

# Cantaloupe

**GRADE**  
**2-3**

**Month: September**

**Time Required: 30 minutes**

**Alternative Tastings: Honeydew, Watermelon**

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## Lesson Goals

- Students will increase their knowledge of fruits and vegetables.
- Students will learn to try new fruits and vegetables and increase their preference for them.
- Students will learn that their peers like to eat fruits and vegetables.
- Students will learn how to ask their parents/caregivers for the fruits and vegetables tasted in class.

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## Learning Objectives

- Students will be able to define and give examples of traditions.
- Students will be able to identify seeds within melons.

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## Academic Standards Connection

Coming soon.

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## Essential Components Checklist

- Physical Activity
- “Asking” Discussion
- Voting
- Newsletters, BINGO Cards, Stickers, and Incentives
- Tasting

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## Materials

- Whole cantaloupe (and another melon if offering two kinds for a taste test)
- Knife
- Cutting board
- Napkins or paper plates
- Bowl for rinsing seeds
- An airtight container (such as a glass jar and lid or a plastic baggie )

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## Preparation

- Wash the outside of the whole melon(s) under cool running water. Scrub with vegetable brush.
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## Engage

### 1. Introduction: 2 minutes

*The “Introduction” section is a time to introduce yourself, recap previous lessons, establish norms, or introduce the day's lesson.*

As this is your first lesson of the year, introduce yourself to the class and to Pick A Better Snack. Share with students, *When I come to your classroom every month, we're going to have fun trying foods together and learn about each other. So here's something I want to learn about you... (have students stand up in a circle).*

### 2. Engage Activity: 10 minutes

*The “Engage Activity” section has two purposes: 1) to activate students' prior knowledge and 2) to engage every student.*

With students standing in a circle, *Today we're going to start by talking about things that our families like to do together. For example, in my family we INSERT A FAMILY TRADITION. Now, think in your head, what is something special that your family likes to do together?* Encourage students to put their fingers to their temples and squint their eyes to think really hard.

*Do you have it? Now, when I say the magic word “melon,” I want you to turn to a friend next to you and take turns quietly sharing. “Melon.”* Observe students sharing, making sure all students have a partner. After a minute or two of sharing, do an attention-getter to end discussion and transition back to you. Ask a couple of students (“pick a stick” is a great way to ask at random) to step into the circle and share. Celebrate them with a “beautiful clap” ([link to clap examples here](#)). To turn this into a physical activity, have students practice the “beautiful clap” by being extra dramatic, squatting close to the ground, and then slowly rising as we do our clap. Repeat a few times.

- Students return to their desks. *These special things we like to do together are examples of traditions (recall examples from students' sharing). Let's all say that word together: tradition (write the word on smart board/white board). A tradition is something that we learn from our family/community. Traditions often happen year after year and are one way in which we celebrate and share our family or community values and activities.*

## Explore

### 3. Experiential Learning: 8 minutes

*This is a time for students to familiarize themselves with what you'll be tasting. The best way to do this is through a hands-on or exploratory activity.*

Have students sit where they will eat (opportunity for 3 deep breaths).

Show students a whole cantaloupe. *Today, we're going to taste this fruit called cantaloupe. When I say our magic word, I want you to say what you think is inside the cantaloupe. “Melon” (activate students' prior knowledge to answer, “seeds”). There are seeds inside the cantaloupe.* Demonstrate cutting open the melon and show students the seeds and the edible inside. *We're going to eat this part of the melon, but we're not going to eat the seeds. Instead we're going to practice a tradition called seed saving together.* Write “seed saving” on the board and have students repeat it back to you. *People all around the world, throughout all of history, have practiced seed saving as a tradition. We can dry and save these cantaloupe seeds in order to plant and grow more cantaloupe next year!*

Work with the teacher to prepare samples of cantaloupe, with some seeds included. *While we prepare our cantaloupe samples, please discuss softly with your table/neighbor: why do you think seed saving is an important tradition?* Pass out pieces of melon (with seeds) to all students, reminding them not to taste it yet. Ask a few groups to share their discussion, and answer any questions. *Seed saving is an important tradition because it means we can re-grow our favorite foods every year. If you see any seeds in your sample, save them on your napkin and we'll collect them at the end of our lesson. We're going to save these seeds!*

### Seed Saving Experiment Instructions

\*Note: Complete this process as a class or leave instructions with the teacher to facilitate.

1. Collect the saved seeds from students.
2. Rinse with water and spread onto wax paper to dry for a few days.
3. Store dry seeds in a labeled jar or baggie in the classroom.
4. Extension: Consider trying to sprout the seeds indoors in the classroom later this year.

### 4. Tasting Activity: 3 minutes

*The "Tasting Activity" section is when students get to try the fruit or vegetable.*

Before trying your samples, be sure to share your brave tasting rules (for example, don't yuck my yum, we all try together, etc.). As students receive samples, ask them to use their senses while they wait.

#### Melon Taste Test Option:

1. Offer classrooms 2 types of melon to sample (ex: cantaloupe, honeydew, watermelon).
2. Use all 5 senses to compare and contrast the melons.
3. Discuss flavors, textures, colors, seed shapes, etc, as a class.

## Reflect

### 5. Voting Activity: 2 minutes

*This is a time for students to give their opinion on what they tried!*

Introduce the tradition of voting with your thumb. *In these Pick a Better Snack Lessons, we have some traditions of our own. To show what we think of the foods we're trying, we vote with our thumbs.* As students taste the cantaloupe, have them vote with their thumbs. Observe their voting and offer positive reinforcement regarding the Brave Taster Rules. If a student dislikes the tasting, perhaps ask what they would change about it.

### 6. Reflection: 5 minutes

*Reflection is one of the most important processes for students to process and retain new information or experiences. Give students an opportunity to reflect on what they've learned or tried in your lesson. This is an excellent place for students to practice the "Asking Discussion".*

#### Choral Response:

*I'm going to ask a question and you're going to quietly think to yourself. When I say the magic word, "melon," you can say your answer aloud. Let's practice...*

- What month is it? (September)
- Whose class am I in?
- What food did we try today? (Cantaloupe)
- What can we save that's inside the cantaloupe? (Seeds)
- What's the word for something important that we do over and over again? (Tradition)
- You might also ask additional questions like, *where could you buy cantaloupe?*

Asking Discussion:

*Raise your hand if you're excited to go home and tell your family about tasting cantaloupe.*

- Ask a student with a raised hand: *if you wanted to try this at home, how might you ask your grown-ups?*
- You might also ask additional questions like, *where could you buy cantaloupe?*

\*Leave newsletters, incentives, stickers, and BINGO sheets with the teachers to pass out.

# Lesson Supplement

## Recommended Books

“The Cantaloupe Cat” by Jan Yager

“The Antelope Who Loved Cantaloupe” by Celeste Marie Halata

“The Antelope Who Ate Cantaloupe Instead of French Fries and Hay” by Julie Crichton

## Physical Activity

Sports Galore from “[Get Movin’ Activity Breaks](#)”

(Variation: Have students call out sports or activities they did over the summer and mimic them.)

More ideas for physical activity are available at <https://idph.iowa.gov/inn/play-your-way/brain-breaks>.

## What You Need to Know About Cantaloupe and Melons

- Look for a melon that is heavy for its size without cuts or bruises on the surface. The stem should give to gentle pressure.
- Always wash the whole fruit under running water before preparing and eating. Always use clean knives and cutting surfaces (Adults should do the cutting). Store cut sections in the refrigerator.
- Cantaloupes range in size from 1-10 pounds.
- Cantaloupe and honeydew have a hollow cavity that is filled with seeds that are scooped out before cutting.
- Watermelons contain small black seeds throughout the flesh or come in a seedless variety.
- Watermelon is the most common melon consumed in the United States by weight, then cantaloupe and honeydew.

## Facts About Cantaloupe

- Melons grow on the surface of the ground on a trailing vine. They grow in Iowa.
- Flowers on a melon vine need to be pollinated (visited) by bees to make melons.
- Cantaloupes are also known as muskmelons and rockmelons.
- China produces the most cantaloupes in the world; United States is the 5th largest producer with over half grown in California.

## Health Connection

- Cantaloupe is an excellent source of Vitamin C, to help you ward off germs and keep you healthy. Put up your defense shield (cross your arms in front of your chest).
- Cantaloupe is an excellent source of Vitamin A (one of highest among fruits), which is important for your eyesight. Put on your super goggles (make goggles with your fingers over your eyes).
- Cantaloupe is high in fiber, which is good for digestion and helps you feel full longer (rub your tummy for good digestion).
- Honeydew and watermelon are also good sources of Vitamin C.

## References and Resources

<http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/honeydew>

<https://www.watermelon.org/>

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/foodsavings/content/produce-basics>

<https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/seasonal-produce-guide/cantaloupe>

