

## Edible Celebrity of the Week/Month ([www.kidsgardening.com](http://www.kidsgardening.com))

Focus on a new healthy item each week or month. You can set this up as a classroom, team, or grade level. Some places have even launched schoolwide celebrity themes by involving food service staff and volunteers. Here's some advice from the field:

- 1) Choose a featured food or category. Be sure to include items that are in season in your region or locally available. Fruits and vegetables are ideal, but you might also choose a type of local cheese or bread, or a food from another culture (e.g., Middle Eastern dips).
- 2) Consider seeking donations from local growers, food suppliers, or markets. Find out if any representatives are willing to come into class or host a field trip.
- 3) Decide how to involve your students. For instance, they might conduct research and create hallway or cafeteria displays complete with cool facts, photos and artwork, nutritional highlights, recipes, and growing information. They could even schedule taste tests for the school community.
- 4) Decide how to prepare the food. For instance, will you make and serve it in different ways (e.g., raw apples, applesauce, apple muffins, and carrot-apple salad)? If the celebrity food will be served in the cafeteria, make sure to involve food service staff in planning. Can they use help preparing the food? How will it be served?
- 5) Allow students to set up taste tests. Ask them to think about what they want to find out and how they will gather feedback (e.g., verbal or written surveys that ask tasters to rate the food's appearance and taste).
- 6) If possible, extend the learning. Try to take a trip to a local garden or farm to see the featured food growing. Invite students to uncover its origins and colorful history and folklore. Find out how it is used and regarded in different cultures. Buy, grow, or get donations of different varieties. Try cooking it different ways. Engage parents. Send home recipes or a student-designed newsletter to generate excitement and publicity for the "celebrity." Students can prepare and serve the food at an open house or parent-teacher night.