

Spinach – A Cool Weather Veggie



OVERVIEW: Spinach is one of New Jersey's top crops. In fact, New Jersey is the second largest grower of spinach in the United States. In this lesson, students learn about the spinach life cycle, when spinach is planted and harvest, and the nutritional value of this leafy green vegetable.

GRADES: 3-5

OBJECTIVES: The student will be able to:

- Identify spinach as cool-season leafy green vegetable.
- Describe where and when spinach is grown in New Jersey.
- Describe the spinach plant's life cycle.
- Describe some of the vitamins and minerals contained in this super food.

MATERIALS:

The book *From the Garden State to Your Plate, Farming Fruits and Vegetables in New Jersey*. A digital copy is available at: newjersey.agclassroom.org. There is a link on the home page under New Jersey Curriculum Resources.

Optional: Spinach leaves for a classroom taste test.

PROCEDURE:

Read and discuss the two-page spinach section in the book *From the Garden State to Your Plate, Farming Fruits and Vegetables in New Jersey*.

Use the map at the beginning of the *From the Garden State to Your Plate* book to show students where spinach is grown in the state.

Show students the chart below of other cool-season vegetables that grow in New Jersey

Optional: Divide students into small groups to create a poster that answers one of the following questions:

- What is a cool-season vegetable and which ones are grown in New Jersey?
- Where and when is spinach grown in New Jersey?
- Describe the life cycle of the spinach plant.

- What is the nutritional value of spinach?

EVALUATION:

Small group presentations of posters

Students write an informative paragraph about what they know about spinach: the life cycle, nutritional value, and when and where it is planted in New Jersey.

New Jersey Learning Standards

Science: 3:LS1.B 4:LS1.A 5:LS1.C

English Language Arts: 3:W.3.2.A-D; W.3.4,8 4:W.4.2.A-E; W.4.4,8
5: W.5.2.A-E; W.5.4,8

New Jersey Cool-season Vegetables

Beets	Collards	Radishes
Bok choy	Kale	Rutabaga
Broccoli	Kohlrabi	Scallions
Cabbage	Lettuces	Spinach
Carrots	Onions	Swiss chard
Cauliflower	Parsnips	Turnips
	Peas	