



Hey kids, become a **FOOD EXPLORER** and check this out!

Apples & Cranberries



Did you know...?

- You can pick your own apples at over 80 Massachusetts orchards.
- Massachusetts grows more than 18 apples for every person in the state. If you lined them up, they would wrap nearly one-fourth of the way around the world.
- Cranberries are also called bounceberries because they bounce when ripe.
- Massachusetts Native Americans used cranberries for food, medicine, and dye for cloth.
- Cranberries have little air pockets inside. Farmers harvest the berries by flooding the bog with water. When cranberries float, the farmers scoop them up.

DELICIOUS AND NUTRITIOUS

Both apples and cranberries have special protectors to keep you healthy!

A SUPER SNACK IDEA

Mix dried apples and dried cranberries for a super-easy sweet snack.

CRANBERRY HUMOR

Why are cranberries red?

Because they saw the turkey dressing!



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Carrots



Did you know...?



- Crunchy carrots are delicious all year. But local Massachusetts carrots are freshest. Look for them in the summer and fall.
- Carrots can be orange, yellow, red, purple, black, or white.
- At one time, people grew carrots for their fragrant leaves and seeds. Today we eat the roots.
- On average people eat more than 10,000 carrots in their lifetime.



DELICIOUS AND NUTRITIOUS

Our bodies turn the bright orange coloring in carrots into vitamin A, which helps us see at night and fight infections.

A SUPER SNACK IDEA

Try some carrot juice or vegetable juice.

CARROT HUMOR

What do you call an elephant with a carrot in each ear?

Anything you want—he can't hear you!



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Green Beans



Did you know...?

- Green beans grow on tall vines. Massachusetts farmers pick them in summer and early fall.
- Open up a green bean and find little beans inside. Green beans are so tender that we eat the whole pod.
- Green bean, string bean, snap bean—they're all the same!
- Massachusetts Native Americans grew green beans with corn and winter squash. They called them the "Three Sisters of Life" because each crop helps the others grow.



DELICIOUS AND NUTRITIOUS

Bright green and crunchy green beans are great dippers. Try them with your favorite low-fat dip or salad dressing.

A SUPER SNACK IDEA

Sprinkle fresh green beans with a little olive oil and pepper. Bake in the oven to make green bean fries.

GREEN BEAN HUMOR

What vegetable can tie you up?

Why, a string bean, of course!



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Greens



Did you know...?

- In the South, people eat greens and black-eyed peas on New Year's Day for good luck. The greens and peas are a symbol of paper money and coins.
- Ancient Greeks and Romans loved to eat collard greens.
- People often thought that a collard leaf on your forehead would cure a headache.
- Popeye, the sailor who loves spinach, first appeared in a comic strip in 1929.
- You can eat young dandelion leaves in fresh salads or cook them as a side dish. Just don't eat any that were treated with chemicals.

DELICIOUS AND NUTRITIOUS

Besides the color, the word "green" means fresh, support for the environment. Greens are also fresh and good for our bodies. They're low in cost and high in vitamin A, vitamin C, and fiber.

A SUPER SNACK IDEA

Make a spinach quesadilla! Fill a tortilla with spinach and cheese. Then heat it in a toaster oven or microwave.

GREENS HUMOR

What happened to the yellow vegetables that grew in the collard garden?

They got collard green!



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Oranges



Did you know...?

- Fresh, sweet oranges are a treat in the winter or at any time of year.
- Oranges grow on trees, mainly in Florida and warmer climates.
- Some oranges are called “navel” because their bottoms look like a belly button, or navel.
- Oranges were not named for their color. The word “orange” comes from an old word “naranga,” which means “fragrant.”



DELICIOUS AND NUTRITIOUS

Oranges are one of the best sources of vitamin C, which helps our bodies heal cuts and scrapes.

A SUPER SNACK IDEA

Juicy and sweet, oranges make the perfect snack. Just rinse the skin, peel, and eat!

ORANGE HUMOR

What did the little chick say when its mother laid an orange?

“Look at the orange mama-laid!”



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Peaches & Nectarines



Did you know...?

- Massachusetts farmers grow many kinds of peaches and nectarines, including Flaming Fury, Stella, Glowing Star, and Honeykist.
- Pick your own peaches in late summer. Massachusetts has more than 30 pick-your-own peach farms.
- The peach tree originated in western China 4,000 years ago.
- Nectarines look and taste like peaches but without the fuzz.

DELICIOUS AND NUTRITIOUS

Choose peaches that are slightly soft. Ripe peaches can be mostly red, yellow, or orange.

A SUPER SNACK IDEA

Slice a peach or nectarine in half, remove the pit, and put a scoop of your favorite low-fat vanilla yogurt in each half.

PEACH HUMOR

What is the best thing to put in a peach pie?
Your teeth!



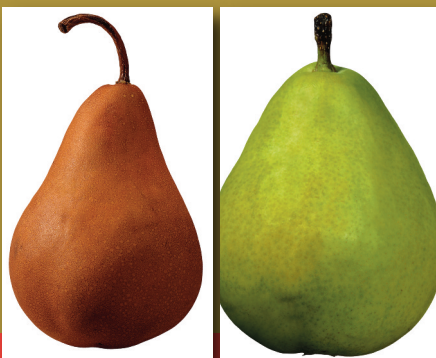
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Pears



Did you know...?

- Pears, like apples and peaches, are a member of the rose family.
- Pears are just right for eating when the stem end feels slightly soft as you gently press it with your thumb.
- Some pears, like Asian pears, are round, more like apples.
- Pears can be yellow, green, red, brown, or combinations of these colors. Some have brown flecks.
- It takes a Bartlett pear tree five to seven years to produce fruit.



DELICIOUS AND NUTRITIOUS

Pears are juicy and sweet—low in calories and high in fiber. They also have vitamin C, which helps our bodies fight infection and heal cuts and scrapes.

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A SUPER SNACK IDEA

Add fresh chopped pears to your favorite fruit or vegetable salad.

PEAR HUMOR

What are twins' favorite fruit?

Pears!



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Strawberries



Did you know...?

- Strawberries are the first fruit ready to eat in the spring. There are about 70 pick-your-own strawberry farms in Massachusetts.
- The strawberry is the only fruit that carries its seeds on the outside. Each strawberry has about 200 seeds.
- Strawberries are a member of the rose family.
- At one time, people used fresh strawberries as a toothpaste. The juice helped whiten stained teeth.
- Native Americans made a type of strawberry bread. The settlers liked it and turned the recipe into strawberry shortcake.



DELICIOUS AND NUTRITIOUS

One cup of strawberries provides fiber and more vitamin C than you need in a day. Vitamin C helps our bodies fight infection and heal cuts and scrapes.

A SUPER SNACK IDEA

Try a strawberry smacker: Spread a thin layer of light cream cheese on a graham cracker. Top with strawberry slices and enjoy.

STRAWBERRY HUMOR

Why did the elephant paint his toenails red?

So he wouldn't be found in the strawberry patch.



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Sweet Potatoes



Did you know...?

- Sweet potatoes grew in prehistoric times. Dinosaurs may have eaten them!
- Sweet potatoes are really sweet roots that grow underground.
- Early explorers got sweet potatoes from Native Americans in 1492 and took them back to Europe.
- We call sweet potatoes “yams.” But real yams are a different vegetable with rough, scaly skins.
- George Washington grew sweet potatoes on his farm in Virginia.

DELICIOUS AND NUTRITIOUS

Sweet potatoes are one of the world’s healthiest vegetables.

A SUPER SNACK IDEA

Cut a sweet potato into slices, spray them with olive oil, and bake them in an oven at 400° F for 15–20 minutes to make delicious sweet potato fries.

SWEET POTATO HUMOR

Why did the sweet potato farmer plow his field with a steamroller?

Because he wanted to grow mashed sweet potatoes!



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Tomatoes



Did you know...?

- Massachusetts farmers grow 55 to 60 million pounds of tomatoes per year—about 9 pounds for every person in the state.
- Tomatoes are really fruits that grow on tall vines.
- There are about 5,000 variations of tomatoes worldwide.
- The largest tomato ever grown was 8.61 pounds—the size of a newborn baby.
- The Pilgrims thought that growing tomatoes was evil—as bad as dancing or playing cards!

DELICIOUS AND NUTRITIOUS

Fresh tomatoes picked right off the vine or from a farmers' market are full of juicy sweetness. Remember to wash all produce before eating regardless of where it is from.

A SUPER SNACK IDEA

Put a slice of fresh tomato on an English muffin, top with low-fat cheese, and toast it in the oven.

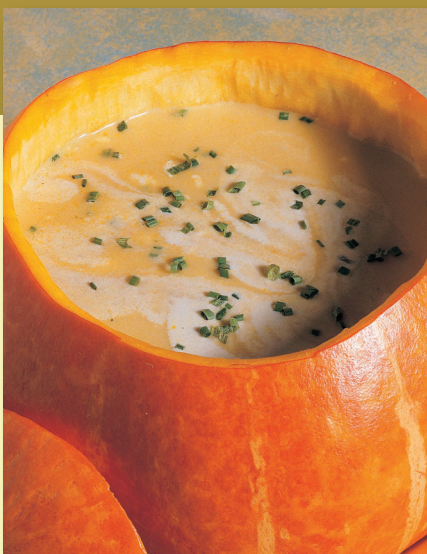
TOMATO HUMOR

What did the farmer say to the slow tomato?
“Ketchup!”



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Winter Squash



Did you know...?

- The name “squash” comes from the Narragansett Native American word “askutasquash.” It means “eaten raw or uncooked.” Squash is one of the oldest crops dating back thousands of years.
- Native Americans roasted or boiled squash and pumpkins and stored the edible parts like a jam in syrup. They also ate the young shoots, leaves, flowers, and seeds.
- Squash and gourds are in the same plant family. Their hard outer shells can be used as containers and utensils like spoons.
- Because American colonists had so little to eat during the winter, squash is a food that saved many lives.



DELICIOUS AND NUTRITIOUS

Hubbard squash has more than twice as much vitamin A as broccoli. Vitamin A helps build bones and teeth. It also helps us see at night and fight infection.

A SUPER SNACK IDEA

Fill a hollowed-out baked squash with cut-up apples or applesauce with cinnamon. You can even add dried fruits like raisins.

WINTER SQUASH HUMOR

Which veggie plays a sport?

Squash



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Zucchini



Did you know...?

- Zucchini are easy to grow in Massachusetts. One reason they're popular is because you can use them in so many dishes and meal—even in breads and desserts.
- Zucchini look like cucumbers and are 95% water.
- The zucchini we eat today became popular in Italy. The word “zucchini” comes from an Italian word for “small squash.”
- Smaller zucchini (less than 6 or 7 inches long) taste best, but some have grown to more than 6 feet long.



DELICIOUS AND NUTRITIOUS

You can eat all parts of a zucchini—even zucchini flowers.

A SUPER SNACK IDEA

Zucchini wedges make great dippers.
Serve them raw with your favorite dips.

ZUCCHINI HUMOR

What's a zucchini's favorite game?
Squash!