



Harvest Objectives

Families will describe different asparagus types.

Families will identify that asparagus are the stems that grow from the ground.

Families will taste a piece of asparagus.

Harvest Vocab

Firm

Stem

Materials & Prep

Various Asparagus (two or more colors—green, white, or purple)

1 Piece of Purple, White, and Green paper

Chalkboard/Whiteboard and chalk/whiteboard markers

Images (included at end of learning plan)

Knife & Cutting Board

Taste Test Chart

Stickers (or small Post-It Notes)



Literature Connections

The Mighty Asparagus by Vladimir Radunsky

Life on a Crop Farm by Judy Wolfman

The Vegetables We Eat by Gail Gibbons

Warm Up

- In order to engage the family, gather together and pass around the different asparagus. Allow each person to touch and look at them, and ask them to think about how they would describe them (size, shape, color, weight, texture, smell, etc.) Do not tell them what they are. Tell the family to think of the name for the food, but to keep their answer inside their head. Then when everyone has held the asparagus, ask them, “What is this called?” Consider having everyone say the answer aloud on the count of three. This way you’ll know who in the family knows.
- Then discuss, have ever seen one before? Eaten one before? How was it prepared? Where do they think asparagus comes from? How do they grow? (On trees, bushes?)
- Put out the colored paper and ask the families what colors they are. Using the asparagus pictures at the end of the learning plan, have the family sort them into a green pile, a white pile, and a purple pile. Then use one real asparagus of each color and add them to each pile.
- Depending on family involvement, draw a Venn diagram on the board. Write the two asparagus types above each circle. Holding up the asparagus, ask the family what they have in common (texture, size, color, etc.) Record their observations in the middle of the Venn diagram. Then hold up just one. Record their descriptions that only fit that asparagus. Repeat with the second asparagus.

Explain



Asparagus

- Explain that botanically they are vegetable (because we eat the stem, and there are no seeds inside). The asparagus stems grow out of the ground and then are harvested before they produce a flower stalk. What other botanical vegetables can they think of? (Carrots, beets, onion, etc.) If possible, put out pictures of fruits and vegetables and allow the family to think about which ones are vegetables.
- Explain why we should eat asparagus (helps heal cuts, healthy bodies, healthy immune system, and healthy eyes) and for each reason come up with an action to help the family remember. For example, they can run in place while saying “healthy bodies.” Also explain how to pick good asparagus (they should be bright green with closed compact tips). Please see the next pages for images to share with the family.

Taste Test & Wrap-Up

- After rinsing the asparagus, place in microwavable container with water covering the bottom. Vent the container and microwave for 3-6 minutes, or until soft. Stir halfway through the cooking time. Slice each variety into pieces. Have each family member predict which one he/she will like best before tasting. Then after tasting, share which he/she liked the best.
- Create a chart that says “I Like” with a smiley face and “I Don’t Like” with a sad face. Give each family member a sticker, and ask them to vote by placing it in a column. Count the number of people that like, and don’t like asparagus and write that number in each column.
- Review with the family how asparagus grows and the health benefits.

Toddler Tasting

- To make asparagus baby food puree, rinse the asparagus and steam until very soft (about 4-7 minutes). Then place in blender/food processor and puree, adding water as needed. When cool, serve and enjoy!

Taste Test Extension

Rule of 15 “Put a food on the table at least 15 times to see if a child will accept it.” Susan B. Roberts, Tufts University Nutritionist and Co-author of Feeding Your Child for Lifelong Health

For an additional tasting experience, prepare this recipe with the family having each member help in an age-appropriate manner.

Breaded Asparagus

For about 6 servings (adapted from: <http://www.parents.com/recipe/appetizers-snacks/breaded-asparagus/>)

6 trimmed asparagus spears
1 Beaten egg
1 teaspoon olive oil
Cookie Sheet
Egg beater

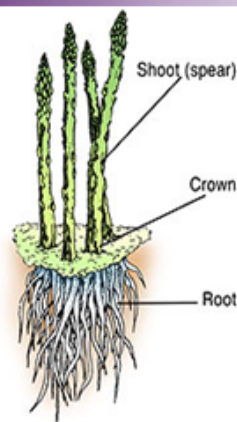
1/3 cup all-purpose flour
1/3 cup bread crumbs
Mixing bowls
Parchment paper (optional)
Plate (1 per person)



Asparagus

1. All family members should wash their hands.
 - a. Wet hands with warm water
 - b. Apply hand wash (soap)
 - c. Lather and wash for AT LEAST 15 seconds (the length of the ABC song)
 - d. Rinse both sides of hands with water all the way up to the wrists
 - e. Dry hands and shut off faucet with towel
2. Place the flour, bread crumbs, and eggs in separate bowls.
3. Demonstrate how to dip the asparagus spears first in all-purpose flour, then in beaten egg, and then in bread crumbs. Then put the spear on the cookie sheet.
4. Once the cookie sheet is full, drizzle asparagus with olive oil.
5. Bake in a single layer at 450 degrees F. for 10 minutes, or until golden.

How does **Asparagus** grow?



Asparagus
grows up out
of the ground.
We eat the
stems of the
asparagus
plant.

Why should we eat **Asparagus?**

Vit. K



Heals cuts

Antioxidants



Healthy bodies

Vit. C



Healthy immune
system (prevents
colds)

B Vitamins



Healthy bodies
(cell energy)

Fiber



Healthy digestion, cleans your system

Vitamin A



Healthy eyes

Preschool Home Visit Learning Plan

Asparagus

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