially known as "red pepper."

Capsicum annum is native to Central and South America, and has existed for more than 7500 years. Over time, several varieties took shape and continue today as cultivars. Bell peppers were one of those varieties and were actively cultivated before Spanish exploration in the 1400s.

Bell peppers, sometimes called sweet peppers since they lack the spicy capsaicin, are technically a type of fruit that's treated as a vegetable.

### HOW DO THEY GROW?

Bell peppers need lots of sun, water, and space to grow! Bell peppers are heat-loving summer vegetables that are pest-resistant and disease-resistant.

### FUN FACTS:

- Paprika is a spice made from dried and ground red peppers from the Capsicum annum plant, which is native to Central Mexico
- A bell pepper has the highest levels of Vitamin C of any produce item. A large red pepper provides more than 300% of your daily requirement of Vitamin C and has three times more Vitamin C than an orange. Eat one today!
- Red/yellow/orange bell peppers are simply green bell peppers that have been left on the vine to continue to ripen.

### GREAT TO EAT!

Bell Peppers are loaded with nutrients!

- **Vitamin C.** One medium-sized red bell pepper provides 169% of the Reference Daily Intake (RDI) for vitamin C, making it one of the richest sources of this essential nutrient.
- **Vitamin B6.** Pyridoxine is the most common type of vitamin B6, which is a family of nutrients important for the formation of red blood cells.
- **Vitamin K1.** A form of vitamin K, also known as phyloquinone, K1 is important for blood clotting and bone health.
- **Potassium.** This essential mineral is noted for improving heart health.
- **Vitamin E.** A powerful antioxidant, vitamin E is essential for healthy nerves and muscles.
- **Vitamin A.** Red bell peppers are high in pro-vitamin A (beta-carotene) which your body converts into vitamin A, which helps with our eyesight.

You can slice up a red bell pepper into strips and use it to dip into a delicious hummus, or add to a salad for a sweet kick! You can cut the top, hollow out the seeds and make a classic stuffed pepper filled with cooked ground beef, rice, tomato sauce, and cheese. It's an easy way to make a healthy weeknight supper!

### RESOURCES:

- <https://www.webmd.com/diet/health-benefits-red-pepper>
- <https://www.inspiredtaste.net/15938/easy-and-smooth-hummus-recipe/>
- US Department of Agriculture, Food, and Nutrition Service, [www.fns.usda.gov](http://www.fns.usda.gov)



## ALL ABOUT *Blueberries!*

### DID YOU KNOW?

The Blueberry is the official fruit of Maine, which produces a high amount in North America. Blueberries are round, dark berries with a white / silver coating that protects them from water and from the sun.

Northern highbush blueberries are native to North America. They grow on an upright bush with a shallow, fibrous root system and woody canes. The fruit is borne on buds formed during the previous growing season in late summer. Highbush blueberry plants leaf, flower, and fruit in the month of June. They are used as hedges, shrub borders, and beautiful ornamentals or for wildlife.

### HOW DO THEY GROW?

For best results, blueberries are planted in early spring. Blueberries are self-pollinating, however cross-pollination will help bring a better crop and larger berries. It is always recommended that 2 or 3 blueberry bushes be planted in proximity to each other.

### FUN FACTS:

- Blueberries are technically **not** blue.
- They are actually a deep purple color, but appear blue due to a natural colorant called anthocyanins, the compound that provides blueberry's health benefits
- Blueberries were called "star fruits" by North American indigenous peoples because of the five-pointed star shape that is formed at the blossom end of the berry.
- A single blueberry bush can produce as many as 6,000 blueberries per year!

### BLUEBERRY VARIETIES

There are five major varieties of blueberry grown in the United States: lowbush, northern highbush, southern highbush, rabbiteye, and half-high. Of these, northern highbush blueberry varieties are the most common type cultivated throughout the world.

### GREAT TO EAT!

Blueberries are high in fiber, which supports heart health. It's a source of Vitamin C which supports a healthy immune system. It is an excellent source of Vitamin K, manganese and potassium. Manganese is a mineral that helps support our body's energy production and cell repair. Blueberries are an excellent snack after playing at school or exercising! Blueberries ranked number one in antioxidant health benefits in a comparison with more than 40 fresh fruits and vegetables.

Blueberries can range in taste from tart to sweet. They can be eaten raw, added to cereal, baked into a pie, made into a jelly, or mixed into your favorite pancake batter!

### MAPLE BLUEBERRY OATMEAL

#### Ingredients:

- 2 cups water
- 1-1/2 cups milk
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 2 tablespoons chia seeds
- 2 cups old fashioned rolled oats
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups fresh blueberries, divided and washed

#### Instructions

1. Add water, milk, maple syrup, and salt to a medium pot. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat.
2. Once boiling, lower the heat to medium-low and add in the chia seeds, oatmeal, and 1 cup of the blueberries.
3. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the oats have thickened up and are tender, about 3-5 minutes. Stir in the vanilla extract.
4. Divide the oatmeal into dishes, adding the remaining blueberries on top of the oatmeal.

#### RESOURCES:

- <https://www.bcblueberry.com>
- Watermelon Board, [www.watermelon.org](http://www.watermelon.org)
- US Department of Agriculture, Food, and Nutrition Service, [www.fns.usda.gov](http://www.fns.usda.gov)



## ALL ABOUT Celery!

### DID YOU KNOW?

Celery is a cultivated plant that has been used as a vegetable since ancient times. Celery has a long fibrous stalk that tapers into leaves. Celery seed powder is used as a spice.

Celery originally came from the Mediterranean area (France, Italy, and Greece) and was transported around the world as celery seed. Now, California supplies over 80% of celery in the US, and other countries that are big producers of celery include Spain and Mexico.

### HOW DO THEY GROW?

Celery likes sun and shade. The roots of celery grow very close to the surface. The stalk sprouts upward of the root. The celery stalks form a thick base at the bottom and on the surface grows into solid stalks with large green leaves. The plant will grow to a height of 18 to 24 inches, and will also regenerate (regrow) after you cut it.

### FUN FACTS:

- Celery leaves were part of the garlands found in the tomb of Egyptian pharaoh Tutankhamun
- In ancient times, celery was used as medicine to treat toothaches, to calm nerves, and to help people sleep!

### GREAT TO EAT!

Celery has a high amount of fiber, Vitamin C, Vitamin B6, and vitamin K. Vitamin K keeps our bones healthy and strong!

Celery has lots of water, which makes it a hydrating vegetable. Fiber is good for our body because it can make digestion easier, and it helps us feel full for a long period of time.

The stalks can be eaten raw, or chopped up in a salad, or as an ingredient in soups, Thanksgiving stuffing, and stews. Celery makes a great addition to juices, smoothies, and salads. Celery stalks can also be eaten dipped in hummus, ranch, or vegetable dip.

### SPICY LOADED CELERY STICKS

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 12 stalks celery cut into 1 inch pieces
- One 8oz. package of softened cream cheese
- 4 oz. blue cheese
- 1 dash of hot pepper sauce
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- ¼ tsp black pepper

#### INSTRUCTIONS:

Put the celery pieces on a plate. Mix the other ingredients in a bowl and blend well. Top the celery sticks with the mix.

#### RESOURCES:

- US Department of Agriculture, Food, and Nutrition Service, [www.fns.usda.gov](http://www.fns.usda.gov)



## ALL ABOUT *Pineapple!*

### DID YOU KNOW?

Pineapples are tropical plants with an edible fruit and a waxy tough skin that has small spikes protruding from it. The inside flesh is yellow with a hard core in the middle. The leafy top, hard skin and core aren't eaten. It is indigenous to South America, and considered a type of berry, because it does not have a stone (pit) inside. The "scales" on the surface of a pineapple are actually individual flowers that have fused together.

### HOW DO THEY GROW?

Pineapple plants will only produce one pineapple each growing season. Pineapples do not ripen after they have been picked.

### FUN FACTS:

- Pineapples contain an enzyme called bromelain, that can be used as a meat tenderizer. The name pineapple in English came from "pina" in Spanish because it looks similar to a pinecone.

### GREAT TO EAT!

Pineapples are a good source of Vitamin C, Manganese, Potassium and Dietary Fiber. Enhancing Flavor: Sprinkle a bit of salt, chili powder, or lime juice on freshly cut pineapple to enhance its natural sweetness and flavor. Multiple Uses: Pineapple can be eaten in many different ways. Eat it plain, add it to salads, grill it for a kabob, or cook it in a casserole.

### RESOURCES:

- Pineapple Fried Rice Recipe:  
<https://cookieandkate.com/thai-pineapple-fried-rice-recipe/>
- US Department of Agriculture, Food, and Nutrition Service, [www.fns.usda.gov](http://www.fns.usda.gov)

### Thai Pineapple Fried Rice - Author: Cookie and Kate

Prep Time: 15 mins, Cook Time: 10 mins, Total Time: 25 minutes, Yield: 2 to 4 servings

This is a healthy and quick, vegetarian weeknight dinner! This dish comes together quickly, so have your ingredients (including chilled leftover rice) prepped in advance. The recipe yields 2 large, restaurant-sized portions or 4 more modest portions.

#### Ingredients

2 tablespoons coconut oil or quality vegetable oil  
1 ½ cups chopped fresh pineapple  
¾ cup chopped green onions (about ½ bunch)  
½ cup chopped raw, unsalted cashews  
2 cups cooked & chilled brown rice\* (or jasmine rice)  
1 small lime, halved  
A handful of fresh cilantro leaves, torn into little pieces, for garnishing

2 eggs, beaten with a dash of salt  
1 large red bell pepper, diced  
2 cloves garlic, pressed or minced  
2 teaspoons chili garlic sauce or sriracha  
1 tablespoon low salt tamari or soy sauce  
Salt, to taste

#### Instructions

Heat a large skillet or frying pan over medium-high heat and place an empty serving bowl nearby. Once the pan is hot enough that a drop of water sizzles on contact, add 1 teaspoon oil. Pour in the eggs and cook, stirring frequently, until the eggs are scrambled and lightly set, about 30 seconds to 1 minute. Transfer the eggs to the empty bowl. Wipe out the pan if necessary with a paper towel (be careful, it's hot!). Add 1 tablespoon oil to the pan and add the pineapple and red pepper. Cook, stirring constantly, until the liquid has evaporated and the pineapple is caramelized on the edges, about 3 to 5 minutes. Then add the green onion and garlic. Cook until fragrant while stirring constantly, about 30 seconds. Transfer the contents of the pan to your bowl of eggs. Reduce the heat to medium and add the remaining 2 teaspoons oil to the pan. Pour in the cashews and cook until fragrant, stirring constantly, about 30 seconds.

Add the rice to the pan and stir to combine. Cook until the rice is hot, stirring occasionally, about 3 minutes. Pour the contents of the bowl back into the pan and stir to combine, breaking up the scrambled eggs with your spoon. Cook until the contents are warmed through, then remove the pan from heat. Add the tamari and chili garlic sauce, to taste. Squeeze the juice of ½ lime over the dish and stir to combine. Season to taste with salt and set aside. \*Rice notes: For 2 cups cooked rice, you'll need to cook up about ¾ cup dry rice.





## ALL ABOUT *Strawberries!*

### DID YOU KNOW?

Strawberries are fruits that grow on small plants. They have been found in the woods, by the seaside, and on mountaintops. They are native to northern and southern hemispheres. Wild strawberries date back to the times of the Greeks and Romans. The average strawberry has around 200 seeds on it, and is not considered a **true** berry because its seeds are on the outside of the fruit. They range in color from a deep red, to light pink, to white!

### HOW DO THEY GROW?

Strawberries need lots of direct sunlight in order to grow. They need space to thrive and should not be planted too close to each other.

### FUN FACTS:

- The Strawberry is the official state red berry for North Carolina
- The name comes from the fact that strawberry plants are frequently mulched with straw to protect their delicate roots

### STRAWBERRY TYPES:

There are three types of strawberries: **June-bearing**, **everbearing**, and **day-neutral**.

- June-bearing varieties produce flowers and fruit once each year, usually in June.
- Everbearing varieties produce two crops per year, usually in July and August-September.
- Day-neutral varieties produce a continuous crop throughout the growing season. There are more than 70 varieties of strawberries in the world.

### GREAT TO EAT!

Strawberries are considered a superfood—packed with nutrients. Not only are strawberries deliciously sweet but they also help keep you healthy.

Strawberries are an excellent source of vitamin C and a good source of fiber. Soluble fiber can help lower cholesterol. Insoluble fiber aids in digestion.

A cup of whole strawberries has around 50 calories and 140 percent of the vitamin C Daily Value. Strawberries are cholesterol free and low in fat and sodium. Vitamin C helps form collagen to hold muscles, bones and tissues together, protects us from infections and bruising, aids in healing, keeps our gums healthy, helps our body absorb iron and folate from plants, and acts as an antioxidant to prevent cell damage.

Strawberries have a variety of phytochemicals—flavonoids, ellagitannins, and ellagic acid. Anthocyanidins, a flavonoid sub-group, contribute to the blue, red and purple pigments of berries and other fruits. Phytochemicals act as antioxidants preventing or repairing cell damage. Anthocyanidins may help with maintaining brain and healthy immune function.

### RESOURCES:

- North American Strawberry Association, <https://www.nasga.org/>
- <https://strawberryplants.org/strawberry-varieties/>
- US Department of Agriculture, Food, and Nutrition Service, [www.fns.usda.gov](http://www.fns.usda.gov)



## ALL ABOUT *Watermelon!*

### DID YOU KNOW?

A Watermelon is a fruit that grows on a vine. It is related to other veggies like pumpkins, cucumbers and squash. Watermelons originated in Africa over 5,000 years ago. The first watermelon harvest recorded was in ancient Egypt, illustrated in hieroglyphics. China is the #1 producer of watermelons in the world. The United States of America is 5th in the world for watermelon production.

### HOW DO THEY GROW?

Watermelons need five things to grow and produce delicious fruit: sun, water, Honeybees, nutrients and space to grow! It takes three months for melons to grow until they are ready to be picked.

### FUN FACTS:

- The inside flesh of a watermelon can be red, orange or yellow! The pigment Lycopene gives it its red color.
- A watermelon is 92% water!

### WATERMELON VARIETIES

Watermelons (*Citrullus lanatus*) come in a wide range of sizes, from petite personal-sized fruits to massive specimens that can feed a large gathering. The size of a watermelon is influenced by its variety, growing conditions, and the time it's allowed to mature on the vine. Let's take a closer look at the different categories of watermelon sizes.

#### Personal or Mini Watermelons

- **Little Darling:** Weighing in at just 5-7 pounds, this variety is perfect for small families or single servings.
- **Sugar Baby:** A popular personal-sized melon, Sugar Baby watermelons are round, with a dark green rind and sweet red flesh, typically weighing 6-10 pounds.
- **Mini Love:** These heart-shaped melons are not only adorable but also delicious, averaging 5-7 pounds.

#### Mid-Sized Watermelons

- **Charleston Gray:** This heirloom variety has a long, oblong shape and can weigh between 20-30 pounds.
- **Crimson Sweet:** Known for its deep red flesh and high sugar content, these melons average 15-25 pounds.
- **Bush Sugar Baby:** A compact vine variety that produces round melons weighing 10-12 pounds, ideal for small gardens.

#### Large Watermelons

- **Black Diamond:** A classic large watermelon, Black Diamond can reach up to 50 pounds with its dark green, almost black rind.
- **Jubilee:** These elongated melons are known for their light green stripes and can weigh 25-40 pounds.
- **Carolina Cross:** This variety holds the record for the largest watermelon ever grown, with some specimens weighing over 200 pounds.

### GREAT TO EAT!

Watermelon is full of nutrients. One cup has less than 50 calories, no cholesterol and little fat or salt. It is a great source of Vitamin C, and Vitamin A. Vitamin C helps form collagen to hold your muscles, bones and tissues together, protects us from infections and bruising, aids in healing, keeps our gums healthy, helps our body absorb iron and folate from plants, and acts as an antioxidant to prevent cell damage. Vitamin A promotes good vision, supports the growth of cells and tissues, and helps regulate the immune system. Most red fruits and vegetables, like watermelon, have lycopene, a phytonutrient which may reduce cancer risks.

### RESOURCES:

- Watermelon Board, [www.watermelon.org](http://www.watermelon.org)
- US Department of Agriculture, Food, and Nutrition Service, [www.fns.usda.gov](http://www.fns.usda.gov)