

Emerson Garden and Cooking Program

The cooking and garden programs at Emerson have continued to grow this year. By making specific connections to the classroom curriculum, we have been able to integrate math, science, and the language arts into the hands-on activities in the garden and cooking nutrition education classes.

This spring, Emerson's 3rd grade classes mapped out our new prehistoric garden in the breezeway. With all the rain this year, many areas of the garden provided prime examples of erosion.

Garden classes are now being held in the rear of the school, where picnic tables have replaced the old bungalows. Special events at Emerson this year included Farmers' Markets, Asian Cultural Night, Colonial Day, Greek Day, and the big Spring Fling.

Emerson's cooking program has had great success building strong hands-on experiences around the subject of locally grown, seasonal foods. Students from Kindergarten to 5th grade recognize, remember and delight in tasting a wide variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains and beans.



We fondly remember Amir Hassan in our hearts.

September began the school year with students preparing their own bowl of fresh tomato salsa. Our tasting plate included a variety of local heirloom tomatoes that echoed plantings from our garden. October brought Tree Fruit month and in November we learned about squash and symbiotic relationships with Three Sister Stew and the Three Sister garden plots in our own garden. For December's root vegetable month, we looked at Latin and Greek family names of the different root vegetables and made Parsnip soup and a winter root gratin. In January, we began a citrus unit that explored the whole-to-part fraction connection to oranges, tangerines, Oro Blanco grapefruit and kumquats.

Finally, all students in 2nd through 5th grades now regularly write and record in their cooking journals. Activities range from creating whole-to-part fraction charts to comparing and contrasting kales, collards and chards using a Venn diagram, to developing sentences using descriptive language about an alien's discovery of a winter greens leaf...

*Jeanette Kjobmand, Garden Instructor
& Carrie Orth, Cooking Instructor*

What did your Student Plant and Eat this Year?

Tomatoes, summer and winter squash, broccoli, kale, brussel sprouts, cauliflower, rainbow chard, cabbage, sugar snap peas, beets, carrots, beans, kohlrabi, strawberries, flat leaf parsley, herbs, sweet peppers, New Zealand spinach, lemon, Calamondin orange (kalamansi), lettuces, bok choy, and figs. Whew!

Skills Your Student Should Show They Know!

- "Making a bridge" for cutting equal parts
- "Spider Claw" for slicing safely
- "Flat side down" for keeping food in place while cutting
- "French fries first, then rotate and cross cut"
- Composting food scraps

ROOT GRATIN Adapted from Linda Char Bennett's *Winter Vegetables in a Puff Pastry Shell*

Makes 8 servings.

Ingredients

48 Toasts (croutons)

1 cup grated butternut squash

1 cup grated celery root

1 cup grated parsnip

1 cup thinly sliced leeks (white part only)

1 tablespoon olive oil & more as needed

2 tablespoons unsalted butter

2 tablespoons vegetable stock

½ cup grated Emmenthaler or Gruyere cheese

¼ teaspoon minced fresh thyme

Kosher salt

Freshly ground pepper

Preparation

- 1) Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
- 2) Arrange toasts flat and spread out on a baking sheet.
- 3) Toss the squash, celery root and parsnip with one tablespoon of oil, salt and pepper to taste.

- 4) In a skillet, over high heat, add enough of the oil to lightly coat the surface.
- 5) Add vegetables and one tablespoon of butter. Quickly sauté to brown slightly, but retain a crisp texture (about one minute). Move vegetable mixture to a separate bowl and set aside to cool.
- 6) In the same skillet, over medium-high heat, melt the remaining butter. Add the leeks, salt and pepper to taste, and sauté until soft, about 1½ minutes.
- 7) Add the stock and cook until the pan is dry. Allow the leeks to cool and add to the vegetables.
- 8) Mix the cheese and thyme.
- 9) Spoon a teaspoon of the vegetable mixture onto the toast, top with grated cheese.
- 10) Place the vegetable toasts into the oven for about 2-3 minutes. Serve immediately.

Nutrition Information per Serving:

Calories: 79, Carbohydrate: 5g, Protein: 3g, Total Fat: 6g, Saturated Fat: 3g, Cholesterol: 17mg, Sodium: 46mg, Dietary Fiber: 1g