



A fun pre-school education programme



Fun, motivational ways to teach children to love fruit and vegetables



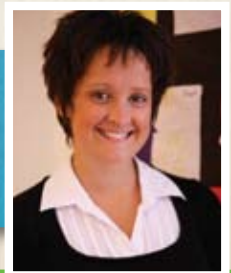
Welcome to Taste for Life, a pre-school education programme supported by Organix.

Taste for Life is a new, interactive and educational way of introducing and presenting fruit and vegetables to children, in a completely different context to that of mealtimes, helping them to explore and enjoy good food from a young age and develop healthier eating habits for a lifetime.

Through the **Taste for Life** programme, nursery practitioners are provided with a range of practical tools, based on many tried and tested ideas to enable children to have fun discovering food and exploring the origin, shape, colour, texture or smell of fruit and vegetables. It is through this investigation that the children may want to try, eat or taste the produce, though they are never directly asked to do this.

Taste for Life is based on an original concept by Lucy Thomas author and creator of the Mange Tout™ book and classes and is part of a wider campaign, Better Nursery Food Now, led by Organix and the Soil Association, calling on the Government to improve nutritional standards in nurseries.

“I am thrilled to share some of my ideas and activities with you through the **Taste for Life** Programme and delighted hundreds more children will be able to enjoy positive experiences becoming confident and adventurous with food.” Lucy Thomas



About Organix

Organix make nutritious and tasty organic foods for babies and toddlers to give them the best start in life. Like you Organix understand that the quality of food fed to toddlers is of vital importance to their health, well being and development. That is why Organix also campaign to improve the quality of children's food and raise the standards within the food industry.

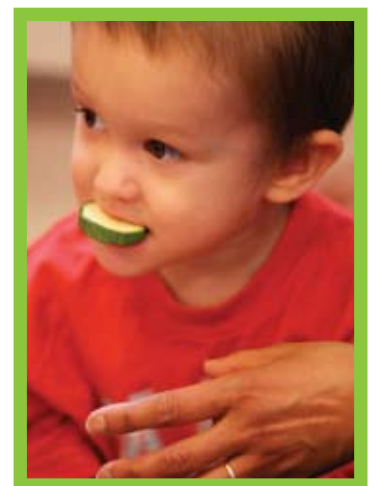
Find out more about Better Nursery Food Now at www.nurseryfood.org, where you can sign up to the petition or join the Facebook debate and post your experiences.

Taste for Life in your nursery

This guide is part of a tool kit to lead you through the entire process of using your Taste for Life resources and provides new ideas and suggestions to activate and inspire children to learn about and enjoy fruit and vegetables.

Resources include:

- EYFS linked activity plans based on seasonal fruits and vegetables
 - Each plan includes, touch activities, craft activities, songs and rhymes, active games, a recipe and suggestions for at home activities to engage with parents
- A poster for your nursery
- A reward chart and motivational stickers
- The programme is supported online at www.tasteforlifenuresery.com, log on to discover:
 - New activity plans available each month linked to seasonal produce
 - Nutritious and fun recipes for toddlers
 - Information sheets for parents with nutritional hints, tips and recipes
 - Fun and interactive games
 - Four newsletters packed with the latest news and updates



| | Peas | Raspberries | Courgettes | Strawberries |
|---|--|-------------|--|---|
| Personal, Social and Emotional Development | Continue to be interested, excited and motivated to learn. Be confident to try new activities, initiate ideas and speak in a familiar group. Maintain attention, concentrate, and sit quietly when appropriate. | | | |
| Communication, Language and Literacy | Enjoy listening to and using spoken and written language, and readily turn to it in their play and learning. Sustain attentive listening, responding to what they have heard with relevant comments, questions or actions. Listen with enjoyment, and respond to stories, songs and other music, rhymes and poems and make up their own stories, songs, rhymes and poems. | | Use a pencil and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed. | |
| Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy | Count reliably up to ten everyday objects. In practical activities and discussion, begin to use the vocabulary involved in adding and subtracting. | | | |
| Knowledge and Understanding of the world | Investigate objects and materials by using all of their senses as appropriate. Find out about, and identify, some features of living things, objects and events they observe. Look closely at similarities, differences, patterns and change. | | Select the tools and techniques they need to shape, assemble and join materials they are using. | |
| Physical Development | Move with control and coordination. Recognise the importance of keeping healthy, and those things which contribute to this. Handle tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely and with increasing control. | | | |
| Creative Development | Respond in a variety of ways to what they see, hear, smell, touch and feel. Explore colour, texture, shape, form and space in two or three dimensions. Express and communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings by using a widening range of materials, suitable tools, imaginative and role-play, movement, designing and making, and a variety of songs and musical instruments. Recognise and explore how sounds can be changed, sing simple songs from memory, recognise repeated sounds and sound patterns and match movements to music. | | | Express and communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings by using a widening range of materials, suitable tools, imaginative and role-play, movement, designing and making, and a variety of songs and musical instruments. |



Food Allergies/intolerances

It is essential that parents of all the children in class are aware of the foods their child will be coming into contact with. We have included a template letter and form for parents to read and complete authorising their consent for their child to participate making a record of any food allergies or dietary requirements before they take part.

Anytime you use hummus, make sure that all nut allergy sufferers parents are alerted due to the sesame content.

- We suggest using paper plates for use with the children during touch and taste activities.

Room set up

Although rooms will differ from place to place we have suggested a set up and structure below.

- These key areas can be defined:
 - Touch and taste/circle time area with plastic sheeting/table cloth on floor
 - Hand washing area
 - Craft area with tables and chairs
 - Leader's area (this can be a table or work surface) where all the props and bowls of produce are kept out of children's reach.
- Make sure:
 - the children wear aprons to protect their clothes from staining.
 - you have a large enough bin to collect refuse
 - the children help to tidy up after themselves.

Practicalities

Produce

- Decide who will be providing the fruits and vegetables for your sessions. You may wish to ask the parents of the session to provide their child with the items needed.

Use organic ingredients if possible; organic foods are free from artificial chemical pesticides. Up to the age of seven, children's bodies are more susceptible to the disruption water soluble pesticides can cause. To find out more about organic foods and why they are beneficial visit www.tasteforlifenursery.com and follow the links.

Food preparation

Ensure that the area where you are preparing food is hygienically clean and safe, follow the health and safety policy / procedure guidelines set out for food preparation in your nursery.

- Remember to always prepare extra food, things can get dropped on the floor, and sometimes children will enjoy something and ask for more.
- It may be useful to have all the food prepared in advance for each session in separate containers. But consider some foods such as apples or pears will discolour over time, so perhaps leave these to prepare at the start of the session.

Using the activity plans

The **Taste for Life** activity plans follow a simple structure: facts and food introduction, touch activity, craft activity, taste activity, song and rhyme time and a take home activity or recipe.

They can be used to deliver stand alone single produce sessions or in conjunction with other fruit and vegetable activities. The stated format can be followed or activity suggestions moved or spread over a few sessions. Activities are suitable to be completed as a whole group or for use with smaller break off groups. We have suggested a possible activity plan example below.

Facts and food introduction

Gather the class on the carpet or in your circle time space.

- Introduce the food you will be talking about by showing the picture to the children, photographs and images of the food on a plate and as they are grown are available at www.tasteforlifenuresery.com. Ask the children if they can name the food.
- Repeat the name of the food – even if this involves a game of “I can’t hear you, can you shout it louder?”
- Share the food facts with the children.

Touch activity

- During the touch activity try to make sure that all the children get to:
 - Handle
 - Smell
 - Discuss colour, shape, texture and where/how it grows, for each of the fruits or vegetables.
- Follow the suggestions on the Touch section of the activity sheet, these aim to get the children looking at and investigating the food.
- Encourage the children to help tidy up after the session. For example - leaves, peas, and pods could be put into a spare bowl or bin. These could be composted or added to a wormery, if your nursery does not have these facilities find out how to start at www.tasteforlifenuresery.com.

Craft activity

- A craft activity is included on each session plan. These aim to help the children keep investigating and thinking about foods in a new way.
- Most of the craft activities can be completed in small groups or paired work, a “resources needed” list is given for each one.
- Once the activities have been completed, children should be encouraged to take their work home for their families to see what they have been learning about and provide parents and carers with an opportunity to extend and build on the activities at home.

Taste activity

Essentially these activities are about getting children to enjoy their fruit and vegetables and it is important to make this part of the session as fun and as interactive as possible. Be as energetic as you can and use lots of facial expression along with enthusiastic actions.

These activities can be done as a whole class session or in small groups, it may be useful to hold them in the circle time area as with the Touch activity.

When handing out the food:

- Make sure that even if children don’t want to join in with the tasting they still take a piece of the fruit or vegetable and hold it or have it in front of them.

- If a child is really not responding – try asking them to, “just give it a little/baby kiss”. If this works ask them to, “do a baby crunch” demonstrating how tiny it can be.



- If children say, “I don’t like it” ALWAYS respond with “don’t worry we’re not going to eat it” and ask them to put the food down on their plate.
- Make sure your praise is loud enough to be heard by others.
- Follow the suggestions on the activity sheet to get the children involved with the produce.

The golden rule is to NEVER ask a child to EAT TRY or TASTE anything. Make sure you have a wide vocabulary of adjectives to use in place of these phrases to communicate your aim, for example: Smelling, Kissing, Licking, Crunching, Munching, Nibbling etc.

Song and rhyme time

- The songs and rhymes provided in the activity plans will engage children and give them a fun activity to support and consolidate what they have learnt about the food they have been looking at during that session.

Energy and enthusiasm

- Remember that energy and enthusiasm can be communicated through just the volume and tone of your voice, facial expressions and the way in which you lead the class.
- When singing the songs make sure your facial expressions and physical actions are exaggerated to help get children joining in and following your lead.
- The same is true for touch/taste time too! If you demonstrate how to tickle your tongue with a piece of broccoli and laugh hysterically and convincingly exclaiming how tickly the broccoli is, when asking who wants to have a go – you will be pleasantly surprised how many children offer to go first!



Learning at home – parents can join in too!

It is important to involve parents and carers as much as possible.

Each activity plan has a home link to extend the learning from nursery into the home allowing parents to join in with the **Taste for Life** food adventure and help their child develop a love of healthy nutritious foods.

In most cases this is a recipe suggestion for families to do with their children using the food they have been learning about. Encourage families to make the recipe and bring in their food for the class to share.

As well as being able to follow the recipe ideas and activity suggestions on the Parent Information Templates, parents and carers will be able to find more fun recipes for toddlers, party games and activities, download their own copy of the **Taste for Life** reward chart and sticker sheet and register to receive newsletters packed with nutritional hints and tips by following the links on www.tasteforlifenuresery.com



Extension activities and additional resources

Vegetable patch

To support the work you are doing in class and to show parents and other children what you are doing why not create a vegetable and fruit patch for your setting?

Each of the children could make a fruit and vegetable to decorate the display. Perhaps they could choose their favourite fruit or vegetable from their activities to add to the patch. Help the children to discuss where the fruit or vegetable will be placed, will it be on a tree, a bush or growing in the ground?

Many of the rhymes and songs on the accompanying activity sheets can be used alongside your vegetable/fruit patch.



Outdoor ideas

You may like to grow your own vegetables and fruits if you have some outdoor space. Strawberries, peas and tomatoes are easy to grow in a limited amount of space and will be a delight for the children to accompany their learning. Seeds and grow-your-own packs are available at most garden and DIY centres.



Better Nursery Food Now

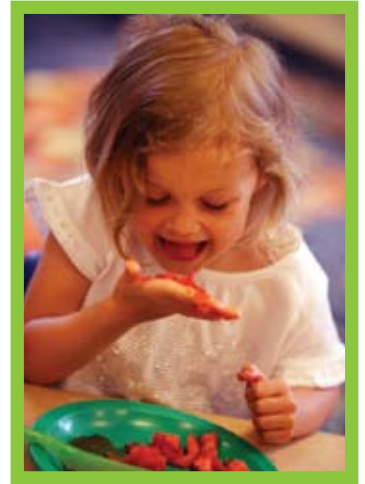
This programme forms part of a wider campaign, Better Nursery Food Now, led by Organix and the Soil Association calling on the Government to introduce genuine nutritional standards in Nurseries and builds on guidelines and recommendations from the Caroline Walker Trust.

“Children should be encouraged to eat a varied diet. They should eat foods from each of the four main food groups every day. The four main food groups are:

- bread, other cereals and potatoes
- fruit and vegetables
- milk and dairy foods, and
- meat, fish and alternatives such as eggs”

Caroline Walker Trust Eating Well for Under 5s in Childcare.

To find out more about nutritional advice and guidelines for children under 5 visit the Caroline Walker Trust website at www.cwt.org.uk.



Nutritional guidance for the under 5's

| Food Group | How much to serve |
|---|---|
| STARCHY FOODS Bread, other cereals and potatoes | Foods from this group should be offered at every meal, and can be useful foods to offer as a snack. These foods should make up about a third of the food served each day. |
| FRUIT AND VEGETABLES | Offer different fruits and vegetables at meal and snack time. Aim for each day's menu for childcare settings to offer: 1-2 types of fruit and 2-3 types of vegetables. Children in full-day care should have the opportunity to try 4- 5 different fruits and vegetables each day. |
| MILK AND MILK PRODUCTS Milk, cheese and yoghurt – whole milk and full fat yoghurt and cheese should be offered, not low fat versions. | Foods from this group should be offered at 2-3 meal and snack times each day. |
| MEAT, FISH and ALTERNATIVES – alternative sources of protein include nuts, lentils, dhal and tofu. | Main meals should always contain an item from this group. Foods in this group are high in iron and can also be usefully served as part of a snack – for example in sandwich fillings. Oily fish should be offered twice a week as it is a good source of omega 3 fats. |