

Harvest of the Month



Local Highlight

Check out our video about the Humboldt Hydro Farm and the culinary herbs they grow hydroponically, without soil.

hcoe.org/2024/01/herbs/

Language Links

English: herbs

Scientific Name (Latin):
depends on type

Spanish: las hierbas

Hmong: txuj lom los
ntawm lub vaj

Joke Corner

What is green and sings?
Elvis Parsley.

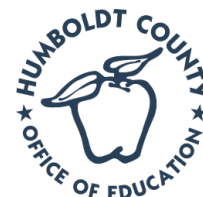
What did the the basil
say to the chef?

Stop pesto-ing me!

What kind of herb is
always cheering you on?
Encourage-mint!



HUMBOLDT COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION
Nutrition Programs & Services



HERBS



Nutrition Power

Herbs are an excellent source of antioxidants and essential oils.



Antioxidants and Essential Oils

help your body fight against germs
and keep your cells healthy!

Did You Know?

- Plant part we eat: When we talk about culinary herbs and spices, “herbs” refer to the LEAVES and FLOWERING PARTS of plants, while spices come from fruits, seeds, bark, and roots.
- Herbs are plants with chemical compounds that give them strong aromas and/or flavors. Some of the compounds also have medicinal uses. Because of these characteristics, cultures around the world have used herbs in cooking and as medicine for thousands of years!
- Many of our present-day medicines are made directly from plants or by mimicking plant compounds. For example, Aspirin is made from a chemical in willow bark, and a drug used to treat malaria is derived from sweet wormwood (artemesia).
- Culinary herbs, or herbs used in cooking, are extremely diverse. There are even many types of basil used in different cuisines. Sweet basil is common in Italian food, while Thai basil and lemon basil are used in South East Asia, and holy basil, or Tulsi is revered by the Hindus.
- Many herbs can be used to make infusions (herbal teas). Yerba buena is a native plant in the mint family that has been used by local tribes to make a medicinal tea to treat cold symptoms. The Yurok people call yerba buena tea *hegoorekeech*.
- Some plants can be used as an herb and a spice! *Coriandrum sativum* gives us cilantro (the green leaves and stems) and coriander (the dried seeds). *Anethum graveolens* gives us dill weed (the green leaves) and dill seed (the dried seeds).



HERBS



Herbs in the Garden

Herbs can be divided into two categories: annuals, which complete their life cycle in one growing season, and perennials, which live for multiple growing seasons (note that some biannuals and tender perennials can be grown as annuals). Perennial herbs are sometimes also called woody herbs because most of them develop rigid, wood-like stems. While all herbs can be used fresh or dried, woody perennial herbs tend to hold their flavor better when dried.

Annual Culinary Herbs

- Cilantro
- Dill
- Parsley
- Basil
- Shiso

Perennial Culinary Herbs

- Mint
- Thyme
- Oregano
- Rosemary
- Sage



Activity Ideas

1. Herbs offer endless curriculum connections - there is a lot to explore about their history, cultural use, sensory attributes, botany, ecology, and more.
2. Use chive seeds to create characters with edible hairdos! Refer to the Chive Hairdos activity in the *Kids' Garden* activity deck by Life Lab.
3. Many culinary herbs are in the mint family, including mint (of course!), basil, and oregano. Two features shared by all plants in this family are square stems and opposite leaves. Can you use this information to identify other herbs that are in the mint family?
4. Herbs are very important to different cuisines and cultures. Ask students to think of some foods that would be really different without herbs (Mexican salsa without cilantro; Italian pasta sauce without oregano; Middle Eastern tabbouleh without mint). What kinds of herbs do their families cook with?

Tasting

- Use a mortar and pestle to make pesto! Basil, cilantro, dill, or even chickweed will work!
- Make herbal teas using fresh or dried herbs like mint, pineapple sage, tulsi basil, lemon balm, chamomile flowers, etc.