



GrowingGreat Veggies & Fruits

A National STEM Education Program

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Graph Your Groceries

The Challenge

Find a label with the least ingredients, the most ingredients, or the most grams of added sugar.

Teacher Preparation: Ask the children to bring in food labels from home so that you have a collection of at least two per child. Collect different cans with the same fruits or veggies, such as: peaches in 100% juice, fruit cocktail in heavy syrup, lite pears. You can also find and print ingredient lists online.



Bonus! Find the ingredient with the largest number of letters.

You Will Need: (enough for each team of children)

2 labels per child, 2 veggie and 2 fruit products with different numbers of ingredients, tasting spoons, large paper for graphing

- Review and discuss your labels and graph the number of ingredients in each.
- Have you heard that kids should only eat 25 grams of added sugar per day? Graph grams of added sugar on your labels compared to 25. What do you notice?
- Based on your data, what is your advice for choosing veggies and fruits at the grocery store?
- Share your graphs and discuss your advice with the group. Remember the challenges -- which labels won?

Taste Test

Before everyone tastes, discuss which veggie or fruit product you think will taste the best. After you taste, discuss how the number of ingredients affects the taste. Record one descriptive word from each child about each veggie and fruit. Graph your results.



What Do You

Think?

- What do you know about veggies and fruits? Which ones do you like to eat?
- Why do you think some food ingredients are words we haven't heard before?
- How would you convince someone which veggies and fruits to buy?
- What do you think the best label and ingredient list would look like?

PARENT PAGE

Your child was a scientist today – making hypotheses, solving problems, measuring, recording data, learning about veggies and fruits, and eating their experiments!



At the grocery store, ask your child to help you read the labels for the canned veggies and fruits. Minimally-processed foods tend to have fewer ingredients -- the more ingredients, the more processed the food. Aim for your family to eat “whole” and minimally-processed foods. Whole foods are those that have not changed much from their natural state, like bananas or brown rice.

-- Sarah Minkow, MS RD



The canning process preserves fresh veggies and fruits with very few added ingredients. Trying the recipe for freezer jam can be a science activity for you and your child with a tasty result. How do the peaches change? How is the jam different when simmering on the stove, in the fridge and then in the freezer?

At the Library



Check out this graphic novel for a kid-chef who always knows where his ingredients come from, even if they're not from planet Earth!

[Rutabaga: The Adventure Chef](#) by Eric Colossal. Abrams/Amulet, 2015..

Want to know how canned fruit is made?

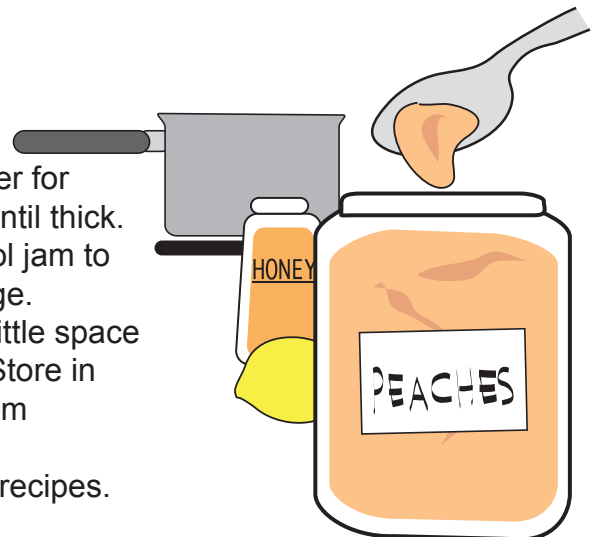
You and your child can make it yourselves.

Ingredients: 3 cups fresh peaches (peeled and cut into chunks),
1/3 cup honey, 2 tablespoons lemon juice



- Mash peaches. Transfer to a saucepan.
- Add honey and 1 Tbsp. lemon juice; bring to a simmer. Simmer for 15-25 minutes, stirring occasionally, then stir more frequently until thick.
- Remove jam from heat and add 2nd Tbsp. of lemon juice. Cool jam to room temperature, then scoop it into a jar and place in the fridge.
- If you want to transfer it to the freezer, make sure to leave a little space at the top of the jar and chill in the fridge for a few hours first. Store in the fridge for 2 weeks or the freezer for 2 months. (adapted from mommypotamus.com/peach-freezer-jam-recipe/)

For more recipes using veggies and fruits, visit delmonte.com/recipes.



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GrowingGreat is a California nonprofit with the mission to empower children to make healthy food choices through hands-on science and garden education. Does your school have a garden or nutrition education program? Email info@growinggreat.org for more information.

