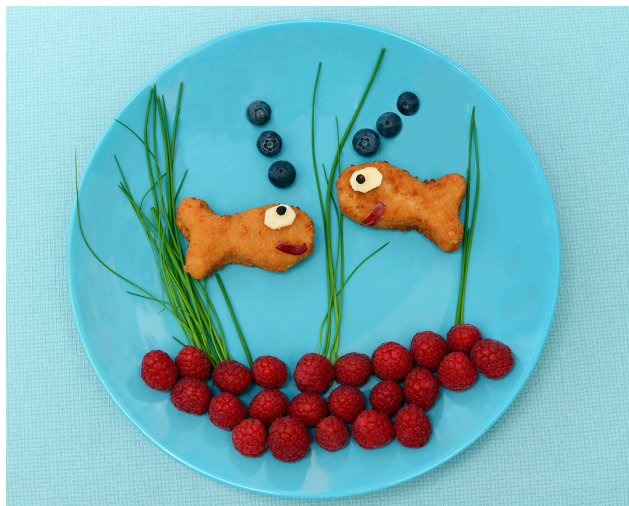


Wake Up Your Tastebuds



We all have favorite foods... but how did they become favorites? Have a mini-taste test to introduce new foods and maybe find a new favorite.

4-H Project Area: Foods and Nutrition

Time: 20 minutes

Life Skills: Experimentation, Critical Thinking

Materials:

- 4 different fruits and vegetables, washed and cut into tasting samples.
Ideas include:
 - Vegetables (jicama, beets, okra, yellow peppers, cherry tomatoes, etc.)
 - Fruits (papaya, plum, passion fruit, star fruit, plantain, etc.)
- paper plates, napkins and glasses, 1 per child

Advance Preparation:

- Check with families to see if there are any food allergies or reactions. Be sure parents are aware that food tasting will be the activity.
- Using safe food handling practices, prepare samples by washing vegetables and fruits and preparing them into sample sizes (using individual sized containers or toothpicks). Be sure to wear gloves when working with food.
- Clean and sanitize tables and worktops where you will hold the tasting.

Did You Know?



Your tongue has between 2,000-8,000 taste buds on it. To taste food, our saliva helps to break food into smaller pieces so our taste buds can “catch” the flavor. We make 2-4 liters of saliva a day... that’s between ½ gallon

and 1 gallon of saliva every day! After the taste buds catch the flavor of our food, they send a message to our brains...and the brain says “I like it!”, “I don’t like it” – or “let me try that one more time”.

Research shows that the more we are exposed to food, the more likely we are to like it. But we may need to try new food more than 10 times before we like it.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON LEADING ACTIVITIES FOR YOUNG MEMBERS, SEE CLOVERBUD LEADER GUIDE

THE ACTIVITY

Tell the group that they will try samples of new foods, talk about how it tasted and whether we would eat it again.

Ask

What is your favorite food? Why?

When was the last time you tried a new food?

What was it?

Investigate

Provide a paper plate, napkin and glass of water to each child. Tell them about the four samples you have for them today, holding up a whole sample so they see what it would look like in a store or garden and providing the name and type of food it is (fruit, vegetable).

Have youth look at the whole fruit or vegetable. Ask them to discuss what they see, what they think it will taste like. **Ask, *What do these food samples look like? Have you ever tried them? What do you think they are going to taste like?***



Create

- Ask children to wash their hands before handling food. Sing “Happy Birthday” while washing to properly wash hands.

- Invite children to take a single serving of each of the 4 samples you have prepared. When they all have their samples, invite them to sit. One sample at a time, invite them to taste and share.

Share/Reflect

What did you think of the color of the food sample?

What did you think of the taste or flavor of the food sample?

What did you think about the smell of the food sample?

Would you want to eat this food again? Why or Why not?

Relationship to 4-H:

4-H has a lot of new things to try. The concept of tasting can be compared to how children in 4-H try out projects and activities. With over 300 projects to choose from, there are opportunities to try new things every year.

Encourage new 4-H members to participate in activities, projects and contests. Our job as leaders, especially with younger members, is to give them the opportunity to try—*taste*—new things and find out if they like them.

More to Explore

Try new foods or categories of foods. Consider trying different combinations of foods (like pasta combinations, yogurt mixes, meats and grains).

Sources: *How to Handle Kids' Picky Eating*, Robin Nixon, livescience; *Taste Testing in Schools: Resource Guide*, Ohio Action for Healthy Kids.

Adapted by: Melinda Pollen, 4-H Youth Development Educator, UW- Extension, Brown County



Today we experimented with trying new things - new foods - that maybe we haven't tried before. We thought about what we liked and didn't like about the foods we sampled, and shared our thoughts on whether we would try them again or not.



Wake Up Your Taste Buds

We learned... As we tasted our samples, we learned about different types of foods and talked about their flavors, colors and smells. We learned about what we liked, disliked or were unsure of. And, we found out that we have things in common with other members of our group!

Ask your child... What did you learn about food today? Did you try anything new today? Would you like to eat any of the foods again? Why? Which foods would you like to taste and compare next?

Explore more... To keep your child trying new things, you can set up food tastes at home. Try new foods or food groups, like pastas (whole wheat, gluten free, enriched white), grains (white rice, brown rice, quinoa, wild rice), dairy products (1%, 2%, skim, whole, soy milks), etc. When you find new foods your child (and you!) enjoy, try making a meal with the item!

Connect to 4-H... 4-H gives young people the opportunity to try lots of new things. Children can participate in a variety of activities (county or club meetings, learning days, festivals, and fair) that expose them to new experiences. Children also pick projects based on the topics that interest them. Those projects can be the same or different every year. Through 4-H, children can learn what they don't like, like and love.