

# VARY YOUR VEGGIES



## Objectives

Learn why it's good to eat potatoes and mushrooms.

Learn what potatoes and mushrooms look like.

Learn how potatoes and mushrooms grow.

## Supplies Needed

February

Pick a **better snack**™ & **ACT** bingo card

"Spuddy Buddy Story"

Kindergarten - "What is Hiding?" worksheet

1<sup>st</sup> Grade - "Where Do I Grow" worksheet

Potatoes for tasting

Mushrooms for tasting

Knife

## Taste Opportunities

Featured Vegetables:

Potatoes

Mushrooms

## Background

**Potatoes** are the most widely consumed and economical vegetable. They are a leading source of vitamin C simply because of the quantities eaten. Many people think of potatoes as a fattening food but that fat comes from processing and the toppings added. About 65 percent of potatoes are sold in more convenient forms, like French fries, which increase the fat and sodium (salt) content.

Eat potatoes with their skin whenever possible. Potato skins contain fiber, iron, calcium, phosphorus, potassium, zinc, and B vitamins. It is best not to eat the potato skin if it has a greenish tinge. This is chlorophyll and is not harmful, but it is an indication of high amounts of a toxin called solanine. Store potatoes in a cool dark place. Do not put them in the refrigerator since this turns the starch to sugar giving the potato a sweet taste. Leaving the potatoes at room temperature for a few days can reverse this.

The states of Washington and Idaho grow many of the potatoes for the United States. Potatoes grow underground in the soil.

The Irish were introduced to the potato between 1586 and 1588. They were the first to recognize the food value of the potato. The climate and soil of Ireland were perfect growing conditions for the potato. Soon, potatoes became the main food crop of the country. In 1845 and 1846, the potato crop failed and many people in Ireland had no food. One of the consequences of the potato crop failure was the increased immigration of the Irish to the United States.

In 1621, Captain Nathaniel Butler brought potatoes to America. Every American eats about 126 pounds of potatoes every year.

**Mushrooms** are not thought of a good source of nutrients because they lack the bright color of so many vegetables. Cooked mushrooms are an excellent source of niacin and a good source of riboflavin, which are B vitamins.

Mushrooms are really not a vegetable, but a fungus. Fungus is a plant that does not have roots or leaves, does not flower

or bear seeds, doesn't make its own food, and doesn't need light to grow. Mushrooms grow best in dark, damp places. There are about 38,000 varieties of mushrooms, some are edible and some are very toxic.

In ancient times, mushrooms were thought to be magical. People were forbidden to eat them unless they were warriors or kings. When mushrooms grow in a circle, they are called fairy rings because people in the olden days thought they were made by fairies dancing in the night.

About half of the mushrooms harvested in the United States come from the Kennett Square area of Pennsylvania. Kennett Square has been named the "mushroom capital" of the world.

Mushrooms come in many shapes, sizes, and colors. The umbrella-shape at the top of the mushroom is called the cap and can be the most colorful part. The underneath side of the cap contains spores and gills. The stem of the mushroom is called the stalk. The base of the mushroom is called the hyphae.

### Web Site Resources

[www.idph.state.ia.us/pickabetersnack](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/pickabetersnack)  
[www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org)  
[www.mypyramid.gov/kids/index.html](http://www.mypyramid.gov/kids/index.html)

### Do the Activity: Kindergarten

Read the Spuddy Buddy story included with this lesson. Distribute "What is Hiding?" color sheet to each student.

### First Grade

Read the Spuddy Buddy story included with this lesson. Distribute the "Where do I grow" worksheet to each student. (The students will begin at the potato at the top of the page and make it through the maze to the potatoes growing underground.)

### Talk It Over:

Who can tell me what a potato looks like? (*oval shaped, brown, yellow, or red in color, often bumpy*)

What does a mushroom look like? (*white or brown in color, looks like a little umbrella*)

Where do potatoes grow? (*underground in the soil*)

Does anyone know where mushrooms grow? (*The stem and cap grow above ground, but they like dark, moist places*)

**Apply:**

What are some ways you have eaten potatoes either at school, at home or when you have eaten at a restaurant? *(baked, boiled, mashed, French fries, tater tots)*

What is the best way to eat potatoes? *(With their skins on and boiled or baked. Watch how much butter or sour cream you add.)*

What are some ways you have eaten mushrooms? *(On pizza, on salads, raw with dip, baked, sautéed, steamed, in casseroles, soups, etc.)*

Can you think of other ways you might eat more potatoes or mushrooms? *(add to soup, put in with a casserole, put mushrooms on a sandwich)*

Where do you find potatoes and mushrooms in the grocery store? *(in the produce department, also comes canned, potatoes can be dried and found in boxes)*



**Taste  
Opportunity**

Have the students wash their hands. Wash the mushrooms and cut for the students to sample. *(Students may want vinaigrette or Italian dressing for dipping.)*

Peel and cut a potato for the students to sample.

They can then put an "X" through the bingo square of the vegetable that they sampled.

How would you get a potato ready to eat as a snack?  
– Wash. Peel. Eat. (How easy is that?)

How would you get mushrooms ready for a snack?  
– Wash. Eat. (How easy is that?)

On the back of the Pick a **better** snack™ & **ACT** bingo card for each month, there is information for their parents and grandparents. Encourage students to take the bingo card home and ask their family to pick out a snack idea to try at home.

Extend the Activity



**Art, Music  
& PE**

Play **Hot Potato**. One version of this game is to have the students stand in a circle with one fist extended toward the inside of the circle. The person who is “It” uses one of his/her fists to lightly tap (as the numbers are said) on the fists of the others as this rhyme is chanted:

One potato, two potato, three potato, four,  
Five potato, six potato, seven potato, more!

The student whose fist is tapped when “more” is said, sits down. The game continues until one person is left standing. He/she then becomes the new “It.”

Or make potato prints as directed in the back of One Potato by Diana Pomeroy, Harcourt Brace & company, 1996. Using potato print illustrations, this counting book features delicious looking fruits, vegetables and seeds to count up to 100.

Place sentence strips of the chant in a pocket chart on a stand. With a pointer, model pointing to words and saying the chant. Place in a learning center. Write as:

One Potato  
One potato,  
Two potato,  
Three potato,  
Four.  
Five potato,  
Six potato,  
Seven potato,  
More!



**Language Arts  
& Reading**

Or read One Potato by Diana Pomeroy.



**Math**

Using the materials suggested for Language arts/Reading, add construction paper potatoes for the students to place the correct number of potatoes for each line. On the back of the number words, you might write the numbers and/or draw potatoes so that the activity is self checking.



**Science &  
Health**

Place a variety of mushrooms in a learning center for the students to explore with their five senses (except hearing and taste).

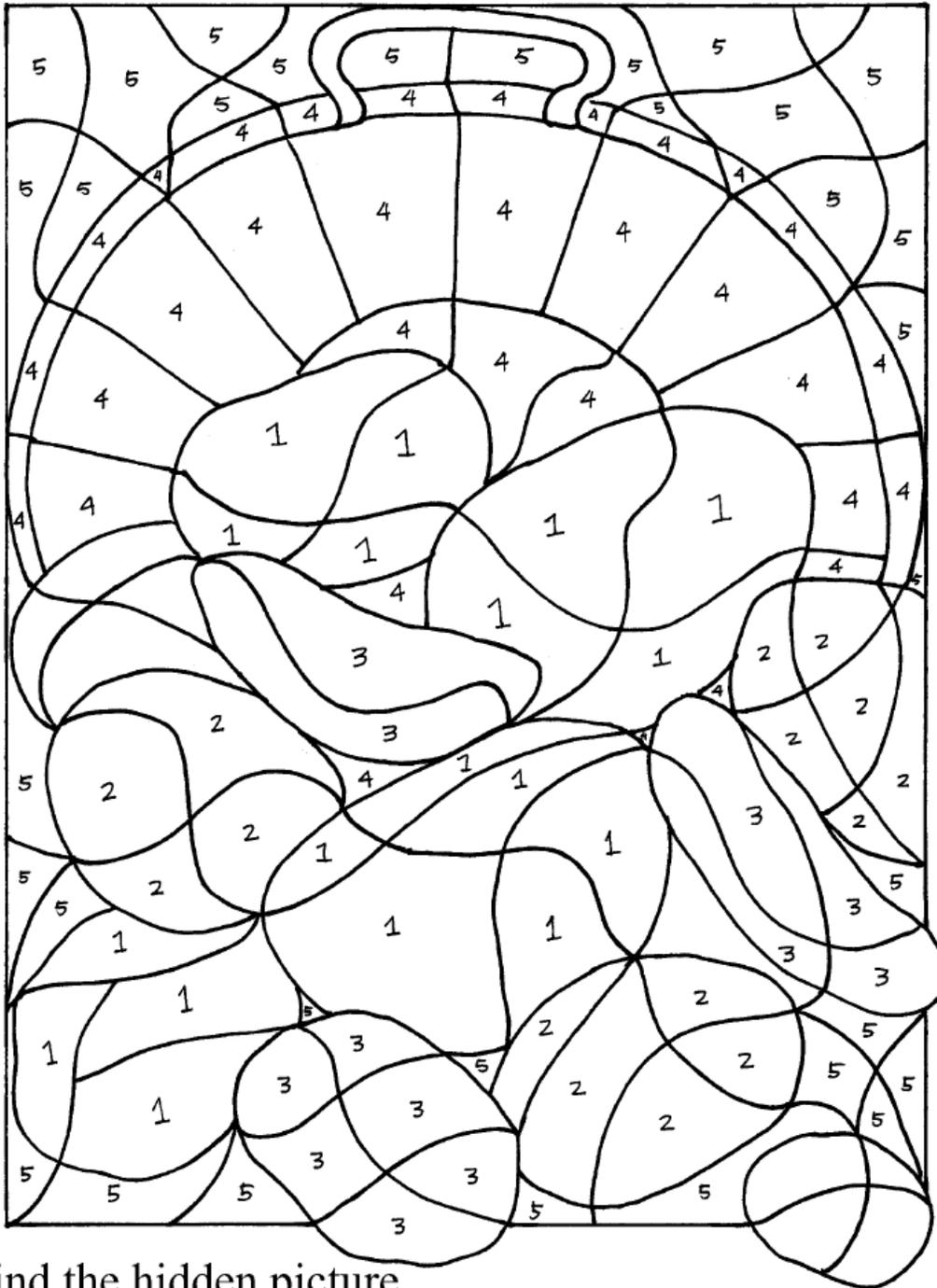


**Social Studies**

Place a book or a poster that shows how mushrooms are grown in a learning center. Or, you could share information and pictures found at <http://www.americanmushroom.org>. The Growing Mushrooms link is recommended.

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## What is Hiding?

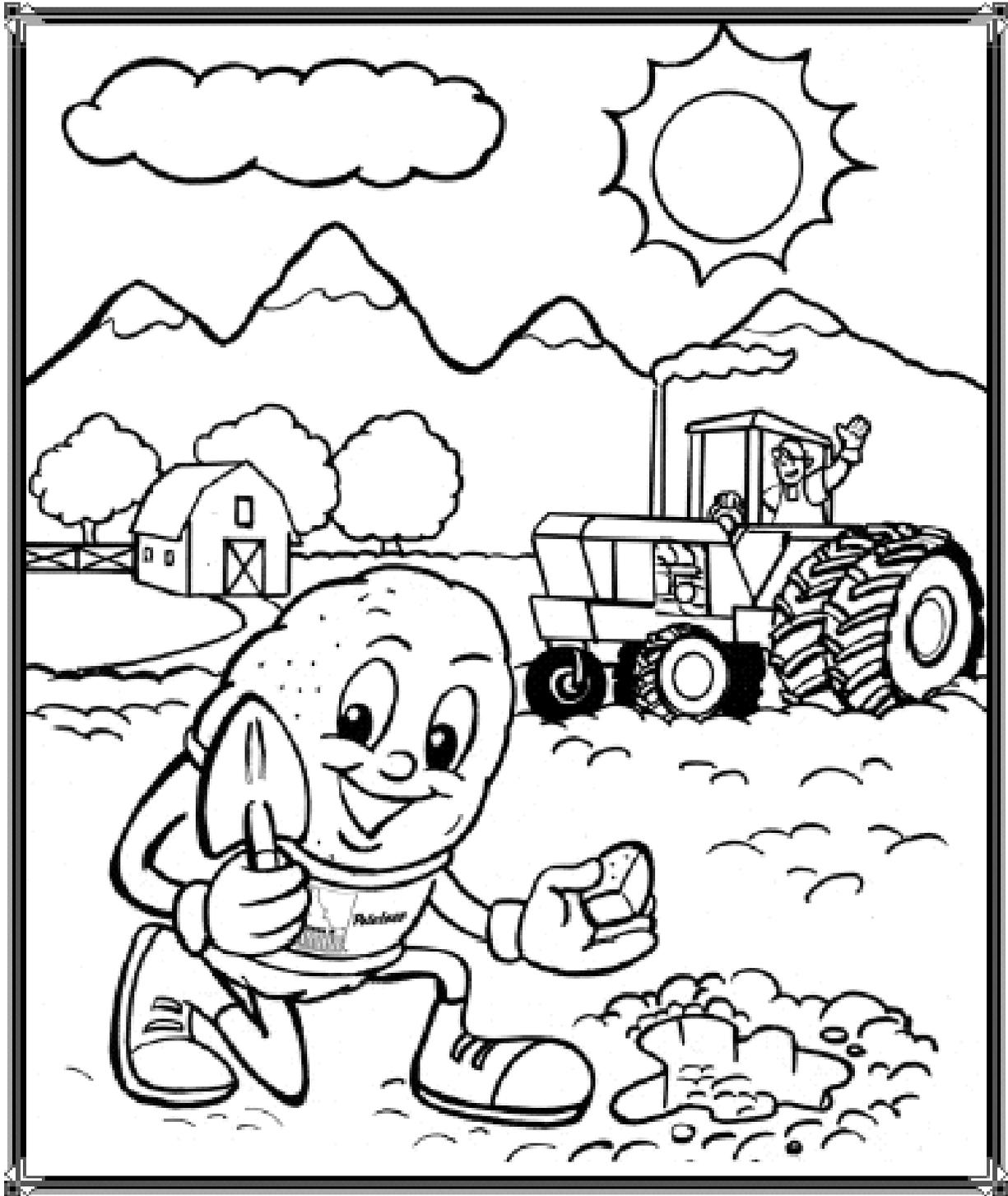


Find the hidden picture.

Color in the numbers: 1 = brown, 2 = light red, 3 = yellow,  
4 = your choice and 5 = your choice!

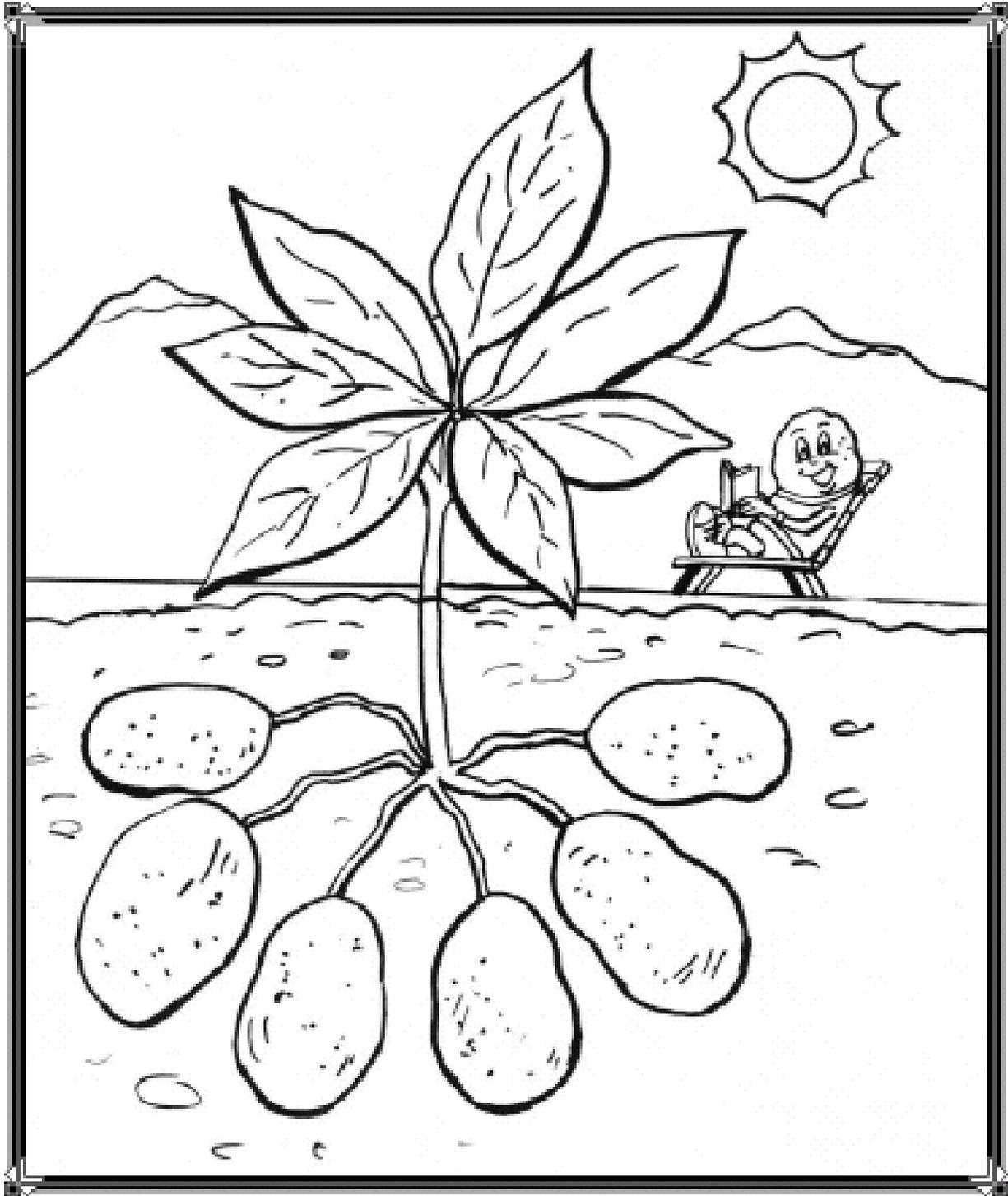
*Or go wild and use your imagination! (ps. green and red make brown)*

Spuddy Buddy plants a seed potato.

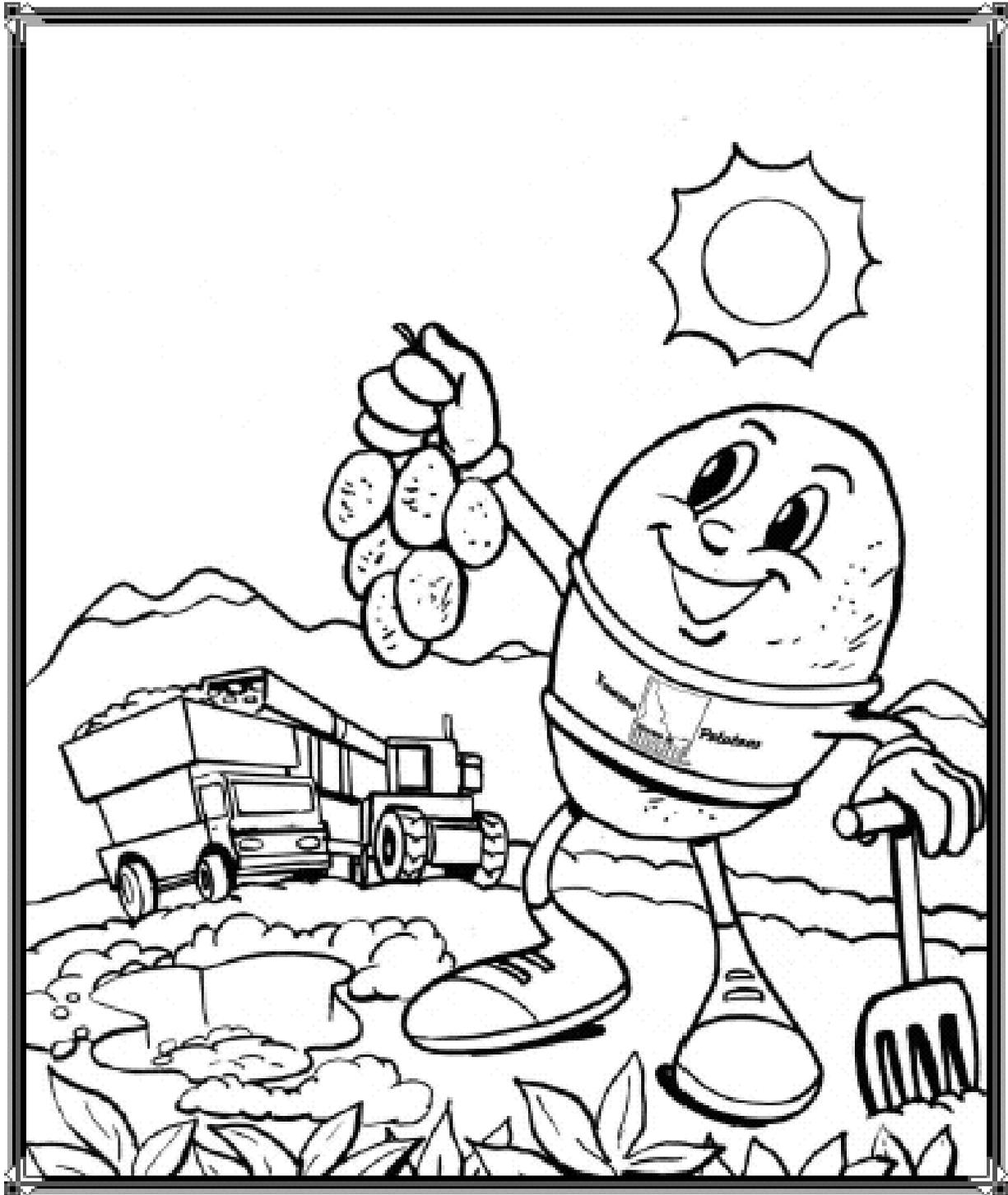


**VARY YOUR VEGGIES**

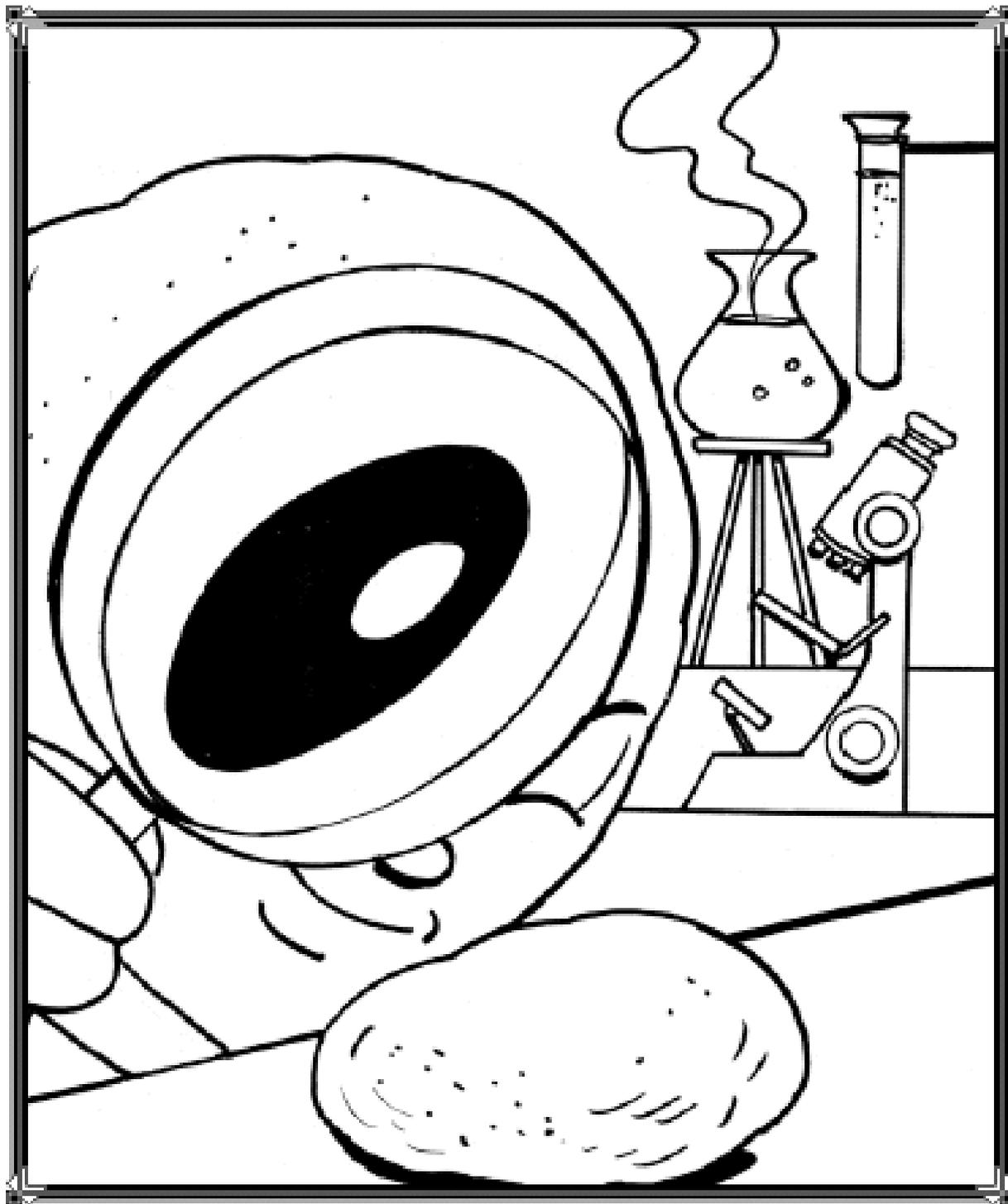
The potato plants grow big and strong in Idaho's rich soil.



Spuddy Buddy harvests the crop.

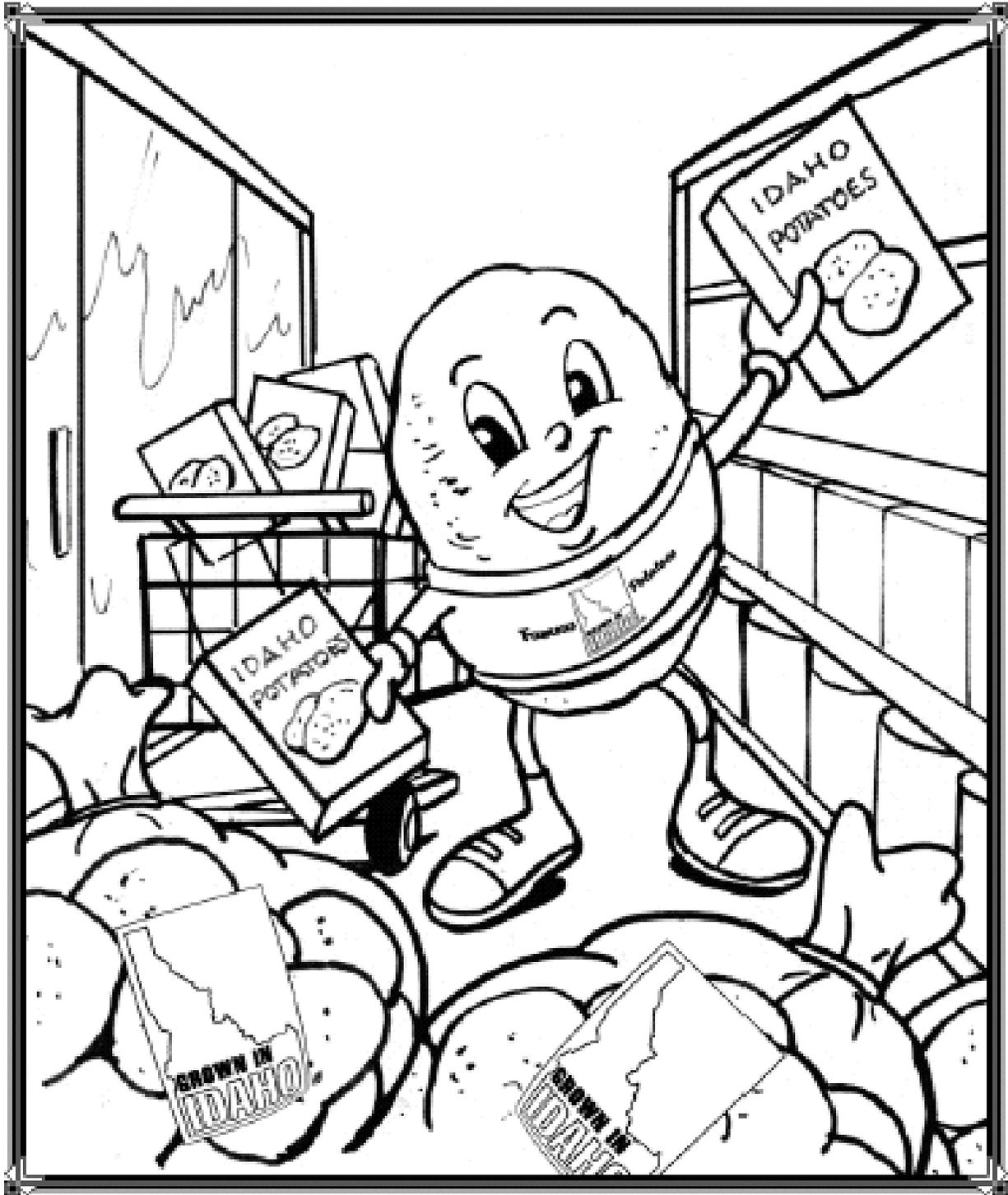


Spuddy Buddy carefully inspects  
all the potatoes...



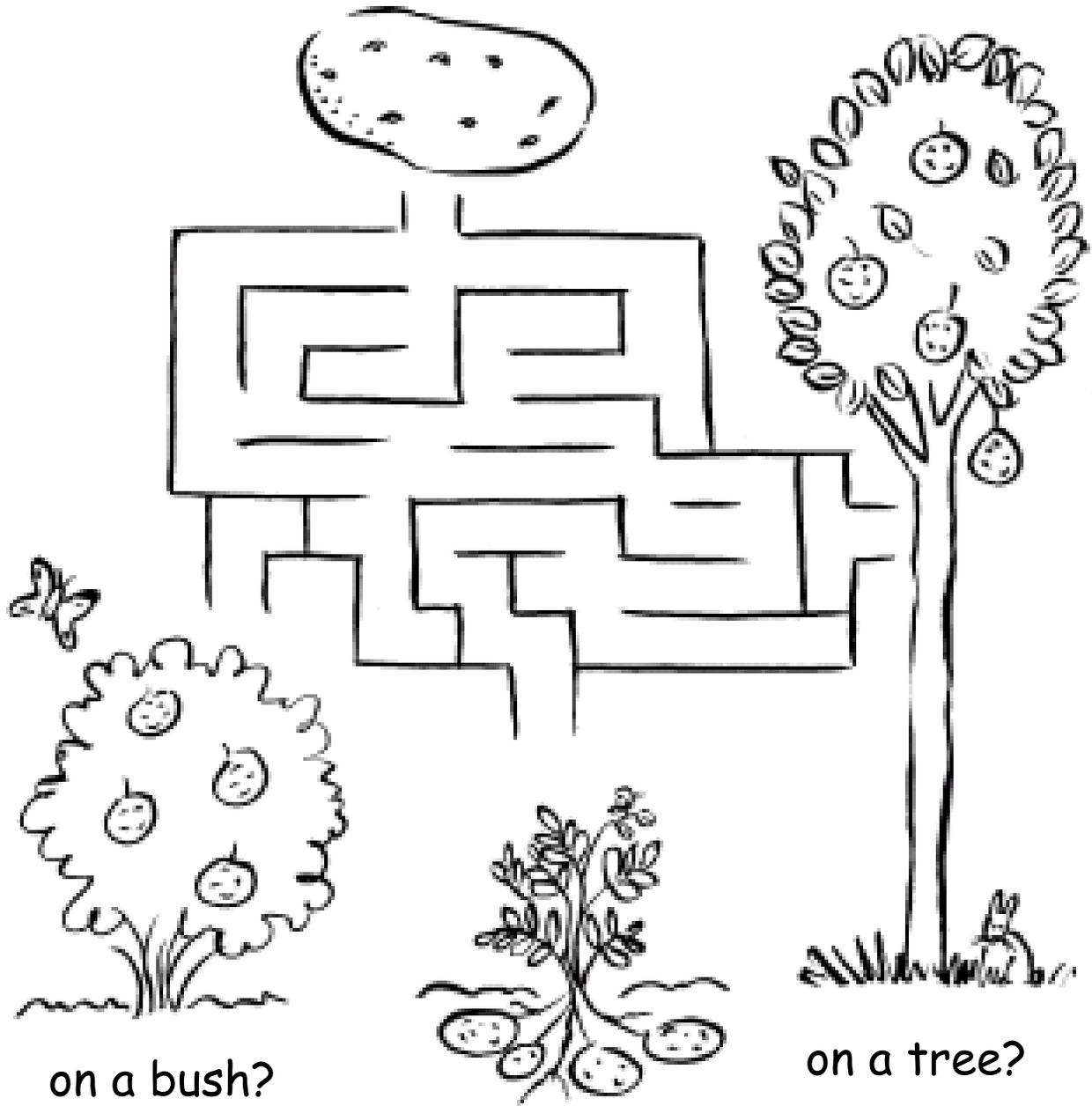
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Some of the potatoes are frozen. Some go into boxes. And some are left just the way they are.



# VARY YOUR VEGGIES

## Where do I grow?



Find your way through the maze and discover where a potato grows!

Source: Washington State Potatoes, [www.potatoes.com](http://www.potatoes.com)