

# HARVEST of the MONTH in the CLASSROOM



## STRAWBERRIES

### HISTORY

Strawberries have a history that goes back more than 2,000 years. They are indigenous to both the northern and southern hemispheres. Strawberries grew wild in Italy where the first mention of strawberries occurred in the writings of Cato, a Roman Senator. European explorers discovered tiny, wild strawberries in North America in 1588 when they landed on the shores of the state of Virginia. Early settlers in Massachusetts enjoyed eating strawberries grown by indigenous farmers who cultivated them as early as 1643. The strawberry is also not a true berry, in the botanical sense. The flesh we eat is actually a swollen part of the stem, called the receptacle. Native Americans called strawberries "heartseed berries" and ground them into cornmeal bread. Inspired by this recipe, colonists created a similar version, referred to today as strawberry shortcake.

### FUN FACTS

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Strawberries are grown in every state in the United States and every province of Canada.

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It takes 30 days for each strawberry to grow from flower to fruit.

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There are 6 towns named Strawberry in the United States!

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Strawberry plants can produce strawberries for up to 5 years.

### FARMER BIO



Joe Czajkowski farms 460 acres of crops in Hadley, Massachusetts. He grows a mix of vegetables including strawberries, rhubarb, blueberries, peaches, carrots, sweet corn, zucchini, butternut squash, kale, parsnips, corn, grape tomatoes and brussels sprouts. Joe's favorite strawberry variety is called Cabot because it's big, firm, glossy and tasty. They sell their farm fresh fruits and vegetables to Market Basket, C&S Grocers, Sweet Greens, UMass, and to the Worcester, Chicopee, Hartford, Amherst and Boston schools.

# STRAWBERRY STRAW POLLS

Grades 3-5 • 30 minutes



## STRAWBERRIES

### OBJECTIVES

Students will learn about polls, and how to collect people's opinions, and how to analyze poll results.

### ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

What are the best methods for gathering different opinions?

What are the reasons you might want to understand people's opinions?

### MATERIALS NEEDED

Straws (cut in half)  
6 Clear Plastic Cups  
Dry-Erase Marker  
Cloth

### PROCEDURE

1. Ask children what the word "poll," means. Explain that it is asking people questions to find out the opinions of a group. Tell the students they will be creating a poll to find out what their class thinks of strawberries.
2. Label two cups: Likes Strawberries & Does Not Like Strawberries. Give each student a straw and ask them to place it in the cup matching their opinion.
3. Count the straws in each cup and challenge children to make statements based on their findings, such as, "Two more people in our class like strawberries than don't."
4. Invite students to suggest more questions and responses to poll the group about strawberries or other fruit. For example, which is your favorite red fruit? Then label the cups with different red fruit.
5. For each suggestion, put new labels on the cups and have students do the poll and make statements about their findings.