

Classroom Cooking Activities are Kids' Favorites

Submitted by Therese Povolo, Michigan State University Extension, Benzie County

I am working with children who are six to eight years old, in a multi-age classroom in a rural school district in Benzie county. The students like my visits and enjoy the books and learning the nutrition concepts in the curriculum, but the thing they like most is preparing and eating the food and samples I bring for the food-tasting/nutrition education activity.

I brought kiwis to use on the bagel faces (Edible Pyramid Bagel Faces) and many children had never seen them or eaten them before. At first some of the children wouldn't try the kiwis, but by the end of the period, the children had all decided on their own, to try the kiwis. They were delighted to discover a new food!

I also brought fresh, tender baby spinach to add to the vegetable soup (Easy Vegetable Soup) we made at the next lesson. I really involved the children in making the soup. (They think they are getting their own personal cooking show!) Almost all of them loved the soup and wanted more. I wish I had brought enough to make a double batch! My favorite comment as the students were eating the soup was, "I didn't think I liked spinach I like spinach now!" I heard this from several students.

I am happy to be part of a program that is bringing children hands-on positive, and healthy nutrition education and food-tasting experiences.