



Dear Families:

A natural foods educator with the Midwest Food Connection will be visiting our classroom a total of four times this year to teach their Fall One Series of lessons, “Grown Near Home.” Made possible by funding from Twin Cities Natural Foods Co-ops, we have the wonderful opportunity to study and taste a wide variety of locally grown and naturally healthy foods.

1. In Eat Local, students will learn the environmental and health reasons for choosing locally grown foods, complete a project on this concept and sample snacks to highlight some of the delicious seasonal foods grown in our area.
2. In Make a Salad, students will learn about the fruit and veggies from local farms. They will cooperatively choose ingredients before preparing and then enjoying their own salads in small groups. (Kindergarten and 1st graders will focus on the tasting experience and will create colorful drawings of vegetables.)
3. Students will learn how Minnesota’s native grain has been a source of sustenance and pride for generations of Native Americans and settlers in Wild Rice. Through story and drawing, students will explore the plant’s characteristics and traditions and will learn how it is harvested. Its flavor will be enjoyed as well!
4. In Herbs and Spices, students will learn how pizza can be a healthy meal, learn about herbs and spices, and make scientific drawings of herb plants that are easy to grow in any indoor kitchen.

At the grocery store, or while cooking --to reinforce lesson content --parents are encouraged to ask their children to point out, maybe explain, some of the foods they have been exploring at school. Also, listed below are a few review questions you could ask your children that directly correspond to the lessons listed above (in that order):

Primary (grades K-2)

How does it save gas to buy locally grown apples? What are 3 fresh vegetables or fruits you tasted today? What native grain did Winnebozo discover? What is a popular herb used to flavor a pizza?

Intermediate (grades 3-6)

What are some locally grown, seasonal foods we can buy this time of year in Minnesota? How did your group decide which ingredients to put in your salad? What are the main steps of the wild rice harvest? What is the difference between an herb and a spice?

**Midwest Food Connection is on Facebook! Click “like” to keep up on the latest from MFC **
www.midwestfoodconnection.org ** 651-373-9878 ** contact@midwestfoodconnection.org