



Lesson Plan – Pollinator Tasting Party

Note to educators and group leaders: Please modify this lesson plan as needed for students with specific food allergies. **DO NOT** serve any food items that are on the restricted list for any students. Project Plant It! and Dominion Energy are not responsible for allergy-related incidents with students.

Students will have fun learning about and tasting foods that rely on pollinators.

Materials Needed:

See list of food items below.

Time:

One science class period of about 30 minutes for the tasting party. Some pre-planning is required. Educators and group leaders can enlist assistance from parents to provide some of the food items and share in the preparation.

Procedure:

Part I: In preparation for this activity, share the following facts with students:

- The Pollinator Tasting Party is an opportunity to appreciate and enjoy the wide variety of fruits and vegetables that would be missing in gardens and grocery stores without help from pollinators.
- According to the pollinator.org website, pollinators provide pollination services to over 180,000 different plant species and more than 1,200 crops.
- This means that, on average, one out of every three bites of food you eat is made possible because of pollinators.

Part II: Brainstorm and research types of foods that require pollination.

- Engage students in a lively brainstorm session to get their suggestions on foods that need help from pollinators. List their suggestions in three columns: **Vegetables, Fruits, Other**
- Following the brainstorm session, divide the students into teams to research the items on the list to confirm if their hunches are correct. Cross out any incorrect items and add new items if any are discovered during research.

Part III: Pollinator Tasting Party

- Assemble samples of food items that need pollination to grow and thrive. Schedule date and time for the tasting party. Encourage students to try a taste of each item.

Food allergy alert—see note to educators and group leaders above. While several types of nuts need pollination, we recommend that nuts are not brought for sampling due to the possibility of allergy-related issues.

- The following foods could be considered for the Pollinator Tasting Party:

Vegetables – Broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, celery, cucumbers, lima beans, peppers, pumpkin, squash, string beans, tomatoes

Fruits – Apples, apricots, blueberries, cherries, grapes, kiwi, melons, nectarines, peaches, pears, plums, strawberries

Other – Chocolate, honey, vanilla, mustard

Part IV: Guest speaker

If possible, invite a guest speaker to visit the class or group to share real-world stories about the role of pollinators. Suggested speakers include a local farmer, a beekeeper, a county extension agent, or a Master Gardener, just to name a few.

Outcome/Result:

Students will acquire a broad base of knowledge about the impact that pollinators have on the food supply in their communities, as well as a deeper appreciation for the variety of fruits, vegetables, and other foods that require pollination.