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# HARVEST OF THE MONTH

## *July: Zucchini*

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### **Nutrition News—**

Summer squash, such as zucchini, are very low in calories but high in fiber. It is also rich in beta-carotene, vitamin C, folic acid, and calcium.

Choose wisely—small to medium zucchinis with darker skin have the most nutrients opposed to large lighter ones!



### *Did you know?*

Squash are native to the Americas and were an important piece of the “Three Sisters” cultivated by the Native Americans.





# SHOPPING FOR A BALANCED MEAL

## Standards of Learning:

Health: K.1, K.2, 1.2, 2.2

## Objectives:

Students will be able to—

- Categorize foods by food group
- Identify the components of a healthy meal

## Materials:

- Grocery store circulars/ads
- Paper plates
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Markers
  - red = fruits
  - green = vegetables
  - orange = grains
  - purple = protein
  - blue = dairy



## Background Knowledge:

A well balanced diet is essential for good health. By learning to make good food choices early, students can begin habits that will prevent health problems later in life, such as obesity, diabetes, and heart disease. When students choose nutrient rich foods from each of the 5 food groups they can fuel their bodies for healthy and active lifestyle. A person's age, gender, and level of physical activity determine how much of each food group they should eat.

Virginia farmers grow or raise food that belongs in each section of MyPlate. In "Protein" there is poultry, eggs, beef, and hogs as well as soybeans and peanuts. Additionally, Virginia farmers produce many dairy items for the "Dairy" sections. In fact, there are more than 100,000 head of dairy cattle in Virginia, making it the state's third largest commodity (behind chickens and beef, respectively). For the "Fruit" group Virginia growers produce an average of 8-10 million bushels of apples a year, as well as strawberries, grapes, peaches, cantaloupes and watermelons. Next, in "Vegetables," Virginia is the nation's third largest producer of fresh tomatoes. You will also find potatoes, green peppers, snap beans, and zucchini, as well as many other fresh vegetables. Lastly, the "Grains" group, Virginia farmers produce corn as well as wheat.

## Procedure:

1. Discuss the food groups and examples within each category. Ask students to share what they had for lunch. Write the foods included in the meal on the board and then have students sort them into the appropriate categories.

2. Discuss the importance of choosing foods from each of the food groups as well as healthy choices within each group. Pass out grocery store circulars and markers to students. Remind students that the different food groups are represented by different colors on the plate. Have students use the appropriate colored markers to circle the various items in the ads. For example, students will circle the chicken, steak, and eggs in purple while they'll circle the bread and cereal in orange.
3. Have students share a few of the items that they circled. Discuss those items whose ingredients contained multiple food groups.
4. Next pass out one paper plate to each student. Have them cut foods out of the circulars and paste them to their plate to create a meal. They must include at least one item from each food group.
5. Students may share their meals and display around the classroom.

