

## Virginia Farm to CACFP Week 2020 Toolkit

The Virginia Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) invites you to celebrate Farm to CACFP Week, October 18-24, 2020.

Farm to CACFP aims to connect participants to nutrition education, Virginia grown foods, and gardening opportunities. Through these activities, CACFP participants learn about Virginia agriculture while building their knowledge of and interest in healthy foods.

Farm to CACFP Week is an opportunity to celebrate the connections between care providers and farms throughout the Commonwealth, and raise awareness to the importance of prioritizing access to healthy, local food and nutrition education.

**Who:** You! We encourage everyone to celebrate and promote linking Virginia grown foods with our littlest learners and the elderly.

**What:** Virginia Farm to CACFP Week.

**When:** October 18-24, 2020.

**Where:** In person at your center or family day care home, through virtual learning lessons, or at home with your family.

**How:** There are a range of ways to celebrate. Try adding a local food item to your menu this week, integrating food and agricultural education into your curriculum, conducting one of the activities included below, or joining us for a virtual cooking class.

**Why:** Farm to CACFP expands healthy food access, promotes community and family engagement, and provides market opportunities.

Below you'll find resources to help celebrate the week at your center, including activity ideas and promotional materials.

In addition to planning your own activities throughout the week, join us for these free virtual events:

### Monday, October 19

Kick off Farm to CACFP Week by learning more about Farm to CACFP and how to grow your program. **1:00-2:00pm** Click [here](#) to register.



### Tuesday, October 20

Join Virginia Agriculture in the Classroom's #teachmetuesday on their Facebook page [here](#).



This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

### **Wednesday, October 21**

Join Dr. Yum for a fun virtual cooking class! Let's get together virtually and make a delicious curry dinner out of whatever you have on hand. Fun for all ages. **5:30-6:30pm** Register [here](#).



### **Thursday, October 22**

Join Dr. Yum on a pepper adventure! Fun for all ages. Register [here](#). Make sure to have your [ingredients](#) ready, along with a few bell peppers and a blender for this virtual event. **2:30-3:00pm**



### **Friday, October 23**

Learn all about dark, leafy greens with Project Grows! Click [here](#) for a virtual farm tour and lesson about spinach and kale.



### **Sample Social Media Posts**

It's #VAFarmtoCACFP Week! Child and Adult care centers around the Commonwealth are celebrating this week by highlighting #VAGrown food on their menus, and leading nutrition and agricultural lessons. @cacfpvirginia

This week we are celebrating #VAFarmtoCACFP Week! Join us as we highlight Virginia grown food and healthy eating with our littlest learners. @cacfpvirginia

This week we are celebrating #VAFarmtoCACFP Week! Join us as we highlight Virginia grown food and healthy eating with our elderly. @cacfpvirginia

We are adding local food to the menu for #VAFarmtoCACFP Week! @cacfpvirginia

Farm to CACFP Week is an opportunity to celebrate the connections between care providers and healthy, local food. Join us! #VAFarmtoCACFP @cacfpvirginia

Farm to CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program) introduces participants to experiential education opportunities, connecting and engaging them through healthy, local food. #VAFarmtoCACFP @cacfpvirginia

Farm to CACFP expands healthy food access, promotes community and family engagement, and provides market opportunities. #VAFarmtoCACFP #VACACFP @cacfpvirginia

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## Organizational Press Release Template

Instructions:

1. Copy and paste template onto organizational letterhead.
2. Customize to your organization.
3. Email press release to local news outlets. (Note: publishing a press release is free.)

### **ORGANIZATION NAME CELEBRATES FARM TO CACFP WEEK**

#### *Activities Encourage Increased Awareness of Virginia Agriculture*

(City, VA) – Organization name will recognize Virginia Farm to Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Week with activities hosted during the week of October 18-24.

The CACFP provides nutritious snacks and meals that contribute to the wellness of young children and older adults and chronically impaired or disabled persons enrolled at participating day care centers or facilities.

Farm to CACFP aims to connect participants to nutrition education, Virginia grown foods, and gardening opportunities. Through these activities, CACFP participants learn about Virginia agriculture while building their knowledge of and interest in healthy foods.

In recognition of Farm to CACFP Week, organization name will conduct activities for their participants that bring awareness to Virginia agriculture and seasonal food. Activities include add activities here.

For more information on organization's activities, visit contact information. For more information on Farm to CACFP Week, visit VirginiaCACFP.com/FarmtoCACFP.

###

### Activity Ideas

We know centers are working overtime to create safe learning spaces for their participants, while providing healthy, nutritious meals. We also know families with young ones at home are working overtime to provide exciting and engaging learning environments. To help you celebrate Farm to CACFP Week, we've included a few easy activities that integrate healthy food and agricultural education into your curriculum during the week.

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## Green Thumb Guides

### ■ How To Grow a Seedling in a Bag

A Seedling in a Bag is a great visual to help children see what is happening to the seed they have planted in the soil.

#### Materials needed:

- Plastic bag with a zipper-style closure
- Absorbent paper towel, 1-2 sheets
- Stapler
- Dry lima bean seeds, soaked in water overnight
- Masking or strapping tape
- Sunny southern or western exposure window

Wet the paper towel well and place in plastic bag. Place a row of staples across the center of the paper towel. Place soaked beans on top of row of staples and seal bag.

Tape the bag with the seed side facing the room to a sunny southern or western exposure window.

The staples hold the seeds in place, allowing the roots to grow down and sprouts to grow up.

**Note:** Soaking the lima beans overnight in water helps hydrate the beans and speeds the sprouting process. Lima beans will sprout fast, give quick results, and help keep the children's interest. Spinach, squash, and cantaloupe seeds will also produce seedlings; sprouting times will vary.





# What Plants Need: Preschool Lesson



## Objectives

- Children will become familiar with the different things plants need to survive and grow.
- Children will learn to listen and participate in a group activity while outdoors in the garden through this movement based activity.

## NC Foundations for Early Learning and Development

### Goals Addressed:

APL-8

HPD-2, HPD-4

LDC-1, LDC-7, LDC-8, LDC-9, LDC-14

### Materials

The Seed Song, by Judy Saksie

### Preparation

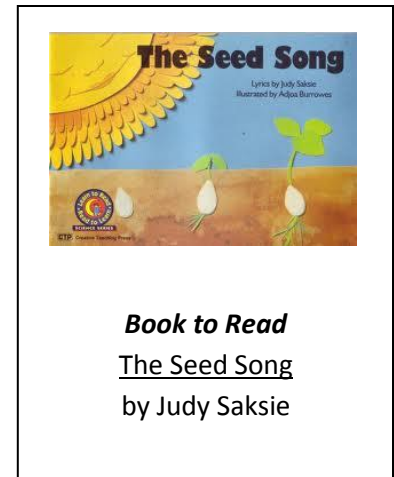
Read The Seed Song and make up movements that can accompany the song.

### Activity

Take children to the garden, read children The Seed Song by Judy Saksie and teach them the song. Tell the children that on each page, there is a clue about what plants need to live and grow. Can they guess? Read the book with the children several times, with the children singing along. Teach them hand motions and movement to accompany the song (make up your own movements!). Highlight the things plants need to survive- soil, sun, water, air/wind, and nutrients.

### Optional

Make a set of cards, each with an image for soil, sun, water, and air. Hold up the card at the appropriate page when singing The Seed Song.



***Book to Read***  
The Seed Song  
by Judy Saksie



# Veggie Crowns

## Goal

Introduce students to new fruits and vegetables.

## Curriculum Alignment

Find a list of which Common Core State Standards and NC Essential Standards this lesson plan aligns with on the lesson plan page at [www.growing-minds.org](http://www.growing-minds.org).

## Materials

- Long, 2" strips of white paper
- Colored construction paper to make vegetable shapes
- Glue Sticks
- Stapler
- Samples of fresh apples and vegetables that correlate with the paper vegetable cut outs

## Preparation

You will need to make long, 2" strips of white paper, which will be the base of the crowns. Cut out and prepare vegetable shapes to glue on the crowns. Use the vegetable cut-out pages to help make squash, carrot, beet, tomato and apple shapes. Do not limit yourself to these examples – create more shapes of vegetable and fruits that grow in your area!

## Activities

### Read a Book

[Eating the Alphabet](#), [An Edible Alphabet](#), [Pick, Pull, Snap](#), and [The Vegetables We Eat](#) all introduce students to new types of vegetables. Please choose a book that fits your student's level of learning. Ask the students to raise their hands when they see a vegetable they have tried.

### Apple and Vegetable Exploration

Show the students the fresh vegetables that correlate with the paper vegetable cut outs the kids will glue to their vegetable crowns (squash, carrot, beet, tomato, and apple). Hold up each vegetable and ask the students to tell you its name. Have they tried the vegetable or fruit? Ask them to guess which parts of the vegetables they can eat – e.g. carrot-just the roots, beets-the roots and the tops, apple-everything except the stem, tomato and squash-the whole thing.



### Books to Read

[Eating the Alphabet](#)

by Lois Ehlert

[An Edible Alphabet](#)

by Bonnie Christensen

[Pick, Pull, Snap](#)

by Lola Shaefer

[The Vegetables We Eat](#)

by Gail Gibbons



# Veggie Crowns

## **Taste the Apples and Vegetables**

Pass out the pieces of the apples and vegetables and ask each student to try them. Ask them to describe how things taste and feel.

## **Make the Crowns**

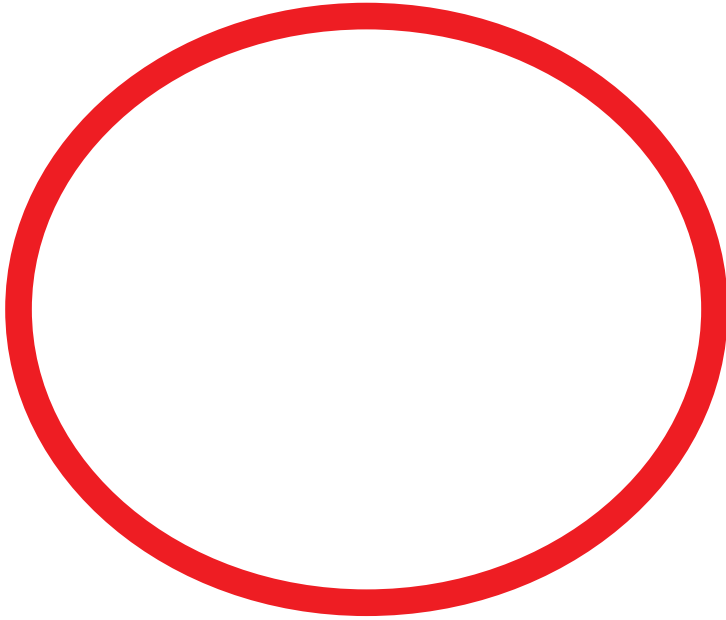
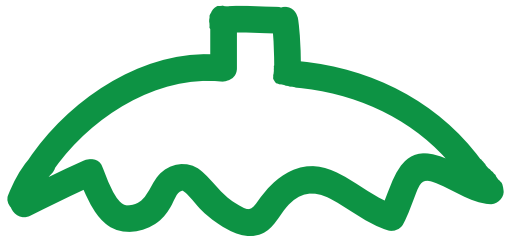
Give each student one of each of the vegetable shapes, one white strip of paper, and a glue stick. Ask the students to glue the vegetables and fruits onto their crowns. When the glue has dried, help the students assemble their crowns by stapling the ends of the white strips together to the crown fits on the students' head.

## **Optional: add the students' names to the crowns**

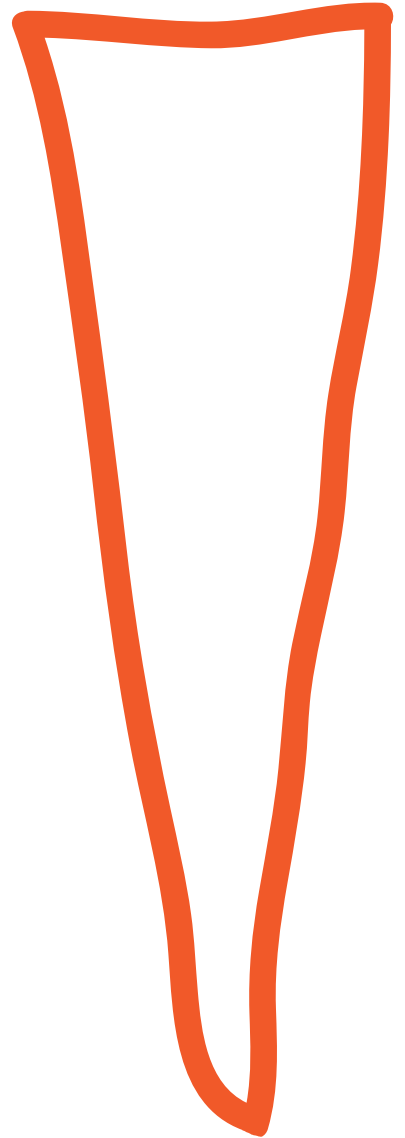
At the beginning of school, everyone is working on learning one another's names. An optional activity is to ask each student to write his/her name in large print on the strip of white paper. They can then glue the fruits and vegetables on the paper strip around their names.

## **Extensions**

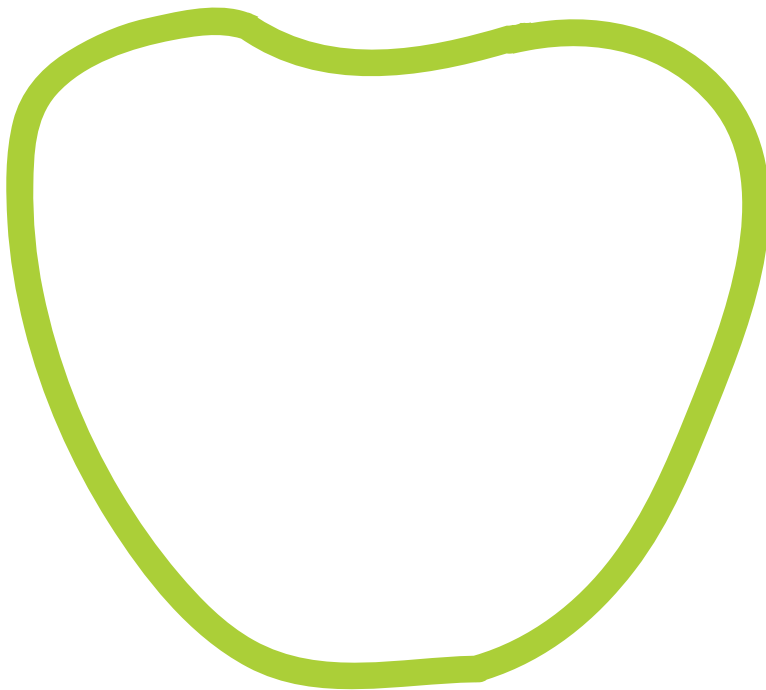
Veggie crowns can be used in a variety of ways to have conversations with students about fruits and vegetables. Using seed catalogs, you can have students make crowns with various themes such as favorite fruits and vegetables or fruits and vegetables that they would like to try. If you do taste tests in your classroom, veggie crowns make a great 'passport' with students adding a picture of each fruit or vegetable that they taste. Adding a picture to their crown is highly motivating for some students to try something new!



Tomato

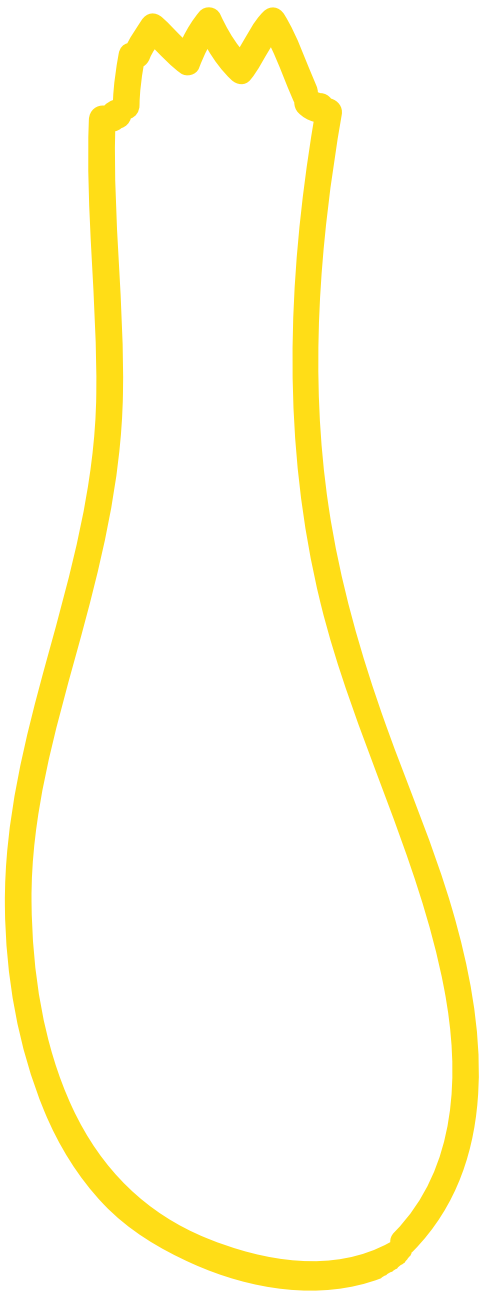


Carrot

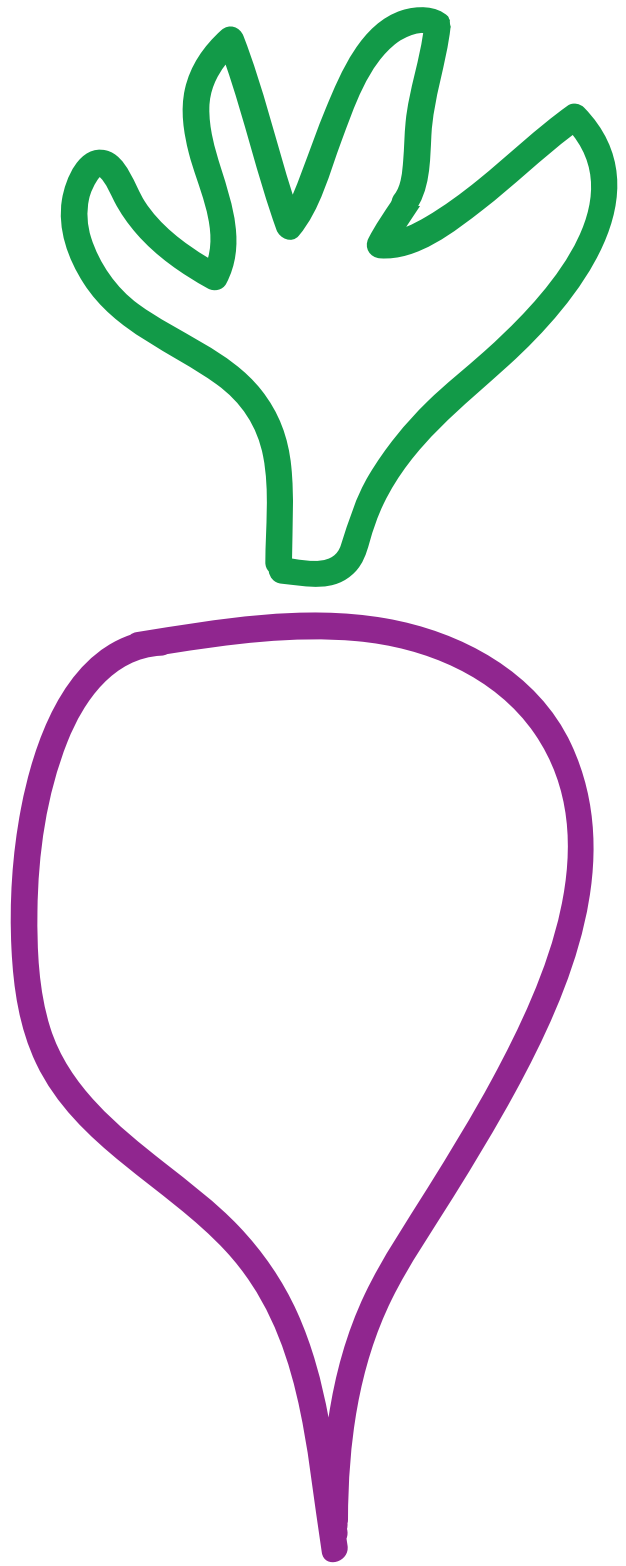


Apple





Squash

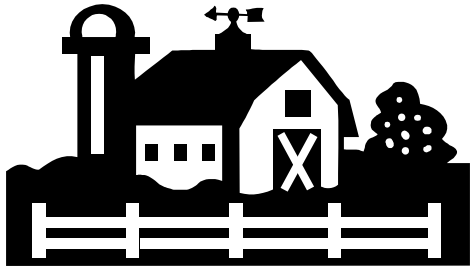


Beet

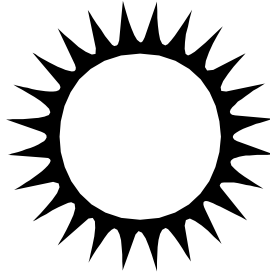


PICK *the* GOOD  
*stuff*

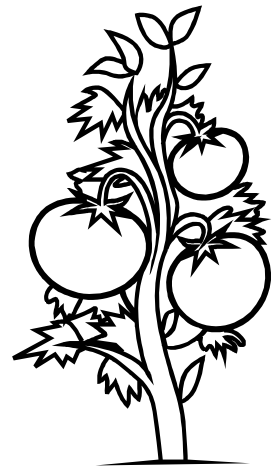
Pick Virginia Grown



Virginia fruits and vegetables begin on a farm. The farmer plants seeds in rich soil.



Sunshine and rain help the seeds grow into big, strong plants. When the plants bloom, bees pollinate the plants. Then the fruits and vegetables appear, very small at first, but they grow bigger and bigger until they are ready to eat. Visit a Virginia farm this season and Pick the Good Stuff!

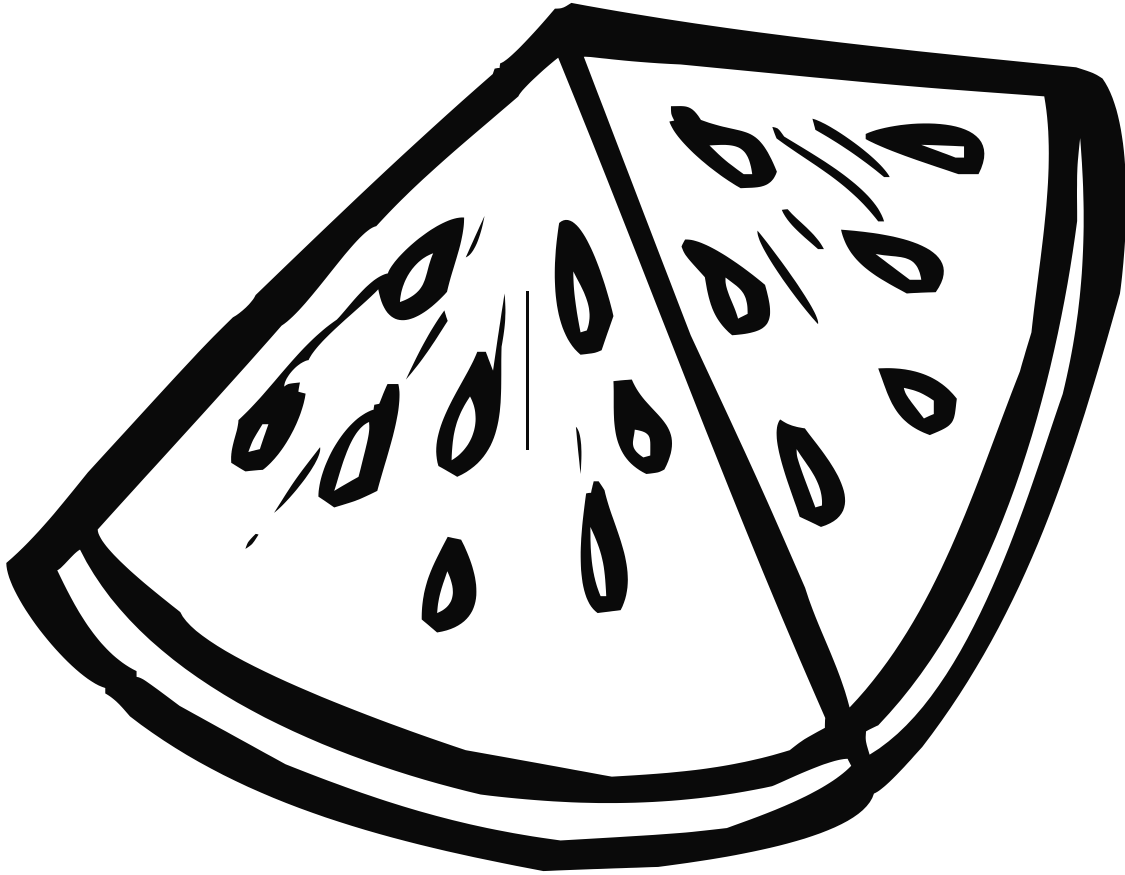




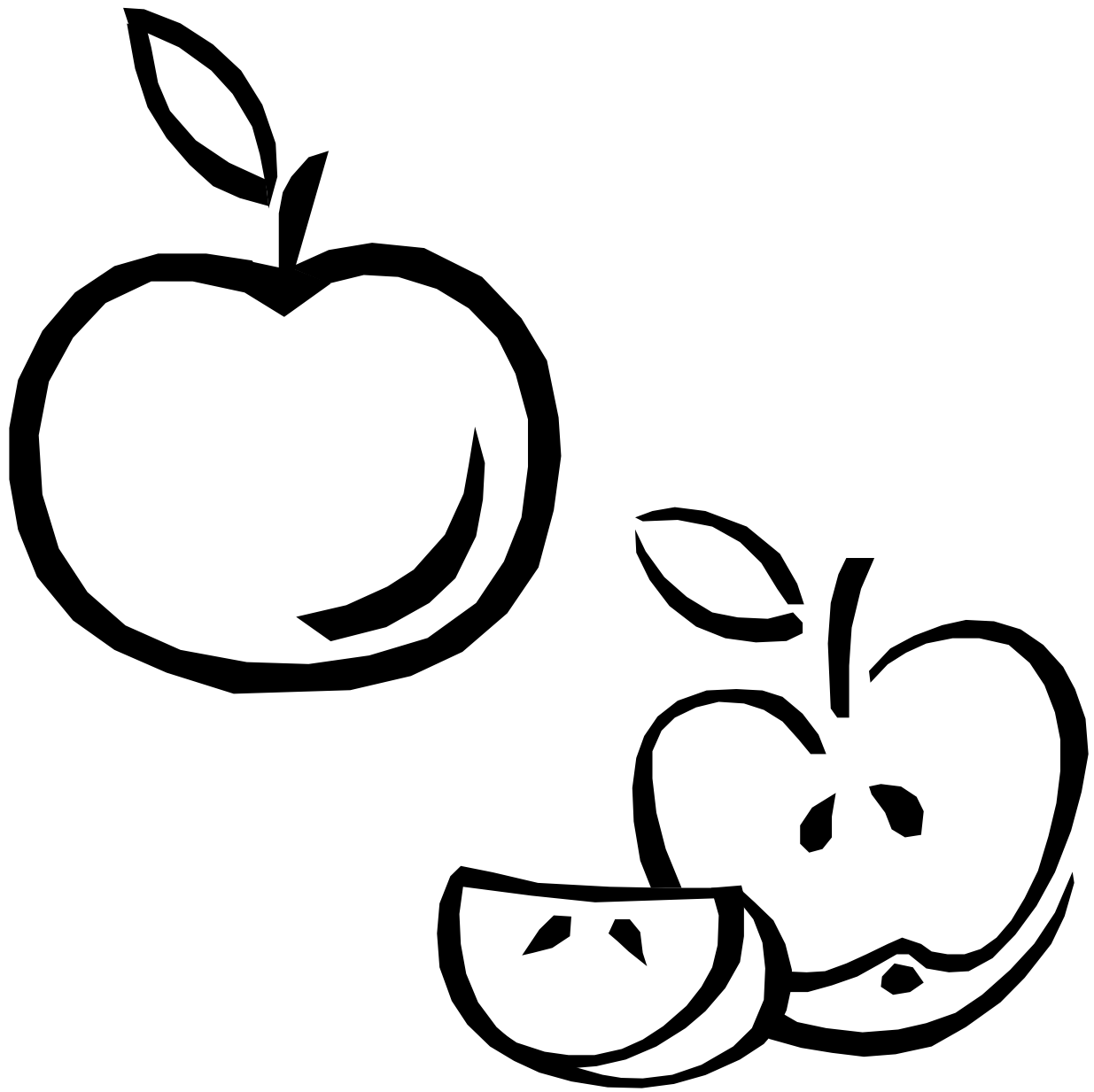
Fresh, juicy strawberries are ready for picking in May. Did you know that every strawberry has 200 tiny seeds? Pick some at a farm near you.



Corn grows on tall stalks. The corn cob is actually part of the corn plant's flower.



Watermelons grow on vines. They are 92% water, but they contain vitamins A, C, B6, and potassium.



Apples are an excellent source of fiber. They are also known as "Nature's Toothbrush," so they are good for dental health.



Pumpkins are members of the squash family and grow on vines. They can be carved for Halloween jack-o-lanterns.





Purple eggplant, red ripe tomatoes,  
orange carrots . . . Virginia vegetables  
come in many different  
colors and flavors.

# Word Search

W P Y C M E C X I O H N E A B Z S P S U L D  
X A L N M A P P Z W E I G L U C L Q U T N X  
J K P U M P K I N S Q H G A B D E O U P R Y  
F D S P C A N T A L O U P E L E N X Z A U K  
G P Z U L U N M I O W L L W R M N X B Z S T  
A R D F G E K L M Q W S A T R U I O E U P H  
V B A M W K L W O P K P N E I M D S R C K C  
L S K P N A E M O I U X T E E L E I R C I Z  
U C C I E P E A C H B E R I S I L N I H N O  
F N W A F S L P O T A T O E S B S P E I S X  
B E R F L E V X L E O T O M A T O E S N X E  
A L I E F Q O V I R G I N I A T M E U I Z Q

APPLE  
BERRIES  
CANTALOUPE  
EGGPLANT

GRAPES  
PEACH  
POTATOES  
PUMPKINS

SQUASH  
TOMATOES  
VIRGINIA  
ZUCCHINI

# Find Your Way Through the Amazing Garden Maze

Start



Finish

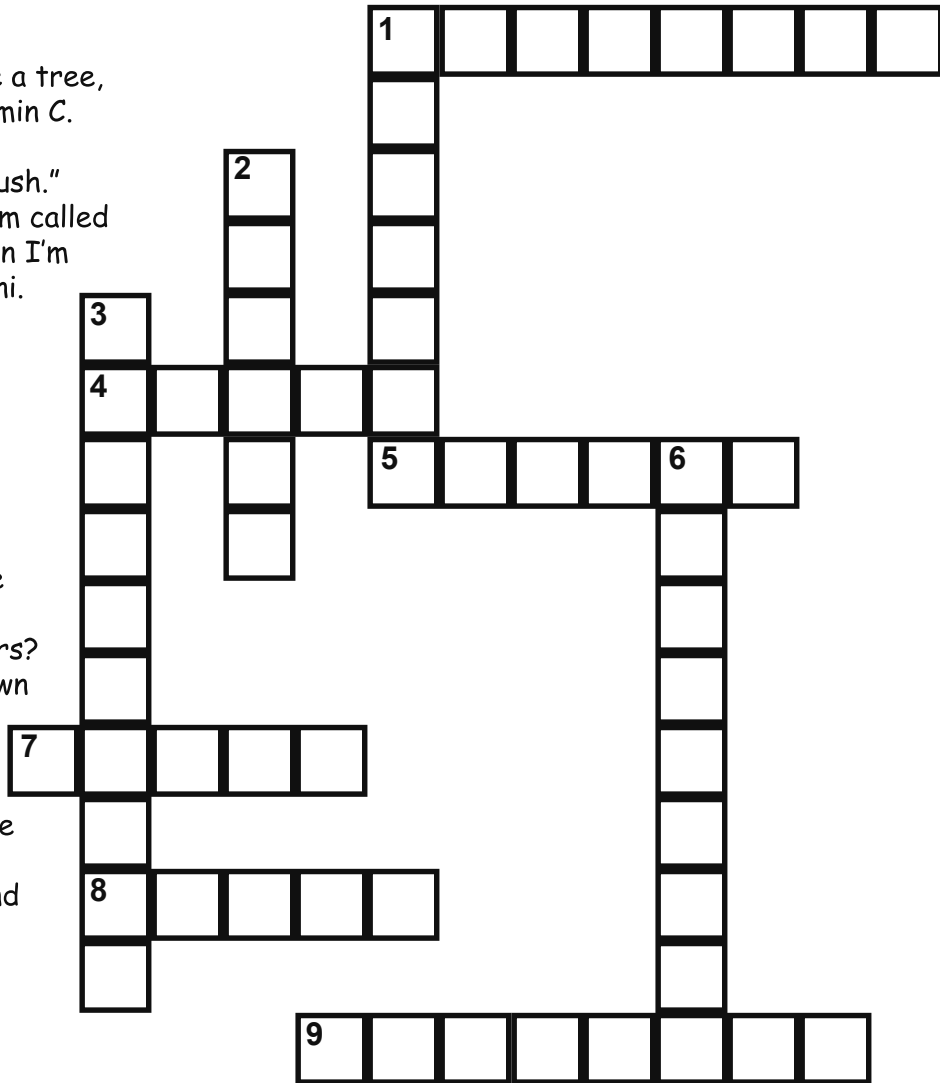
# Farm Fun Crossword Puzzle

## ACROSS

1. I'm green, look like a tree, and am rich in vitamin C.
4. I'm called "Nature's Toothbrush."
5. When I'm yellow I'm called crookneck and when I'm green I'm a zucchini.
7. I'm a fuzzy fruit.
8. I make you cry.
9. Where all the answers grow!

## DOWN

1. What are red, blue and black and make great cobblers?
2. I'm purple and grown in bunches.
3. I'm green on the outside, red on the inside, and have seeds for spitting.
6. I grow on stalks and have ears.



- |    |            |
|----|------------|
| 1. | Broccoli   |
| 2. | Grapes     |
| 3. | Watermelon |
| 4. | Apple      |
| 5. | Squash     |
| 6. | Sweet Corn |
| 7. | Peach      |
| 8. | Onion      |
| 9. | Virginia   |

## ANSWERS

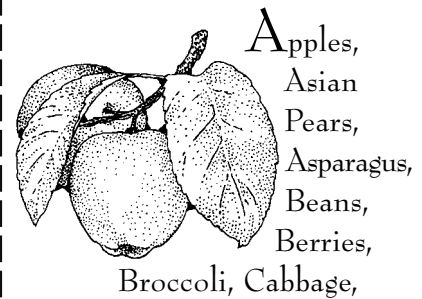


For more information, contact the  
 Virginia Department of Agriculture  
 and Consumer Services  
 Division of Marketing

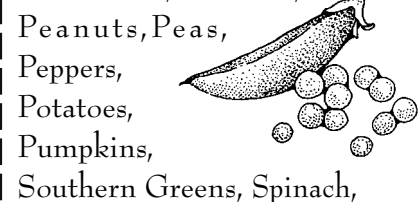
102 Governor Street • Richmond, VA 23219  
 (804) 786-7686

[www.virginiagrown.com](http://www.virginiagrown.com)

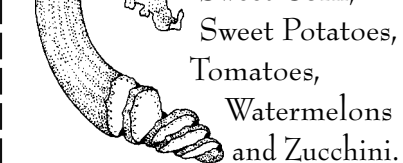
Virginia  
 Grown  
 Fruits and  
 Veggies!



Apples,  
 Asian Pears,  
 Asparagus,  
 Beans,  
 Berries,  
 Broccoli, Cabbage,  
 Cantaloupes, Cucumbers,  
 Eggplant, Grapes, Herbs,  
 Nectarines, Peaches,



Peanuts, Peas,  
 Peppers,  
 Potatoes,  
 Pumpkins,  
 Southern Greens, Spinach,  
 Squash,  
 Strawberries,  
 Sweet Corn,  
 Sweet Potatoes,



Tomatoes,  
 Watermelons  
 and Zucchini.

Look for  
 Virginia Grown produce at  
 grocery stores,  
 farmers' markets  
 or at the farm.

## **How to Source Local Food**

Interested in adding local, seasonal foods to your meals or snacks? Below are a few ways to source local food:

- Check in with your grocery store. They might already be selling local food! If they aren't, ask if they have plans to start.
- Ask your food distributor. Distributors often sell local items, and sometimes you just need to ask what is available. If they know you are interested in having a local item on the menu, they can work to source that item for you.
- Buy directly from the farm. Farm stands and farmer's markets are the best way to get a variety of items. Visit the [Virginia Farmers Market Association](#) to find a market near you and learn their COVID-19 safety procedures.

### ***Remember:***

- There is no one definition of "local." As an organization, you can define what "local" means to you. In the Virginia CACFP, we define it as anything grown or raised in Virginia.
- Farm to CACFP expenses like gardening supplies, nutrition education, and local food for meals are all allowable costs in the CACFP.

We look forward to celebrating with you! Please email [cacfp@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:cacfp@vdh.virginia.gov) with any questions.

