



# early childhood ACTIVITY GUIDE CUCUMBERS

## LEARN



### facts

- Spanish translation: *El pepino*
- Hmong translation: *Dib ntsuab*
- Cucumbers are 96% water.
- Cucumbers come in different sizes and shapes. Fresh or slicing cucumbers are usually 6-9 inches long. Smaller cucumbers are used to make pickles.



## EAT



### nutrition & seasonality

- Cucumbers have potassium. Potassium helps maintain normal blood pressure and is important for the heart and kidneys.

#### Share with children:

Potassium helps the blood pump around our body.

- Fresh cucumbers are available in Wisconsin from mid-July through September.

## TASTE



### taste testing

Select several different types of cucumbers for children to try. Different types of cucumbers include English, Slicing, or Persian. You may be able to find more unique varieties like lemon cucumbers or Mexican sour gherkins at a farmers' market. Encourage children to use their five senses to observe, smell, feel, listen, and taste summer squash.



Mexican Sour  
Gherkins



Kirby  
Cucumber



Bitter Melon

Nutritious,  
Delicious,  
Wisconsin!

# ACTIVITY GUIDE ■ CUCUMBERS

## FUN



### activity: Pickling

**Quick pickle a few cucumbers for the children to try:**

- Slice pickling cucumbers into rounds or spears.
- Make a quick brine by heating equal parts water & vinegar on the stove and dissolving  $\frac{1}{4}$  part sugar and a tablespoon or two of salt into the liquid.
- Place cucumber slices into a jar or other container (add other pickling spices and/or garlic if you want).
- Pour in enough brine to cover cucumbers.
- Place in the refrigerator for at least 24 hours and have a taste test the next day!  
*Quick pickles must be kept in the refrigerator and should be consumed within two weeks.*



#### For the activity:

- Provide children with a pickle and a slice of fresh cucumber.
- Encourage children to explore the pickle and the cucumber. Do they look the same or different? How do they smell? How do they taste?
- Explain that pickles are cucumbers that have been combined with vinegar, salt, and/or spices. Pickling cucumbers helps them to last longer.

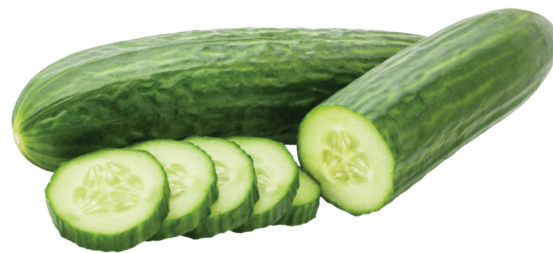
**Share pictures** and engage with the Wisconsin Harvest of the Month community by using #WIHarvestoftheMonth on social media.

## READ



### books

- *Cucumber Soup* by Vickie Leigh Krudwig
- *Cool as a Cucumber* by Sally Smallwood



## GARDEN CONNECTION

### planting

Plant cucumber seeds in warm soil when the danger of frost has passed. Plant seeds  $\frac{1}{2}$ -1 inch deep and 12 inches apart. Cucumbers thrive in warm summer weather, but make sure to water them regularly. Cucumber vines grow very long and can be trained to climb a trellis or fence.

### harvesting

Pick cucumbers when they reach the desired size. Cucumbers for pickling can be harvested when they are just 2 inches long. Wait until slicing cucumbers are 6-8 inches before picking them. One vine can produce 25-125 cucumbers!