



SPRING





Spring

is the season of new beginnings when we welcome the sights, sounds, smells, and excitement of new life as nature wakes up from its winter nap and the growing cycle begins again. In Seed to Stomach's Spring Season modules, you will explore the garden with:

March: Insects

April: Seeds

May: Flowers

And in the kitchen, Seed to Stomach will awaken tastes with fresh recipes featuring:

March: Mango

April: Strawberries

May: Cherries



Field Trip

Field Trip:

[The Denver Botanic Gardens](#) offers a wide variety of programs for children and families to explore the connections between nature, art, and culture together to encourage exploration, creativity, and an appreciation for the natural world.



March: Exploring Insects in the Garden



Insects are important to our gardens – they support the pollination of our plants, are a main food source for hundreds of animals, and help break down and decompose plant and animal waste. Some common insects that we may see are bees, caterpillars, butterflies, grasshoppers, ladybugs, ants, flies, beetles, mosquitoes, and moths, to name a few.

Activity Butterfly Art

Gather Supplies

- Uncooked bow tie pasta, farfalle
- Paints
- Plain white paper
- Markers

Explore

- Children paint butterflies in colors they choose, using pieces of the pasta
- When the paint is dry, glue them onto paper, and using markers create garden scenes by completing the butterflies, adding flowers, trees and grass, and tracing the flight of a butterfly through the garden.



Field Trip

The Butterfly Pavilion is an immersive insect zoo that provides learning experiences for the whole family. Be sure to wear brightly colored clothes like orange, yellow, and red so that butterflies will land on you!



Did You Know?

Ten quintillion individual insects are alive, and there are more than 1.5 million different types of insects.



Add a Song

Flutter, Flutter Butterfly **Original Author Unknown**

(Sung to the tune of Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star)

Flutter, flutter, butterfly.
Floating in the summer sky.
Floating by for all to see,
Floating by so merrily.
Flutter, flutter, butterfly,
Floating in the summer sky.



Activity: Insect Yoga



Yoga is a great way to get little bodies moving, imaginations flowing, and calm big emotions. It doesn't require any special equipment and can be done indoors or out, at school or home. These Insect Yoga poses would be a great addition to classroom structured playtime, to support regulating behaviors, or a take-home activity for children and families to get moving together.

Butterfly

Stand up tall with my hands by my side, then sit on the ground crisscross applesauce with my arms out wide, take a deep breath and exhale with a big sigh, while I float my arms up and down like a butterfly.

Caterpillar

Stand up tall with my hands by my side, like a tree trunk solid, big, and wide, raise my arms up to my heart to make a silent clap, then lift and bend one of my legs and place it on my other knee with a gentle tap, take a deep breath in and exhale long and strong like the breeze, and imagine myself as a tree in nature alongside the birds, flowers, and bees.

Grasshopper

Stand up tall with my hands by my side, bend from my waste as I lift one leg back high, take a deep breath and reach my hands out to the side, and imagine myself soaring in the air like a bird, flying with pride.

Firefly

Stand up tall with my hands by my side, take a deep breath in and exhale long, deep and wide, bend from the waist and drop your hands to the ground, imagine you're a falling raindrop, moving quickly through the sky without a sound.



Read a Book

[Hello, World! Backyard Bugs](#) This colorfully illustrated board book will inspire young readers to explore their backyard gardens and get to know their neighbors who live in the dirt, flowers, and trees!





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March: Enjoying Mangos in the Kitchen



This Mango Whip recipe (on the next page) is Clayton's healthy take on ice cream. We make a point to serve food in its most complete form to allow children to taste real, wholesome food. This supports infants and young children in establishing their sense of taste for healthy and nutrient-dense foods that will nourish their growing brains and bodies. Mango Whip is the perfect after-meal treat or snack. Try it for breakfast, topped with some granola and fresh fruit.



Did You Know?

The food served to infants and children lays the foundation for the foods they will prefer as adults.



Mango Whip

5
Mins

9 Ingredients

- 1 cup fresh or frozen mango, diced
- 1 cup milk of choice
- 1 cup yogurt of choice
- 2 Tsp. vanilla extract
- 2 Tbsp. maple syrup



Directions

1. Blend all ingredients together and serve cold.
2. Topped with granola, cereal, or fresh fruit and eat as a breakfast, snack, or dessert.

Cutting a Mango

1. Cut lengthwise slabs off the whole fruit, slicing as close to the firm flesh around the pit as possible.
2. From the inside toward the peel, use a small knife to cut a grid pattern in the fruit.
3. With your hands, push the center of the peel from behind, to invert it. The cubes of mango will separate out, making them easy to scoop away from the peel with a spoon.





April: Exploring Seeds in the Garden

This month, we begin to see the signs of spring, as nature is busy beneath the soil, creating new life through seeds. Most plant life begins as seeds which develop with warm temperatures, nutrient-rich soil, water, and light.



Did You Know?

Seeds are the building blocks of biodiversity! They can survive for thousands of years, providing food, inspiring hope, and helping to restore ecosystems.

Activity: Seed Science



Gather Supplies:

- Produce cut in halves or quarters to expose seeds (apples, peaches, peppers, cumpers, oranges, and limes are great options)
- Ice cube tray
- Spoons

Explore:

Observe seeds before removing them from the food.
Can we easily see the seeds?
Can we easily count the seeds?
Compare the different sizes or colors of seeds.
Where are the seeds located inside the food?
Allow children to remove seeds from each piece of fruit or vegetable and sort them into the compartments of an ice cube tray.
How easy is it to remove the seeds?
What utensil did you use?
How do they feel and smell?
Create a chart for children to match the seeds to pictures of the fruit or vegetable.
What seeds could sprout and thrive in your garden?
Save some seeds for planting- peppers, tomatoes, and cucumbers are possibilities.





Read a Book

Seeds Whether they are seeds that take adventures on the wind or the ones we plant in our own backyards, seeds are inarguably magical, tiny powerhouses.



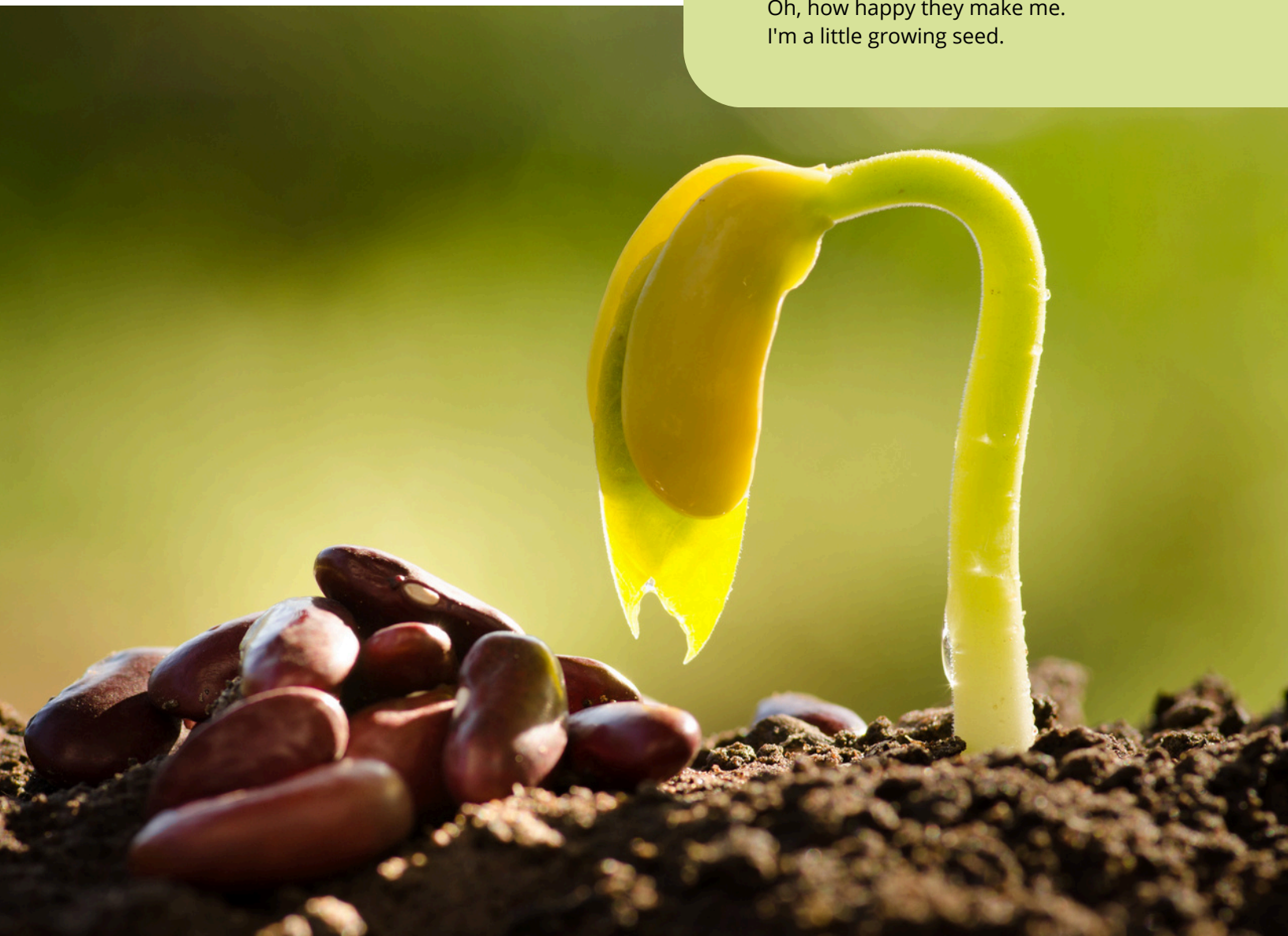
Add a Song

The Seed

Original Author Unknown

(Sung to the tune of Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star)

I'm a little planted seed
See the rain falling on me
Sun shines down through the trees
These are things I need indeed.
Oh, how happy they make me.
I'm a little growing seed.





Activity: Seeds to Beans



Gather Supplies:

- Glass mason jars
- Cotton balls
- Bean seeds (lima beans work well)

Explore:

- Fill the jars with cotton balls.
- Place one bean seed on either side of the jar so that the children can watch two growing at once.
- Add water to the cotton balls until damp; be careful not to over-water.
- Placed the jars near a sunny window.
- Make a bean chart to track the growth and appearance each day:
 - Two to three days: The beans will begin to sprout
 - Four to six days: The leaves will begin to sprout
 - Eight to 11 days: Shoots will begin to develop from the stem
 - 12 to 13 days: Dark green leaves begin to form
 - 16 to 18 days: The bean seedling is fully sprouted and ready to transplant
- Transplant the seedlings by removing the cotton and plant from the jar, gently untangling the roots to separate them from the cotton balls. Noting the cold hardiness of the bean variety of your seedlings, transplant them into pots or directly to the garden.



Add a Song

Planting Time

Original Author Unknown

(Sung to the tune of Row, Row, Row Your Boat)

Dig, dig, dig the earth
Then you plant your seeds
A gentle rain
And bright sunshine
Will help your flowers grow



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April: Enjoying Strawberries in the Kitchen



Did You Know?

Strawberries are the only fruit with seeds on the outside, and just one strawberry can have as many as 200 seeds on its skin.

Strawberries are a favorite by themselves, so pairing them with less familiar or readily enjoyed foods can help expand taste preferences for young children. We love to add strawberries to green smoothies, oatmeal, and leafy green salads, like the Clayton Cooks Strawberry Arugula Salad (on the next page). This recipe blends the sweetness and familiarity of strawberries with the robust and bitter taste of arugula, winning over even the most reluctant salad eaters.



Read a Book

The Little Mouse, the Red Ripe Strawberry, and the Big Hungry Bear
How will Little Mouse stop the bear from eating his freshly picked, red ripe strawberry?



Strawberry Arugula Salad

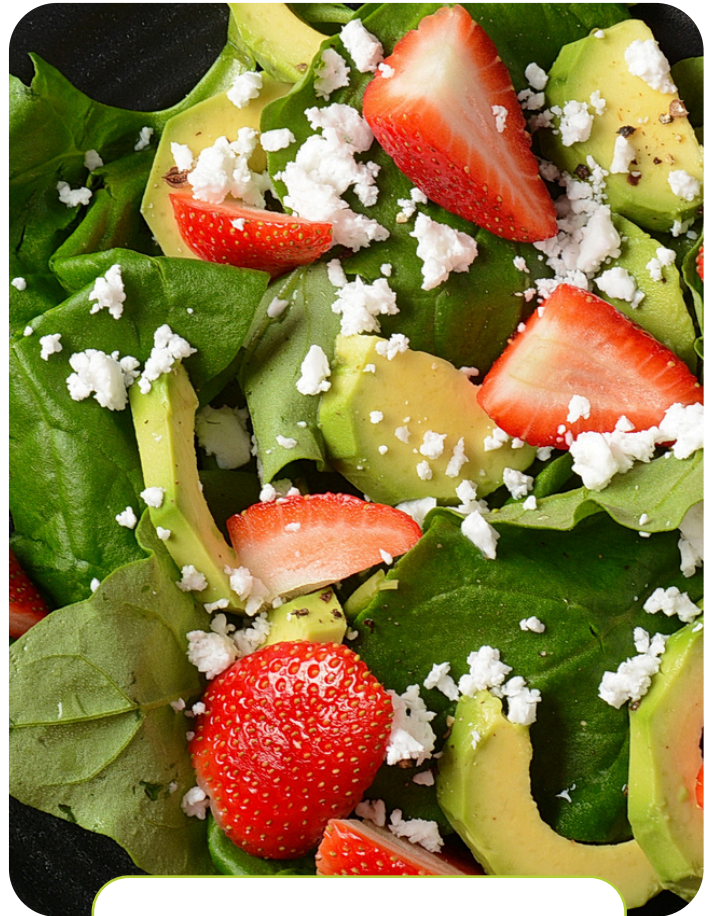
10
Mins

5 Salad Ingredients

- 2 cups fresh strawberries, sliced
- 1 ripe avocado, pitted and sliced
- 1 bag fresh arugula or whatever lettuce you have on hand
- ½ red onion, sliced
- 1 cup cheese of your choice

6 Dressing Ingredients

- ½ cup olive or avocado oil
- ½ cup vinegar
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 Tsp. Dijon or honey mustard
- 1 Tsp. poppy seeds (optional)
- Salt and pepper to taste



This salad will keep in the refrigerator for 1-2 days.

Directions

1. Add all salad ingredients to a large bowl and set aside.
2. Add all dressing ingredients to a mason jar or airtight container and shake well.
3. Place the dressing on top on the salad, toss, and serve.

Arugula is vegetable that provides many of the same benefits as broccoli, kale, and Brussels sprouts.





May: Exploring Flowers in the Garden



Did You Know?

Flowers are the bloom or blossom of a plant that produces seeds. Broccoli, cauliflower, and artichokes are actually flowers? There are many other edible flowers like honeysuckle blossoms, chamomile, squash blossoms, and mint blossoms.

Activity: Flower Science



Gather Supplies

- White flowers; carnations work best and are inexpensive
- Food coloring
- Glass Mason Jars
- Scissors

Explore

- Start by examining the flowers together, naming the parts and their role in the health of the plant:
 - Stems bring water and nutrients to the blossom
 - Petals attract insects for pollination
 - Leaves soak up the sun
 - Blossoms create new seeds
- Fill the mason jars with water, about $\frac{3}{4}$ full
- Allow children to choose their favorite color and add 20 drops of food coloring to the water. The class can count drops out loud together.
- Teachers: cut the bottom of the stem to encourage water uptake, and the children place the flowers in the jars.
- The color-changing process will take place slowly, over 24 hours. Periodically check their progress and discuss how water travels up the stem to the petals.



Add a Song

Flower Parts

Original Author Unknown

(Sung to the tune of Farmer in the Dell)

The flower has some roots, the flower has some roots.
The roots will carry food and drink, the flower has some roots.
The flower has a stem, the flower has a stem.
The stem will make it stand up tall, the flower has a stem.
The flower has some leaves, the flower has some leaves.
The leaves will catch the rain and sun, the flower has some leaves.
The flower has some petals, the flower has some petals.
The petals call the birds and bees, the flower has some petals



Activity: Planting Flowers in the Garden



Gather Supplies:

- Seeds (marigolds, sunflowers, & zinnias are great choices)
- Compost if needed to amend the soil
- Popsicle Sticks and markers
- Watering can

Explore:

- Create plant labels by writing the plant names on popsicle sticks.
- Prepare the soil – break up any hard clumps, remove weeds or other debris, and mix in compost to add nutrients.
- Using a garden spade, dig small holes where seeds will be placed.
- Refer to your seed packets for depth and spacing specific to the varieties you have chosen.
- Children place the seeds and cover them with soil.
- Gently water and place the plant markers.
- Make a chart for daily tracking of watering, weather conditions (rain or sun) when sprouts first appear, growth, buds, and finally blooms.
Marigolds, sunflowers, and zinnias will take five to ten days to sprout, up to 20 days to develop strong leaves and stems, and about a month for the first flower buds to appear and bloom.



Tip

If outdoor garden space is unavailable, plant in pots for container gardening on patios or to add color to sun-filled windowsills.



Read a Book

Flower Garden An urban African-American girl and her father buy plants, potting soil, and a window box at the supermarket, ride the bus to their apartment, and put together a colorful gift for the child's mother.





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MAY: Enjoying Cherries in the Kitchen



This Very Cherry Smoothie recipe (on the next page) from the pages of Clayton Cooks is a perennial favorite, winning over even the pickiest of eaters. Cherries are high in vitamin C, making this smoothie the perfect breakfast, snack, or dessert to keep our immune systems strong. We love to add leafy greens whenever possible, and you would never know there is spinach in this smoothie from the rich red color and sweet flavor.



Add a Song

What's the Weather

Original Author Unknown

(Sung to the tune of Oh My Darling)

What's the weather?
What's the weather?
What's the weather, everyone?
Is it windy?
Is it cloudy?
Is there rain?
Or is there sun?

Very Cherry Smoothie

5
Mins

9 Ingredients

- 2 cups fresh or frozen cherries
- 1 ripe banana, sliced
- 1 handful of spinach
- 3 Tbsp. pure maple syrup
- 2 Tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 cup favorite nondairy milk or cow's milk
- 1 cup 100% grape or cranberry juice
- Ice Cubes (optional)



Directions

1. Put all ingredients in a blender.
2. Mix until the smoothie is at the desired consistency adding more milk, 100% juice, and/or ice if needed.

