MASSACHUSETTS FARM TO SCHOOL
HARVEST of the MONTH in the CLASSROOM

MILK IS FOR ME!

Grades 1-3 | 1 Class Period

OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students will learn to make direct connections between vitamins and what they do for the body. They will develop nutritional literacy by understanding how to read and analyze a nutritional label and reflect on how the nutrition fuels their own body.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- Why do we drink milk? What nutrients and vitamins does it have that are good for our bodies?
- Why do foods have nutritional labels? How do labels help us make food choices?
- How do different vitamins and nutrients support our health?

MA STATE FRAMEWORKS

Nutrition and Balanced Eating [PK.1.NE]

1. Identify situations when a nutrition-related decision needs to be made (e.g., when trying new foods, choosing snacks and beverages, eating breakfast)

3. Identify that food is the preferred way of obtaining nutrition (as opposed to supplements) and is fuel for the body, identify the primary contribution of each food group to the body, and provide examples of foods within food groups to support informed decision-making.

MATERIALS

- Paper
- Vitamin diagram
- Coloring tools
- Milk carton
- Nutritional label (one real, one blank/template)
- Laminator (optional)

PROCEDURE

Warm Up

Before this lesson, make a health diagram that shows the names of different key vitamins and nutrients next to images of the parts of the body they support. You can also find an example here: Vitamins & Mineral Fact Cards (https://bit.ly/4kMJ11g)

The diagram can be used in a small-group exploration, as a guessing game in a large group or in pairs, or with direct teacher instruction.

Use the diagram to ask questions such as:

- What part of the body does protein help with?
- What about calcium?
- What does fat do for your body?

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PROCEDURE, Cont.

Activity

Once students are familiar with some of the key nutrients that support the body, they will take a closer look at the nutrients listed on a milk carton. Provide each student (or pair) with a milk nutrition label or an actual milk carton. Ask them to identify which of the nutrients discussed in the warm-up activity also appear on the label.

Next, give each student a sheet of drawing paper. Instruct them to create a visual representation of how their body uses each nutrient listed on the label. For example, they might draw themselves playing soccer next to the protein line, smiling to represent calcium's role in supporting teeth, or running in the cold to reflect the energy and warmth provided by fats. The goal is for students to form personal, meaningful connections with each nutrient. By illustrating how these nutrients support their everyday lives, they'll gain a deeper understanding of what the nutrition label means—and how it relates to their own health and experiences.

When students have completed their drawings, ask for volunteers to share out with the whole class. How did they represent protein and the different vitamins, minerals and fats?

Laminate students' personalized nutrition labels and bring them out when milk is served in classrooms to encourage and remind youth of why their milk adds nutritional value to their lives.

EXTENSIONS & VARIATIONS

While students can't use whole milk to make butter (because milk lacks the high fat content needed), they can make butter from heavy cream. Making butter with students is a fun and exciting process that requires collaboration and patience. If you want to try to make butter, follow the Mass Farm to School resource "How to Make Butter (And the Science Behind It)" at www.massfarmtoschool.org/guide/how-to-make-butter

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HANDOUT

NUTRITION LABELS

Milk		
Serving Size 8oz	**Amount**	**Daily Value**
Calories	150	
Calories from Fat		
Total Fat	8g	10%
Saturated Fat	5g	
Trans Fat	0g	
Cholesterol	35mg	12%
Sodium	120mg	5%
Carbohydrate	12mg	4%
Fiber	0	
Sugars	12mg	
Protein	8g	
Vitamin D	2.5 mcG	15%
Potassium	370mg	8%
Calcium	300mg	25%

Milk		
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Calories from Fat		
Total Fat		
Saturated Fat		
Trans Fat		
Cholesterol		
Sodium		
Carbohydrate		
Fiber		
Sugars		
Protein		
Vitamin D		
Potassium		
Calcium		