HARVEST OF THE MONTH

A Farm to Early Care and Education Activity Toolkit for Georgia Early Care Providers

AN APPLE A DAY

Prepared by Diana Myers, MS, RD
INTRODUCTION

Research tells us that a young child's food preferences develop within the first few years of life as an infant transitions from eating one food to a multitude of foods with varying flavor profiles. Many young children spend significant time in early care centers and family homes. These providers have the ability to influence the dietary preferences of young children in a healthy, engaging, and positive way. These four Harvest of the Month (HOTM) Kits were created to be used in early care and education settings with three to five-year olds.

Each Kit focuses on a locally grown Georgia fruit or vegetable and includes:

- Fun facts and information about the fruit or vegetable.
- A kid friendly recipe
- Nutrition activity linked to the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS)
- Children's literature connections

The kits are aligned with the Georgia Department of Education’s K-12 Harvest of the Month calendar and Quality Care for Children’s Harvest of the Month calendar for early care providers. The purpose of these kits is to provide a GELDS aligned, hands-on learning experience that enhances children's knowledge of fruits and vegetables through activities, literature connections, taste testing, and recipe creation.

These HOTM kits were created by Diana Myers, MS, RD as part of a Master's capstone project. Each kit was tested at Atlanta area early care and education centers under the guidance of Georgia Organics and Quality Care for Children.

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Photography by Linden Tree Photography and Diana Myers, MS, RD
An Apple a Day

DID YOU KNOW?

- Apples grow on trees! To pick apples, you firmly grasp it and twist it until it detaches from the tree. Let’s try this together!

**Fun tip:**
Have children stand up together and try picking their “apples” from an invisible tree.

- Apples are one of the most widely grown tree fruit.[1]
- Apples come in a variety of colors including red, yellow, green, and pink. What is your favorite apple color?

**Fun tip:**
Open up a conversation with the children about their favorite apple colors.

- The first apple trees came from Central Asia.[2]

**Fun tip:**
Show children where Central Asia is on a map.

- Apple trees blossom in the spring and apples are picked and eaten in the fall.

**Fun tip:**
Discuss the order of the seasons with the children.

- Apples are high in Vitamin C! This helps to keep germs away, keeps us from getting sick and heals our bumps and scratches.
- The skin of apples contain high amounts of fiber. Fiber keeps you full and going to the bathroom regularly.

References:
Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards:

**CLL2** – The child will acquire vocabulary introduced in conversations, activities, stories, and/or books.

**CLL5** – The child will acquire meaning from a variety of materials read to him/her.

### Book Options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apples Go On a Tree</td>
<td>Mari Schuh</td>
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<tr>
<td>How Do Apples Grow?</td>
<td>Betsy Maestro</td>
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<td>5 Little Apples</td>
<td>Yusuke Yonezu</td>
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<td>Apple Farmer Annie</td>
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<td>Apple Pie ABC</td>
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<td>Apple Cider Making Days</td>
<td>Ann Purmell</td>
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<td>An Apple Pie for Dinner</td>
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<td>The Apple Pie That Papa Baked</td>
<td>Lauren Thompson</td>
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<td>Up, Up, Up! It’s Apple Picking Time</td>
<td>Jody Fickes Shapiro</td>
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<td>The Apple Pie Tree</td>
<td>Zoe Hall</td>
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<td>The Apple Orchard Riddle</td>
<td>Margaret McNamara</td>
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<td>Ten Apples Up On Top!</td>
<td>Dr. Seuss</td>
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<td>Little Mouse and the Big Red Apple</td>
<td>A. H. Benjamin</td>
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<td>I Am An Apple</td>
<td>Jean Marzollo</td>
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<td>One Red Apple</td>
<td>Harriet Ziefert</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Fruits We Eat</td>
<td>Gail Gibbons</td>
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<td>Mrs. Peanuckle’s Fruit Alphabet</td>
<td>Mrs. Peanuckle</td>
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Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards:

**CD-CR2** – The child will create and explore visual art forms to develop artistic expression.

**PDM5** – The child will demonstrate gross motor skills.

**Supplies**

- Knife ($15)
- Paint ($12)
- Marker ($2.50)
- Apples ($1.50/each)
- Paper towels ($1/roll)
- Cutting board ($7)
- Construction paper ($8)
- Aluminum pans ($4/two-count)

**Instructions**

1. Cut apples in half using a knife and cutting board; get creative and try a variety of different cutting methods to add new patterns to the apple stamps.
2. Place a paper towel at the bottom of the shallow paint dish and pour paint on top to create a stamp pad.
3. Write each child’s name on a sheet of construction paper and hand it to them.
4. Show children an example of an apple print. Dip the cut side of the apple in the paint, wipe excess paint onto the paper towel in the shallow dish, and stamp the construction paper with the painted side of the apple.
5. With adult supervision, have children stamp their own apples into the paint, wipe off excess paint, and stamp their paper.

**Tips**

- Creating stations with different paint colors and adult supervision will help with classroom management. If you need another activity for children to do while they are waiting to apple print, pass out sheets of construction paper and crayons and ask the children to draw an apple on their paper.
- Have wet paper towels ready at each paint station and line the tables with a plastic tablecloth to help with easy clean up.
- Paint brushes can also be used instead of stamping. Have an adult help each child paint onto their apple and then hand the apple to the child to stamp.
Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards:

**PDM2** – The child will participate in activities related to nutrition.
**PDM4** – The child will use senses (sight, touch, hear, smell, taste) to explore the environment and process information.
**PDM5** – The child will demonstrate gross motor skills.
**PDM6** – The child will demonstrate fine motor skills.

Below, you will find two different ways of taste testing apples. If you have all of the supplies, consider making both of these recipes and introducing children to raw apples and cooked apples. In doing this, children will have an opportunity to learn that fruits and vegetables taste and feel differently when they are cooked versus raw.

The simplest way to taste test apples is to slice them and eat them raw. In doing this, children are introduced to apples in their most basic state. They are able to hear the crunch of the first apple bite and taste the natural apple sweetness. There are many varieties of apples which lend to diverse colors and flavors (i.e. sweet versus tart). Refer to the Buying Local Guide for tips on buying local apples.

Taste testing serving size: One slice of an apple
Servings per apple: About 10 servings

**Ingredients**

- Variety of apple types (i.e. Pink Lady, Granny Smith, Golden Delicious)

**Supplies**

- Knife ($15)
- Cutting board ($7)
- Paper plates ($5/100-count)

**Tips**

- Stimulate conversation by asking the children sensory questions.

Examples of questions include:

What sound does the apple make when you bite into it and chew?

What color is the apple?

Is the apple sweet or is it sour?

- Ask children their opinion of each of the apples.

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RAW APPLES

Instructions

1. Have all adults and children wash their hands thoroughly before preparation and taste testing.
2. Have an adult cut each of the apples into slices so that each child has a variety of slices to try.
3. Place a paper plate on the table in front of each child.
4. Place a slice of each type of apple on the plate in front of the child.
5. As a class, begin tasting each of the apple types together.
6. Go through the entirety of the apple taste test together while engaging in conversation about what the children think.

Tips for Tasting

- Teach children how to give respectful responses, even if they don’t like what they tried. “Don’t yuck my yum!” is a great way of teaching children that they may not like it, but their friends might. Remember, it can take a child multiple times of exposure before they like a new food.
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HOMEMADE APPLESAUCE

Adapted from Sarah’s Applesauce Recipe on Allrecipes.com
Recipe makes about four cups
Taste testing serving size: 1/4 cup
Servings per recipe: About 16 servings

Ingredients

• Six apples, peeled & cored ($9)
• One and a 1/3 cup water
• One tsp. ground cinnamon ($1/2-oz.)

Supplies

• Peeler ($9/three-count)
• Knife ($15)
• Cutting board ($7)
• Medium bowl ($12/two-count)
• Measuring cups & spoons ($10)
• Three-quart saucepan & lid ($17)
• Induction burner ($50)
• Large spoon ($6)
• Potato masher ($5)
• Paper plates ($5/100-count)
• Plastic spoons ($2/100-count)

Preparation

• Peel and core the apples and chop them into chunks.
• Measure out the water and cinnamon.

Tips

• If time constraints are a concern, complete steps 1-5 ahead of time. At this point, the applesauce will be cooled and ready to mash. Have children play a part in the recipe by having them each mash the applesauce before taste testing.

• Have one child volunteer at a time to help with pouring the ingredients; this will help with classroom management.

• Stimulate conversation by asking the children sensory questions.

Examples of questions include:
What does the applesauce feel like in your mouth?
Is it sweet?
Does the applesauce make a sound?

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Instructions

1. Have all adults and children wash their hands thoroughly before preparation, cooking, and taste testing.
2. Call on three children as volunteers. Have one child add the apples, one child pour the water and one child sprinkle the ground cinnamon into the saucepan.
3. Place the saucepan on an induction burner and cover with a lid. Make sure that the induction burner is displayed at a distance from the children and that the cord does not cause a tripping hazard.
4. Heat the saucepan to medium high heat and heat for 15 to 20 minutes or until apples are soft.
5. Once heated through and softened, stir with a large spoon and allow applesauce to cool in a fridge.
6. Once cooled, mash the applesauce with a potato masher. Give each child a chance to mash the apples until thoroughly broken down.
7. Using a spoon, divide the applesauce up into taste testing bowls.
8. Hand each child a taste testing bowl and a spoon.
9. As a classroom, try the applesauce together.
10. Enjoy!

Tips

- If you taste tested both recipes, ask the children about the difference between raw and cooked apples.

Examples of questions include:

Did they like the raw or cooked apples best?
What did they like about each of them?
What was the difference between the raw and cooked apples?
Buying Local Guide

WHY BUY LOCAL FOOD?

• Procuring items from local farms will help to support the local economy and create jobs.
• When produce doesn’t have to travel far, it is able to be harvested closer to its peak ripeness causing it to taste better and fresher.
• With less travel time and a sooner harvest date, produce has longer shelf life which helps to reduce waste.
• Children will begin to develop a connection surrounding the origins of their food.

HOW DO I BUY LOCAL FOOD?

• Reach out to your food distributor to ask for local foods.
• Connect with nearby farmers to purchase directly from their farm. You can find farms near you at www.localharvest.org
• Find nearby farmers markets to purchase local produce from. Visit www.georgiaorganics.org/good-food-guide/ to find a farmers market near you.
• Reach out to local purchasing agencies on procuring local produce.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR BUYING LOCAL FOOD

• The Common Market (www.thecommonmarket.org)
• Farm’d (www.farmd.com)
• Fresh Harvest (www.freshharvestga.com)
• Georgia Grown of the Georgia Department of Agriculture (www.georgiagrown.com/)
• The Turnip Truck (www.turniptruckga.com)