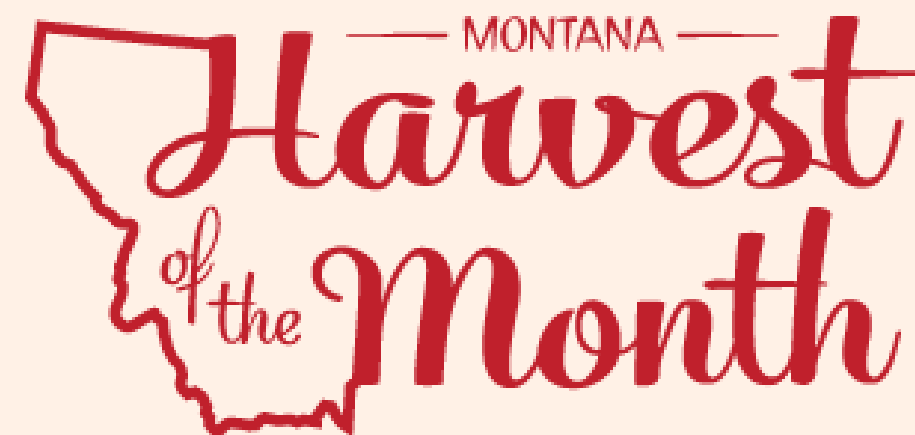
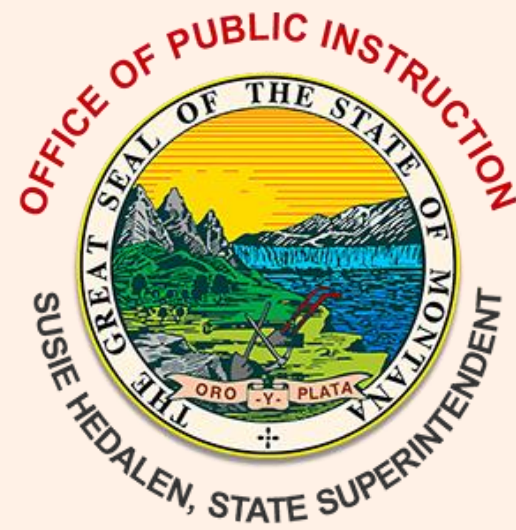
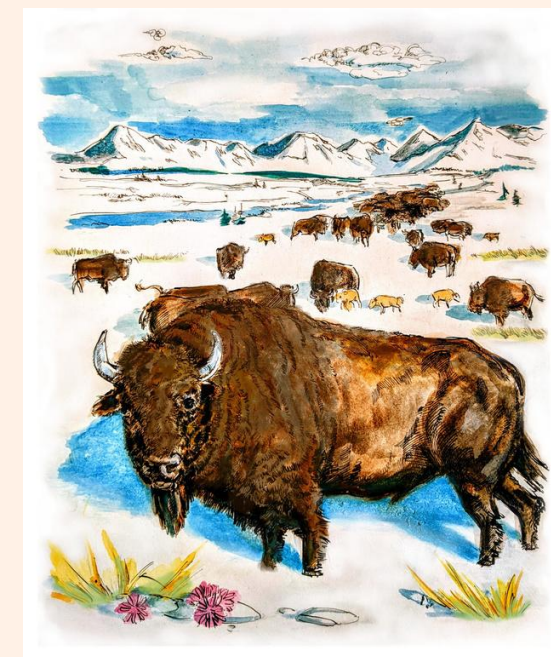
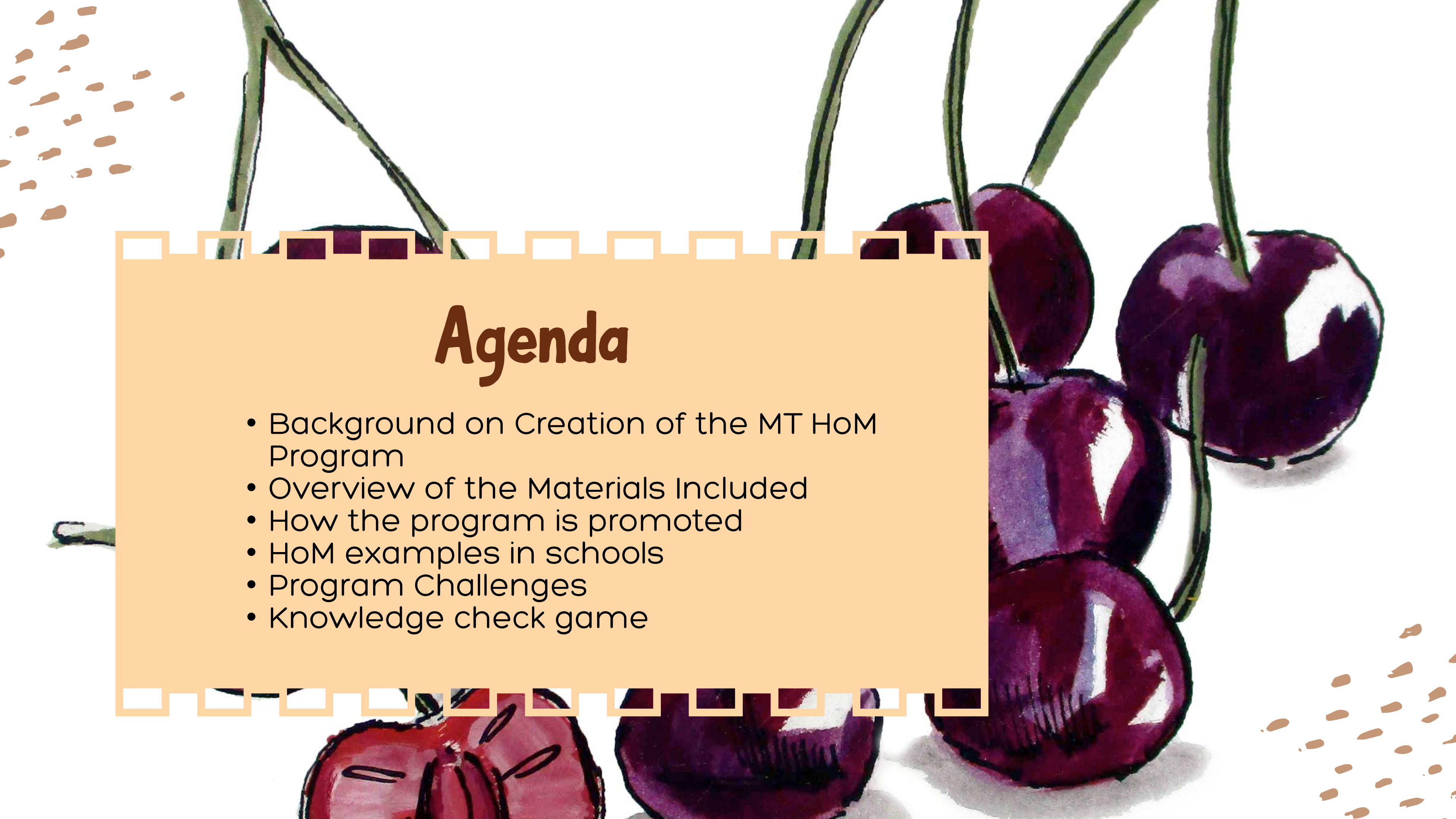




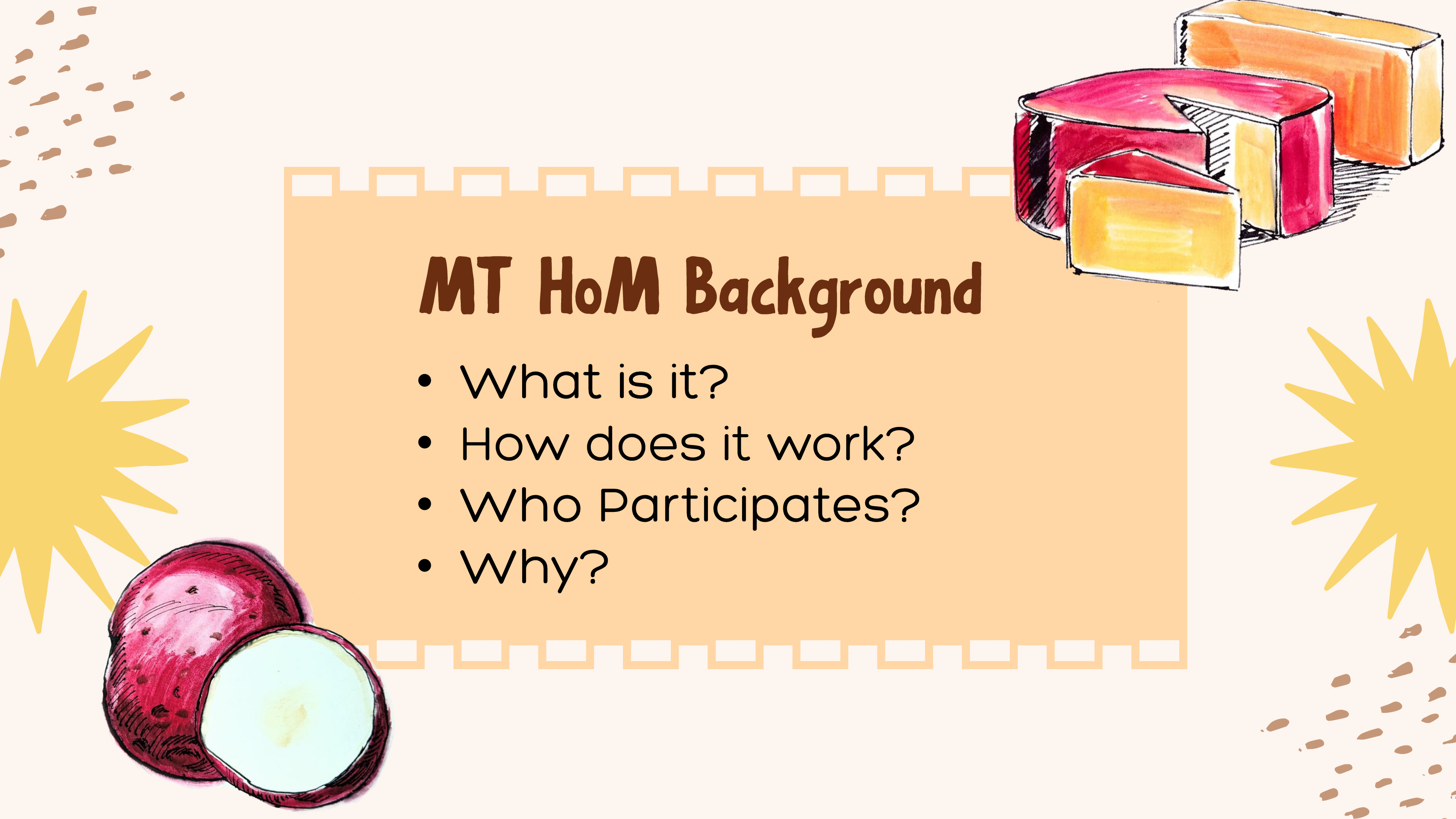
Montana Harvest of the Month





Agenda

- Background on Creation of the MT HoM Program
- Overview of the Materials Included
- How the program is promoted
- HoM examples in schools
- Program Challenges
- Knowledge check game



MT HoM Background

- What is it?
- How does it work?
- Who Participates?
- Why?



Initial Collaboration

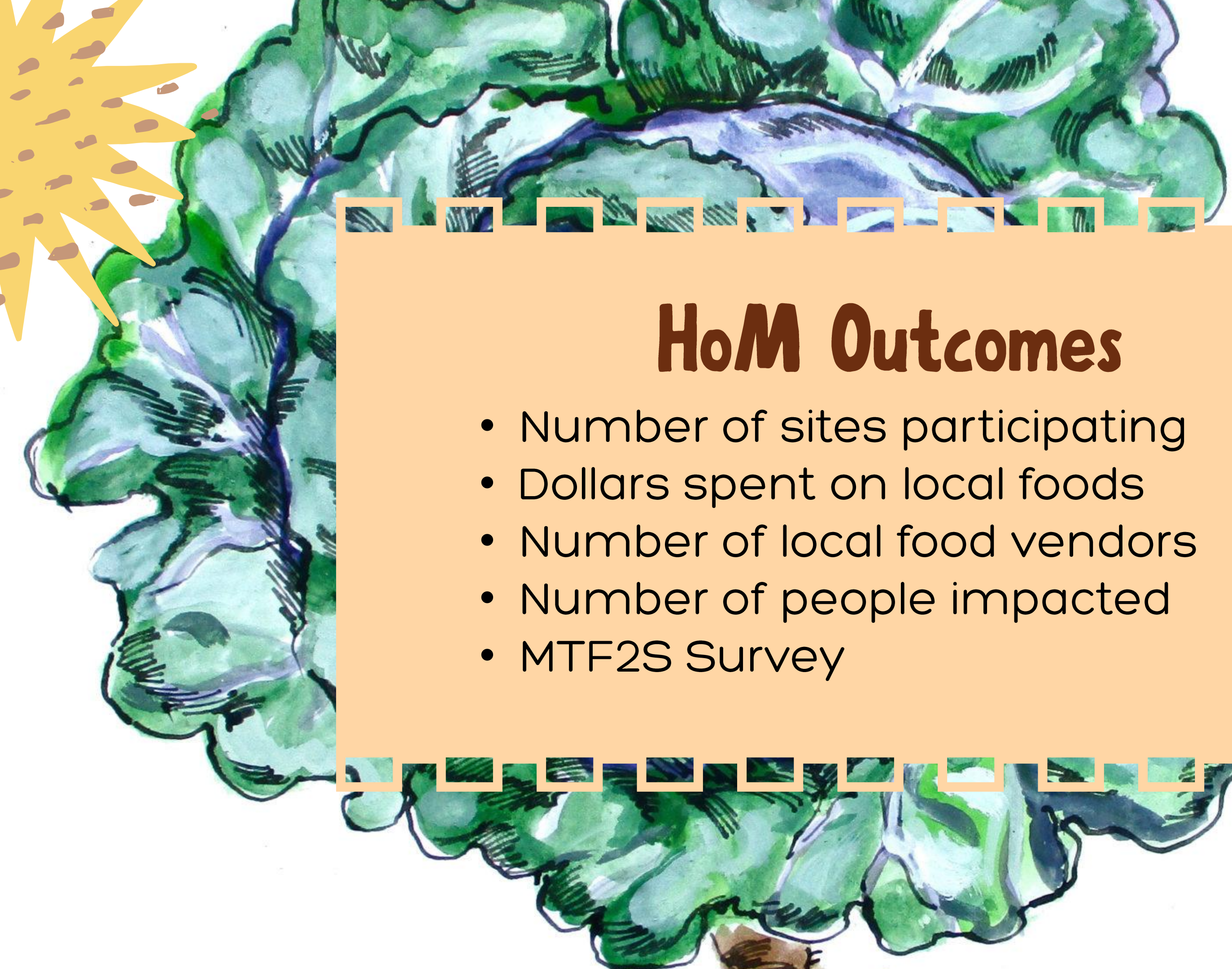
- Roles and Structure
- Timeline
- Website





Current Collaboration

- Roles and Structure
 - Timeline
 - Website
- 
- 



HoM Outcomes

- Number of sites participating
 - Dollars spent on local foods
 - Number of local food vendors
 - Number of people impacted
 - MTF2S Survey
- 



August 2025 – July 2026

Calendar

Although we recommend following this calendar, you can change the order of the calendar to suit your needs. None of the materials are printed with the month. The calendar will likely change each year to include new foods!



August – Herbs



September – Brassicas



October – Apples



November – Potatoes



December – Carrots



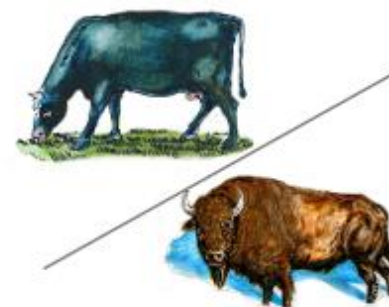
January – Winter Squash



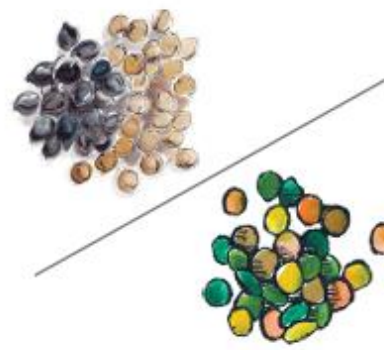
February – Beets



March – Grains



April – Beef + Bison



May – Chickpeas + Lentils



June – Leafy Greens



July – Summer Squash

Website Overview

Let's walk through the website together
using apples as an example item

mtharvestofthemonth.org/



[Home Page](#)[About](#)[Getting Started Resources](#)[Monthly Materials](#)[News](#)[Events](#)[Donate](#)

APPLE MATERIALS



There are over 2,500 varieties of apples grown in the US, however only a handful of varieties are commonly found in grocery stores today. How many varieties have you tried? Use the materials below to showcase apples this month.

Video

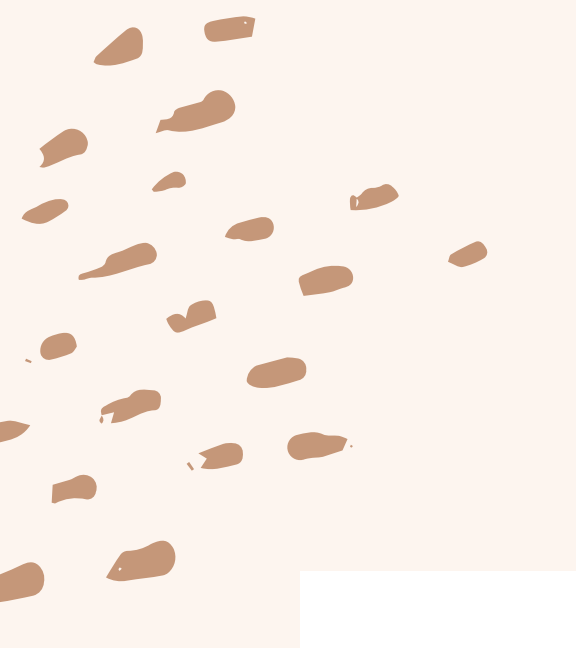
[Video Transcript](#)[Recipe Video](#)[Poster \(18"x24"\)](#)[Small Poster \(11"x17"\)](#)[Purchase Additional Posters](#)[Cafeteria Bites](#)[Cafeteria Bites ECE](#)

Classroom Bites

[Classroom Bites ECE](#)[Harvest at Home](#)[Harvest at Home ECE](#)[Stickers](#)[Newsletter Content](#)[Sources](#)[Menu Template 2024-25](#)[Table Tent – *Print on 11×17*](#)

Social Media Post

[Banner 1, Banner 2](#)[Logo](#)[Illustration 1, Illustration 2](#)[Afterschool Lesson](#)[Common Core & Next Generation
Science Standards](#)[MSU Extension Food Fact Sheet](#)



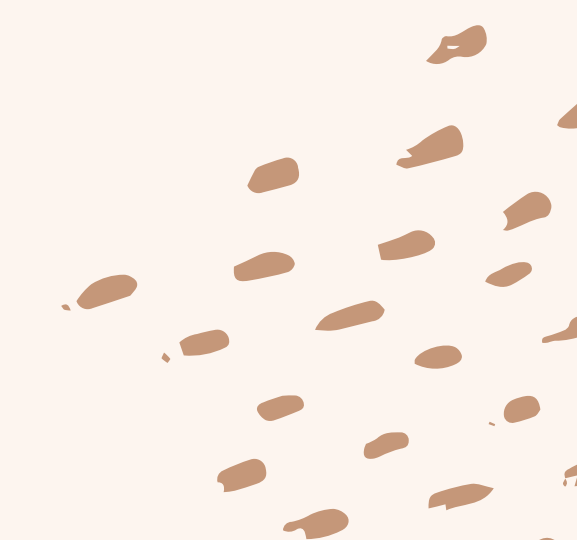
RECIPES

Apple N Cabbage Slaw – [Single Recipe Card](#) – [Printable 2 Recipe Cards](#)

Cucumber Apple Salad – [Single Recipe Card](#) – [Printable 2 Recipe Cards](#)

Easy Applesauce – [Single Recipe Card](#) – [Printable 2 Recipe Cards](#)

Maple Apple French Toast Bake – [Single Recipe Card](#) – [Printable 2 Recipe Cards](#)



“Kitchen Bites” for ECE



Early Care & Education Kitchen Bites

Apples

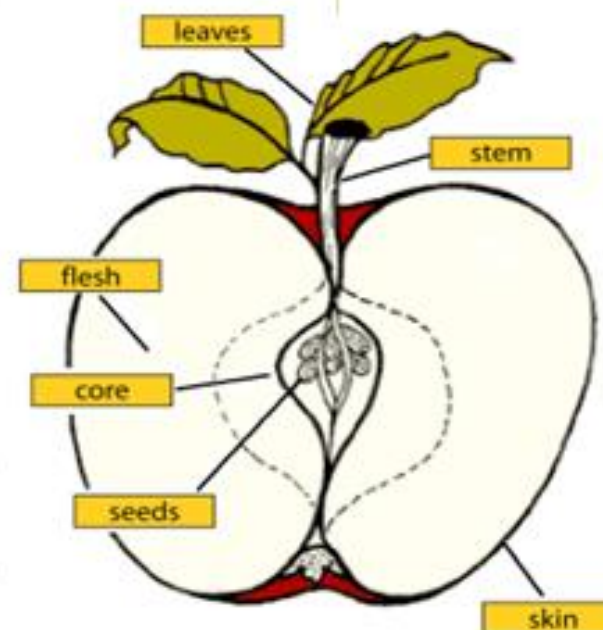


Did You Know

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- There are over 7,500 varieties of apples grown worldwide and 2,500 are grown in the US. However, only a handful of varieties are commonly found in grocery stores today.
- Apples were brought to the United States in the 17th century.
- The Bitterroot Valley and other areas in the western and south central part of Montana are the largest apple producing areas in the state.
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Selection

Choose firm, shiny, smooth-skinned apples with intact stems. Apples should smell fresh, not musty. Remove apples with bruises or rot from the bag or container so they do not spoil the other apples.

Storage

Refrigerate apples in a plastic bag, away from strong-smelling food. Store away from other fruits, as apples naturally produce ethylene, which may cause other fruits to prematurely ripen. Eat within three weeks. Prevent cut apples from browning by dipping them in lemon juice.

Cooking

Applesauce. Place peeled, cored, and sliced apples in 1/4 inch of water. Steam apples in a microwave or pan on the stove until soft and add water if needed. Remove from heat, mash apples to desired consistency, and add seasonings such as cinnamon, cloves, ginger, or nutmeg. Eat warm or allow to cool.

Bake. Select larger apples and remove core with knife, leaving 1/2 inch of the apple core intact at the bottom. Put a small amount of seasoning in the hole. Place apples in a baking pan and add 3/4 cup water to the pan. Bake at 375°F for 30-40 minutes or until desired tenderness.

Grill. Combine 1/2 cup water and 1/4 cup lemon juice in a large bowl and put sliced apples in mixture for 30-60 minutes. Place soaked apple slices on skewers and grill about seven minutes on each side. Once grilled, remove from heat and add seasonings. For added variety and texture, add apples to a grilled meat or vegetable kabob.

— Continued on page 4 —



Cucumber Apple Salad

HACCP Process: ☒ 1 – No Cook ☐ 2 – Cook & Same Day Serve ☐ 3 – Cook, Cool, Reheat, Serve ☐ 4 – SOP Controlled

Ingredients	6 Servings	25 Servings	Directions
Oil	1 Tbsp	1/3 cup	1. Combine the dressing ingredients: oil, vinegar, honey, apple juice, salt, and pepper in a bowl. This can be done one day ahead of time. Cover and refrigerate the dressing if done in advance. 2. Wash the apples well, as you will be using the skins. Use an apple sectioner to core and section the apples, or do this by hand. Discard the core and halve the slices. 3. Toss the apples with the lemon juice in a large bowl to prevent them from browning. 4. Add the cucumbers, red pepper, red onion, and dill, if you are using it. 5. Add the dressing, then toss to thoroughly combine. Chill. CCP: Hold for cold service at 41°F or lower.
White vinegar	1/2 Tbsp	2 1/2 Tbsp	
Honey	1 tsp	1 Tbsp	
Apple juice	1/2 Tbsp	3 Tbsp	
Salt	1/4 tsp	3/4 tsp	
Black pepper	Pinch	1/4 tsp	
Apples <i>unpeeled, preferably red apples</i>	1 apple	4 apples	
Lemon, <i>juice only</i>	1 tsp	1 1/2 Tbsp	
Cucumbers, <i>peeled and sliced into 1/4 inch slices</i>	2 cucumbers	6 cucumbers	
Red bell pepper, <i>diced</i>	3 Tbsp	3/4 cup	
Red onion, <i>diced</i>	1 1/2 Tbsp	1/4 cup	
Dill, <i>chopped, optional</i>	1 1/2 tsp	1/8 cup	

Serving Size	1/2 cup	Pan Size		Yield	6, 25 servings
Oven Temperature & Baking Time:		Conventional	Temperature Minutes	Convection	Temperature Minutes

Meal Component Fulfillment (Based on Serving Size) 1 Serving Provides: • 1/8 cup fruit • 3/8 cup vegetables

Nutrition Analysis : Serving Size: 1/2 cup					
53	Calories (kcal)	.46	Saturated Fat (g)	.28	Iron (mg)
.61	Protein (g)	52.99%	Calories from Total Fat (%)	16.02	Calcium (mg)
6.08	Carbohydrate (g)	283.28	Vitamin A (IU)	85	Sodium (mg)
3.09	Total Fat (g)	13.30	Vitamin C (mg)	1.23	Dietary Fiber (g)

Notes:

Donna Miner, Food Service Manager at Chicopee High School in Massachusetts enjoyed the fresh flavor of this apple salad. It was adapted from an NYC School Food recipe, where it has been served to many school children.

Source: Fresh From the Farm: Massachusetts Farm to School Cookbook



Maple Apple French Toast Bake

HACCP Process: _____ 1 – No Cook ☒ 2 – Cook & Same Day Serve _____ 3 – Cook, Cool, Reheat, Serve _____ 4 – SOP Controlled

Ingredients	6 Servings	25 Servings	Directions
Apples	1/2 lb	2 lbs	1. Coat 2-inch full hotel pan with cooking spray. 2. Core apples and cut each into 8 wedges. 3. Cut bread into 1 inch cubes. 4. Lightly beat eggs in a large bowl. Add milk, about 2/3 of the maple syrup (or brown sugar), cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt; whisk to combine. Stir in the apple slices, then fold in the bread. 5. Lightly coat sheets of parchment paper with cooking spray and place on top of the French toast. Cover with foil. Refrigerate 6-8 hours or overnight. 6. Before baking, let the French toast stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. Preheat convection oven to 325°F or conventional oven to 350°F. 7. Bake for 30 minutes. Remove foil and parchment and rotate the pan end to end. Sprinkle remaining brown sugar (or drizzle remaining maple syrup) on top of each pan. Return to oven and bake uncovered 20 minutes or until set on top and the internal temperature reaches 165°F.
Whole grain bread	1/2 lb	2 lbs	
Eggs	6 eggs	26 eggs (2 qt)	
Lowfat milk	2/3 cup	2 2/3 cups	
Maple syrup (grade A or B) or brown sugar	3 Tbsp	3/4 cup	
Ground cinnamon	1/2 tsp	2 tsp	
Ground nutmeg	Pinch	1 tsp	
Table salt	1/8 tsp	1/2 tsp	

Serving Size _____ 1 piece _____ Pan Size _____ 2-inch full hotel pan _____ Yield _____ 6, 25 servings _____

Oven Temperature & Baking Time:	Temperature	Minutes	Temperature	Minutes
	Conventional _____ 350°F _____	_____ 50 min _____	Convection _____ 325°F _____	_____ 50 min _____

Meal Component Fulfillment (Based on Serving Size) 1 Serving Provides: • 1.25 oz grain • 2 oz meat/meat alternate • 1/4 cup fruit

Nutrition Analysis : Serving Size: _____ 1 piece _____					
_____ 201 _____	Calories (kcal)	_____ 1.82 _____	Saturated Fat (g)	_____ 2.15 _____	Iron (mg)
_____ 10.73 _____	Protein (g)	_____ 28.52% _____	Calories from Total Fat (%)	_____ 65.15 _____	Calcium (mg)
_____ 24.65 _____	Carbohydrate (g)	_____ 348.41 _____	Vitamin A (IU)	_____ 177.24 _____	Sodium (mg)
_____ 6.37 _____	Total Fat (g)	_____ 2.72 _____	Vitamin C (mg)	_____ 3.03 _____	Dietary Fiber (g)

Notes:

- Cube leftover bread or english muffins and freeze. *Make the recipe when you have 1 gallon.*
- You can use frozen commodity apples (thaw before adding to the recipe) or one #10 can of prepared apple filling.
- You can add 2 lb reduced-fat cream cheese, cut into 1/2-inch cubes. Fold it in with the bread in Step 4.
- Slightly frozen bread is easier to cube.
- Stir in 3/4 quart of raisins and the recipe will credit for an additional 1/4 cup fruit per serving for 25 servings recipe.

Source: New School Cuisine (www.vtfeed.org/materials/new-school-cuisine-cookbook)

Raw. Rinse and dry an apple to enjoy as is, or slice and dip in peanut butter, yogurt, or hummus. Dip apple slices in lemon juice to prevent browning.

Season. Enhance the flavor of apples with cinnamon, clove, ginger, or nutmeg.

Preserve. For information on preserving apples, look for Extension MontGuides on: Drying Fruit; Freezing Fruit; Home Canning Pressures and Processing Time; Making Jams, Jellies and Syrups. Visit www.msueextension.org/nutrition and click on the food preservation link or contact your Extension office.

Adapted from the Apple Food Fact Sheet developed by Montana State University Extension. For the full fact sheet and other resources, visit: www.msueextension.org/nutrition.

Dig Deeper

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Nutrition Information

The saying “an apple a day keeps the doctor away” has truth to it. Apples are a good source of fiber and contain vitamins and minerals such as vitamin C and potassium. Most of the apple’s nutrients are located just below the skin and are removed when peeled. Potassium is an electrolyte and is needed for many functions in the body, including the electrical activity of the heart.



4 Montana Harvest of the Month: Apples



The Montana Harvest of the Month program showcases Montana grown foods in Montana schools and communities. This program is a collaboration between Montana Farm to School, Office of Public Instruction, Montana Team Nutrition Program, National Center for Appropriate Technology, Montana State University Extension, Gallatin Valley Farm to School, Montana Department of Agriculture, Montana Organic Association, and FoodCoops Montana. More information and lessons are available at: mtharvestofthemonth.org.

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“Classroom Bites” for ECE

Early Care & Education Classroom Bites

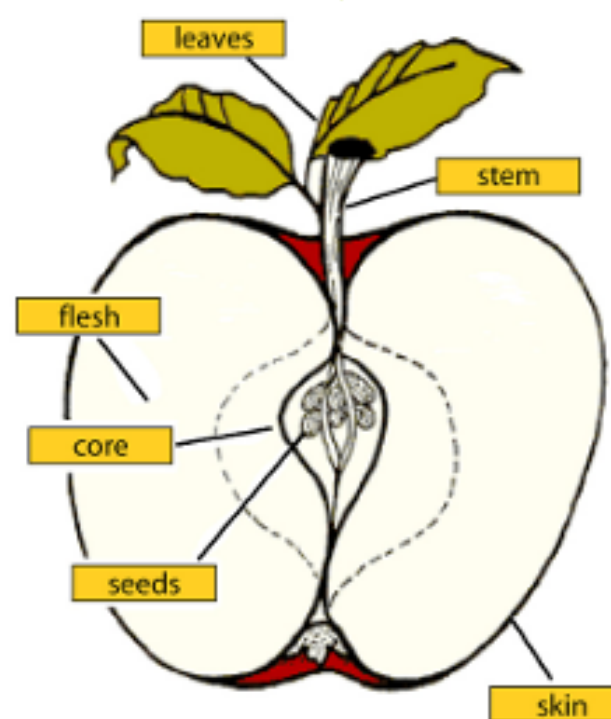
Apples

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Selection

Choose firm, shiny, smooth-skinned apples with intact stems. Apples should smell fresh, not musty. Remove apples with bruises or rot from the bag or container so they do not spoil the other apples.

Storage

Refrigerate apples in a plastic bag, away from strong-smelling food. Store away from other fruits, as apples naturally produce ethylene, which may cause other fruits to prematurely ripen. Eat within three weeks. Prevent cut apples from browning by dipping them in lemon juice.

Cooking

Applesauce. Place peeled, cored, and sliced apples in 1/4 inch of water. Steam apples in a microwave or pan on the stove until soft and add water if needed. Remove from heat, mash apples to desired consistency, and add seasonings such as cinnamon, cloves, ginger, or nutmeg. Eat warm or allow to cool.

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Recipes

Easy Applesauce

Get kids involved in mashing apples for a fun and easy treat.

Source: Harvest for Healthy Kids (www.harvestforhealthykids.org)

Servings

6

Ingredients

4 medium apples
1 cup water
1/4 tsp cinnamon
1/8 tsp nutmeg

Preparation

1. Peel and slice apples, removing the core. Leaving the peel on will result in chunkier applesauce and will retain more nutrients and color.
2. Place in pot.
3. Add water, cinnamon, and nutmeg.
4. Bring to a boil and let simmer until mushy.
5. Let children use a masher to mash up the apples into a sauce.
6. Set aside and let cool.
7. Serve warm or chilled.

Apple 'N Cabbage Slaw

Serve as a tasty side dish or as a colorful addition to sandwiches!

Source: Picture the Recipe (<http://picturetherecipe.com>)

Servings

6

Ingredients

3 cups red cabbage
1 1/2 cups green cabbage or lettuce
2 apples (recommended: golden variety)
3 carrots (about 1 cup)
4 green onions
3 Tbsp of cilantro or more to taste
3 Tbsp oil
3 Tbsp honey
3 Tbsp apple cider vinegar
Juice of one lime (about 1 Tbsp)
Salt & pepper to taste
Optional: Pinch of cayenne

Preparation

1. Shred the cabbage into fine strips. Measure cabbage or lettuce and add to a large mixing bowl.
2. Grate the carrots using a big holed grater and add to the bowl along with sliced green onions.
3. Finely chop a small handful of cilantro and add it to the salad mix.
4. Lastly, cut the apples into thin match-stick pieces and add it to the salad. Don't cut the apples until you're ready to dress the salad since they will turn brown. Toss everything together well.
5. For the dressing, start with the salad oil in a jar or a bowl.
6. Add the honey, apple cider, lime juice, salt, pepper, and a light dusting of cayenne to the oil.
7. Put the lid on and shake the dressing (if you're using a bowl simply whisk it with a fork) until the oil and other liquids are mixed well.
8. Drizzle over the salad and toss well until everything is coated in the dressing.
9. Serve chilled.

Activities

Grow Your Own

Adapted from www.broogly.com/project/growing-apple-seeds

Montana Early Learning Standards

2.1–Fine Motor Skills

4.1–Curiosity

4.15–Scientific Investigations

Description

Children will explore the process of seed saving, plant apple seeds and then observe and record the growing process.

Supplies

- Apples (preferably local, organic)
- Paper towel
- Pots
- Potting compost
- Zip-lock bag

Directions

Remove the seeds from the apple. Be sure to use seeds that are whole and not damaged.

1. Place the seeds in a warm dry place and allow them to dry out completely.
2. Wet the paper towel and then squeeze excess water from the towel. Fold it so that it will fit into a small zip lock bag.
3. Place the apple seeds onto the paper towel and place into the zip lock bag.
4. Place in the refrigerator. Leave the seeds to germinate – this will take approximately 1 month but may be faster or slower.
5. Once small shoots appear from the seeds, remove them from the refrigerator as they need to be placed in pots.
6. Fill your pots with potting compost. Use your finger to poke a hole in the compost about half an inch deep.
7. Very carefully transfer the apple seeds into the hole you have just made, and gently cover with soil.
8. Water the seed until the soil is damp.
9. Place the pot in a warm, sunny position. Water whenever the soil becomes dry.
10. Watch your apple seed grow.

Tips

1. It is important to keep the compost damp but not wet – otherwise your seedling will not prosper.
2. It is fun to try to grow seeds from different varieties of apple. If you do this, don't forget to write the name of the variety on your zip lock bag.
3. Apples are normally propagated by grafting because they do not produce true from seed – in other words, the fruit on the seedling is unlikely to resemble to apple the seed came from. Your seedling is a true experiment – it may produce fruit that tastes wonderful, or it may not! Who knows, maybe you will have created a new, delicious variety of apple!
4. It will take about 3-4 years for an apple tree to bear fruit – it may take up to 10 years before that fruit is edible! Don't let that stop you and your kids enjoy the fun though!
5. Combine this activity with a reading of the story of *How Do Apples Grow* by Betsy Maestro.



Extend the Fun

Source: [HfHfK_Apples_Activity_Plan.pdf](#)

Apple Tasting

- Children explore different types of apples
- Children describe the feel, smell, taste, color of apples and apple seeds
- Children learn that different apples have different characteristics

MELS 3.2–Expressive Communication

Discovery Table

Cut an assortment of apple in halves or quarters, and leave some whole. Place apples on the discovery or sensory table so children can explore by looking, smelling and touching. Apples store well, especially when kept in a cold, dry place. Cut apple should be covered with plastic and refrigerated when not in use for classroom activities.

MELS 4.1–Curiosity

Book Nook

Apples A to Z, by Margaret McNamara

The Apple Pie Tree, by Zoe Hall

Bad Apple-A Tale of Friendship, by Edward Hemingway



Song/Movement

Way up high in the apple tree. (Point up.)

Two little apples smiled at me. (Make a shape of a apple with your hand.)

I shook that tree as hard as I could. (Pretend to shake a tree.)

Down fell the apples—

(Raise hands and let them fall.)

MMMMMM, were they good! (Circle tummy.)

MELS 4.6–Creative Movement and Dance

4.8–Music

Apple Core Painting

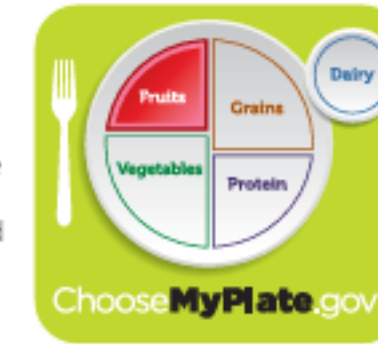
On a day that you are exploring apples, save the cores to use at the art table to paint with!

Provide the children with finger paint and finger paint paper. Put the paint in shallow trays. Use the cores to roll in the paint and then roll or stamp onto the paper.

MELS 4.9–Visual Arts

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Notes:

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“Harvest at Home” for ECE

Early Care
& Education
at Home

Apples

MONTANA
Harvest
of the Month

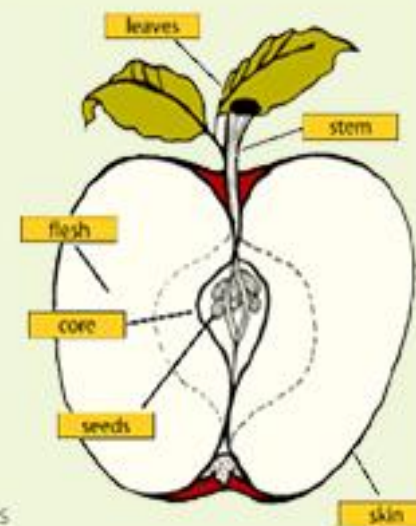


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Buying Tips

Choose firm, shiny, smooth-skinned apples with intact stems. Apples should smell fresh, not musty. Remove apples with bruises or rot from the bag or container so they do not spoil the other apples. Refrigerate apples in a plastic bag, away from strong-smelling food. Store away from other fruits, as apples naturally produce ethylene, which may cause other fruits to prematurely ripen. Eat within three weeks. Prevent cut apples from browning by dipping them in lemon juice.

Cooking

“Branch out” and try a different way of cooking and eating apples! Try baking larger apples by removing the core with a knife, leaving 1/2 inch of the apple core intact at the bottom. Put a small amount of seasoning in the hole. Place apples in a baking pan and add 3/4 cup water to the pan. Bake at 375°F for 30-40 minutes or until desired tenderness is achieved.

Conversation Starters

- **Apples**
What Am I?
I have skin but I'm not a person
I can be peeled but I'm not a potato
I'm a fruit but I'm not an orange
I grow on trees but I'm not a banana
I'm usually red or green but I'm not a grape
Source: Riddles for Kids (<http://riddles-for-kids.org/apple-riddles>)
- **Ideas:** Ask your child how homemade applesauce is different than store bought applesauce. Why are apple peels healthy? (Most of the nutrients lie in or just beneath the peel.)

Dig Deeper

For sources and photo credits along with more recipes, lessons, quick activities, resources, and guides, visit: mtharvestofthemonth.org.



Applesauce

Servings
6

Ingredients



Tools



Directions

1. Peel and slice apples, removing the core. Leaving the peel on will result in chunkier applesauce and will retain more nutrients and color.
2. Place in pot.
3. Add water, cinnamon, and nutmeg.
4. Bring to a boil and let simmer until mushy.
5. Let children use a masher to mash up the apples into a sauce.
6. Set aside and let cool.
7. Serve warm or chilled.



2 Montana Harvest of the Month: Apples



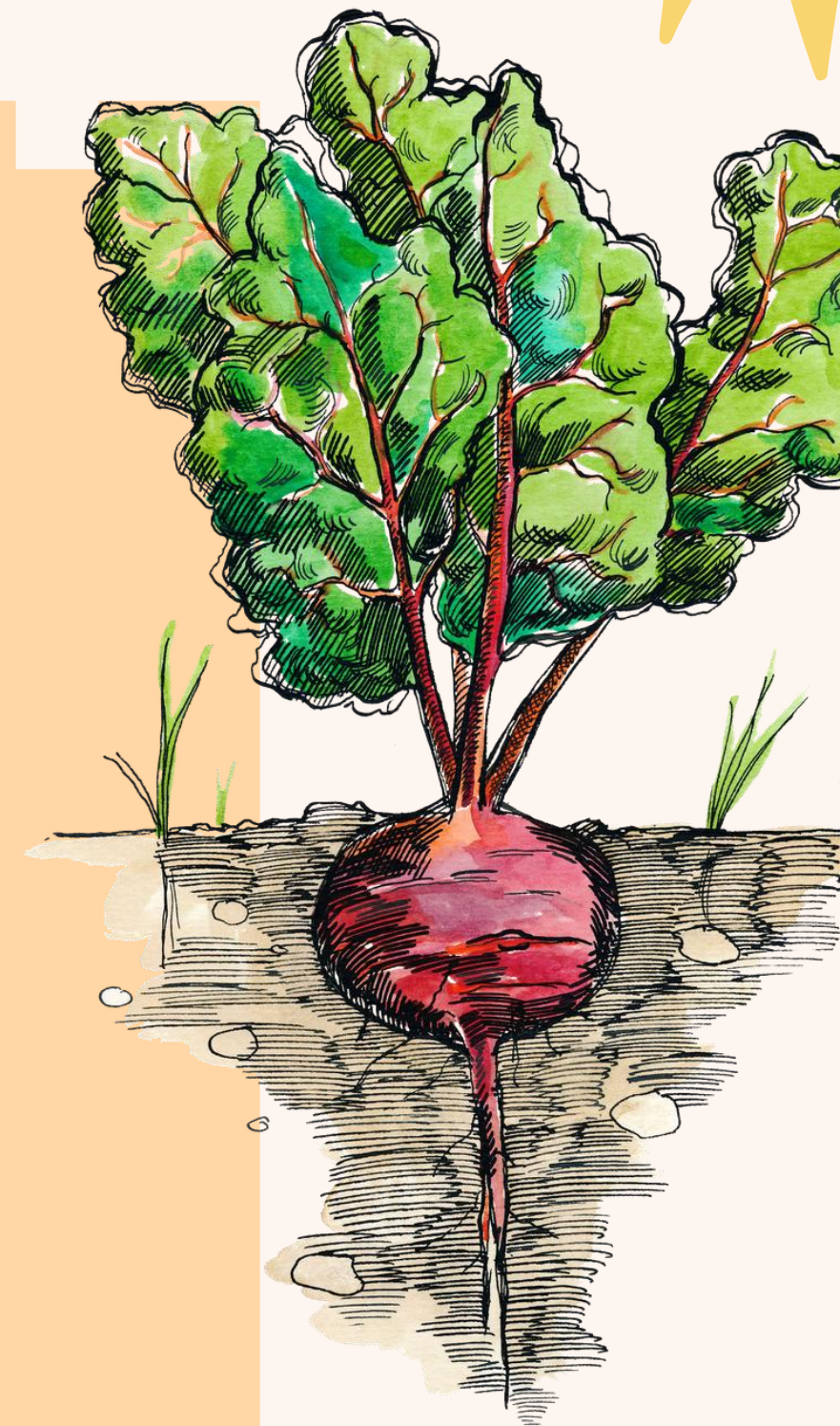
The Montana Harvest of the Month program showcases Montana grown foods in Montana schools and communities. This program is a collaboration between Montana Farm to School Office of Public Instruction, Montana Team Nutrition Program, National Center for Appropriate Technology, Montana State University Extension, Gallatin Valley Farm to School, Montana Department of Agriculture, Montana Organic Association, and FoodCorps Montana. More information and resources are available at: mt Harvest of the Month.org

Funds were provided in part by a USDA Team Nutrition Training grant, a USDA Farm to School grant, Montana Healthcare Foundation, Northern Pulse Growers Association, Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, and Montana School Nutrition Association. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. The Montana State University Extension Service is an ADA/EO/AA/Veteran's Preference Employer and Provider of Educational Outreach. This publication was supported by the Grants or Cooperative Agreements Numbers, 6 US80P004818-03-01 & 6 US80P004816-03-03, and funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the DPHHS.

Example Education Questions

What type of beet is red and white striped?

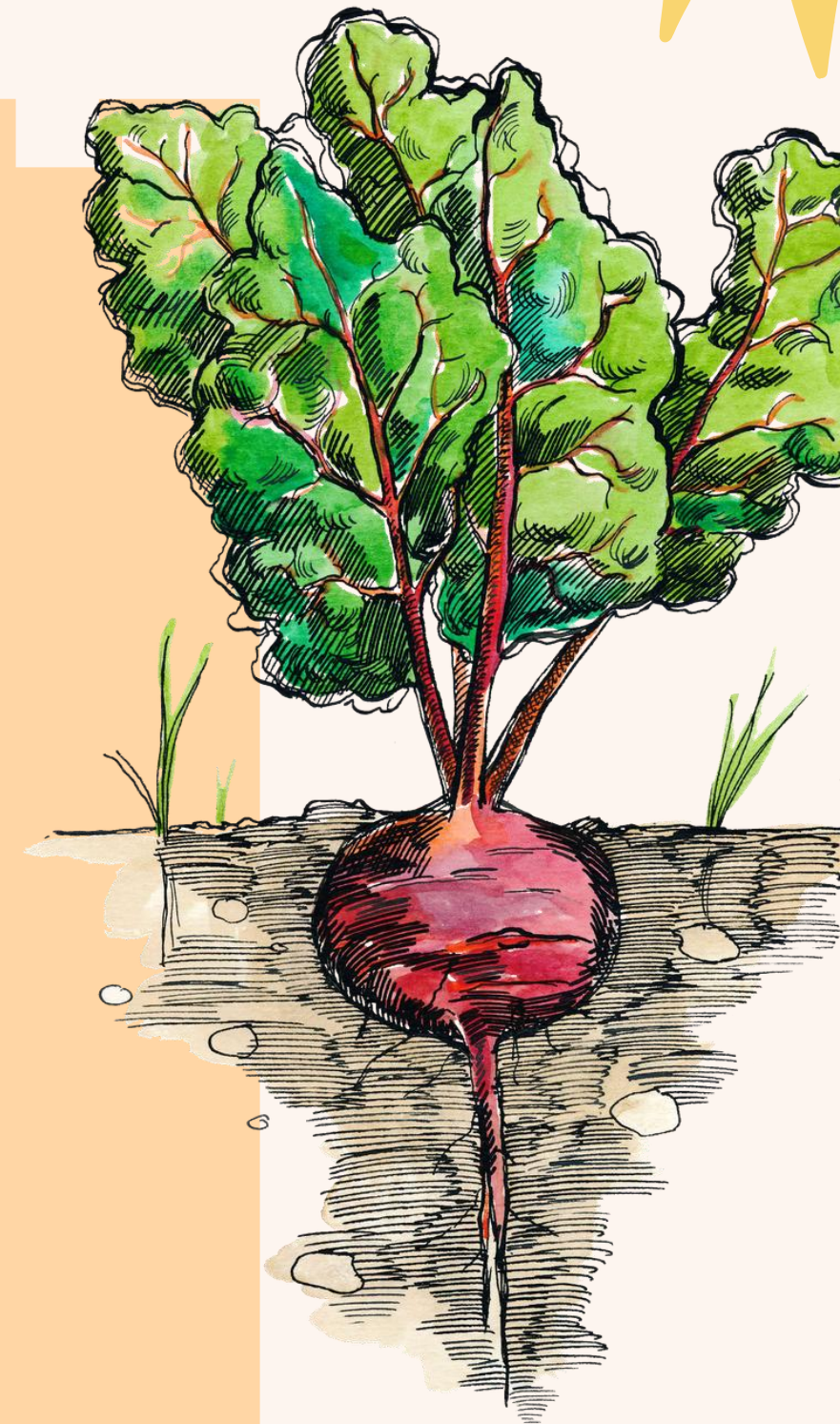
- a. Red
- b. Golden
- c. Chioggia
- d. Santa Clause



Example Education Questions

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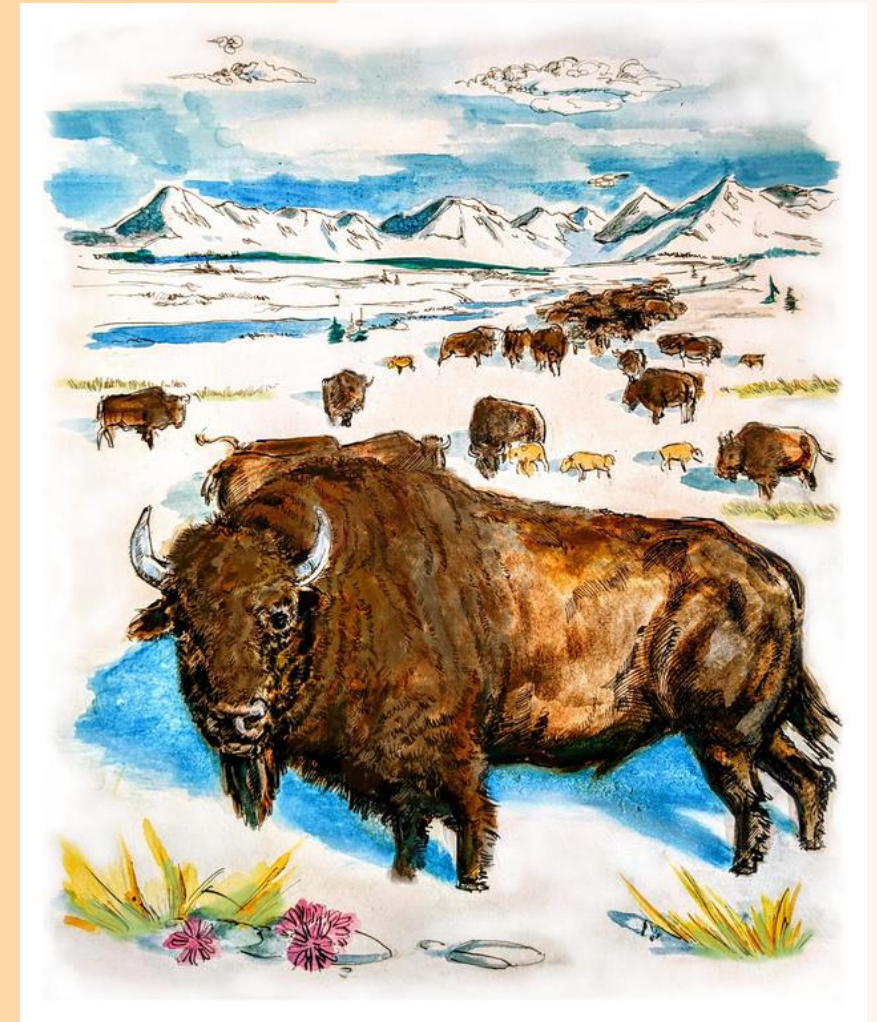
- a. Red
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Example Education Questions

What are the largest land animals in North America?

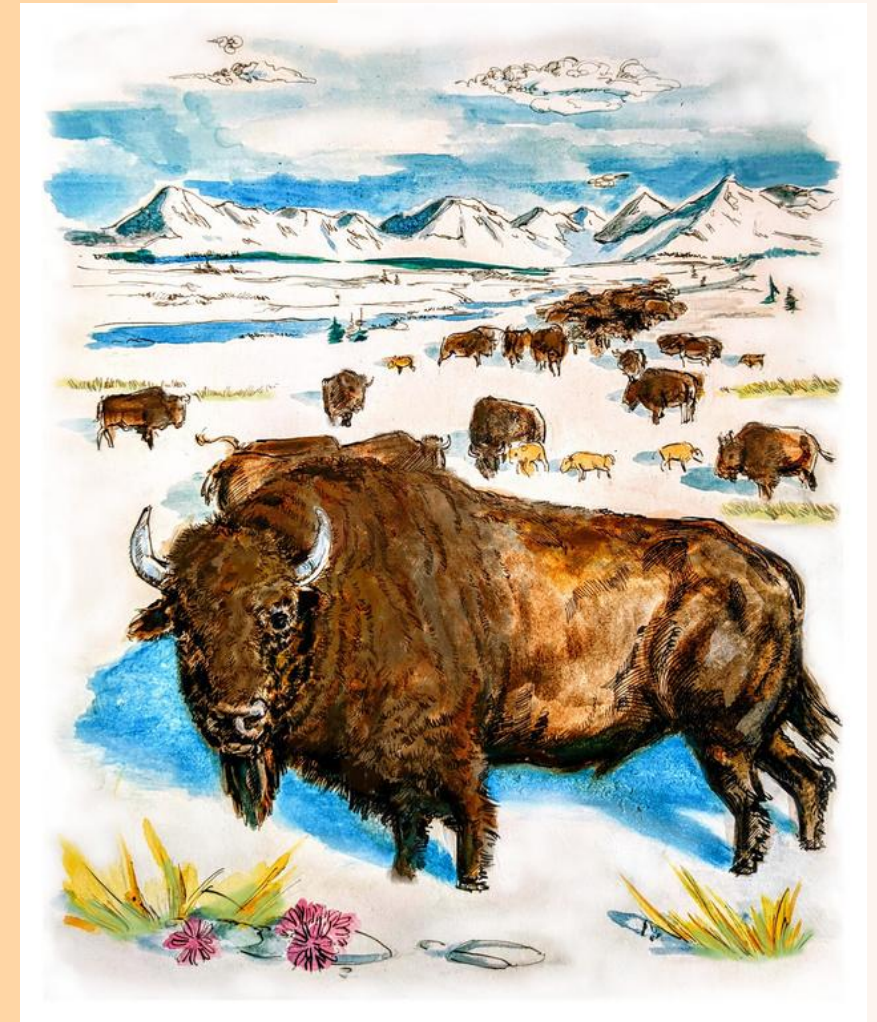
- a. Grizzlies
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- c. Cow
- d. Bison



Example Education Questions

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A watercolor illustration of various pumpkins and gourds. In the top left is a large orange pumpkin. To its right is a long, yellow and green striped gourd. Below the orange pumpkin is a dark blue-green gourd. In the bottom right is a large, light blue gourd. The background is white, and the pumpkins are rendered with soft watercolor textures and dark outlines.

Program Promotion

1. Word of mouth at schools
2. Newsletter
3. Social Media
4. Have done webinars and success stories
5. MT School Nutrition Association Conference

Anderson School HoM Taste Test



Taste tests



Handing out
taste tests

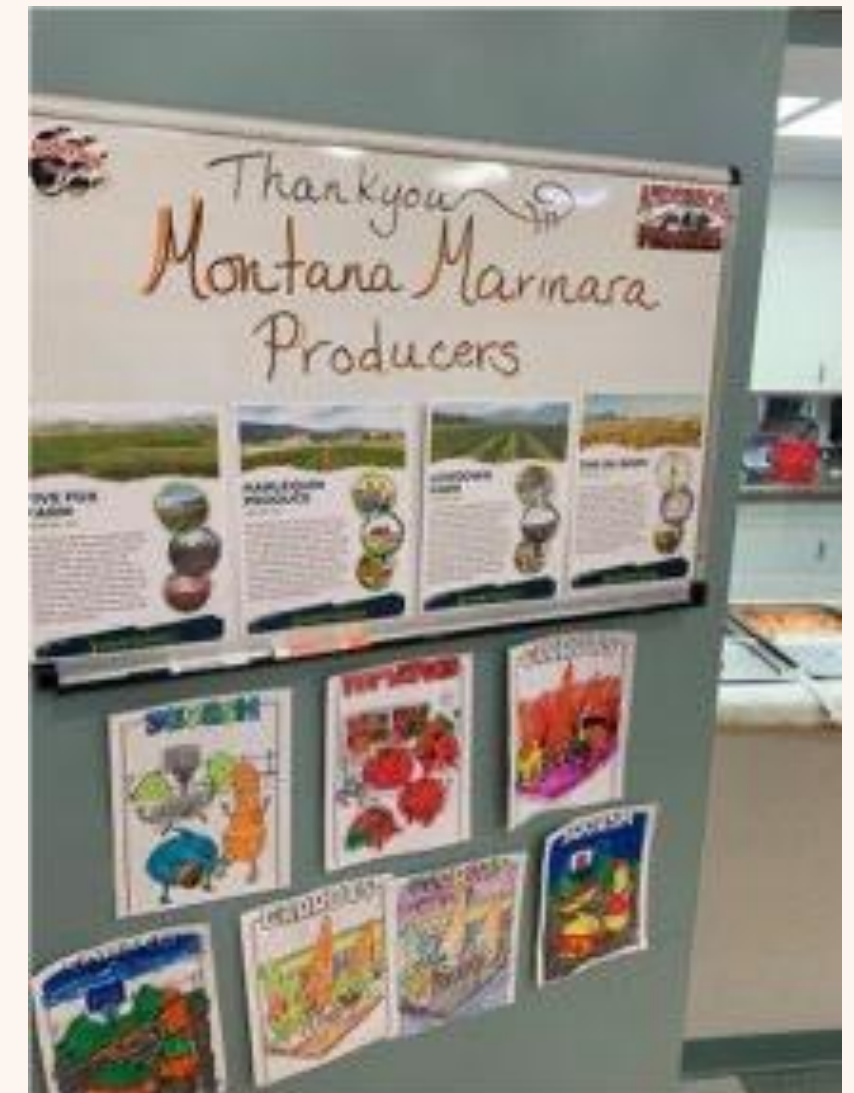


How to taste test with
tried it, liked it, loved it
method



Voting on taste test

Anderson School MT Marinara



Somers School HoM



Potatoes



Three
Sisters Soup



Whole Wheat Buns

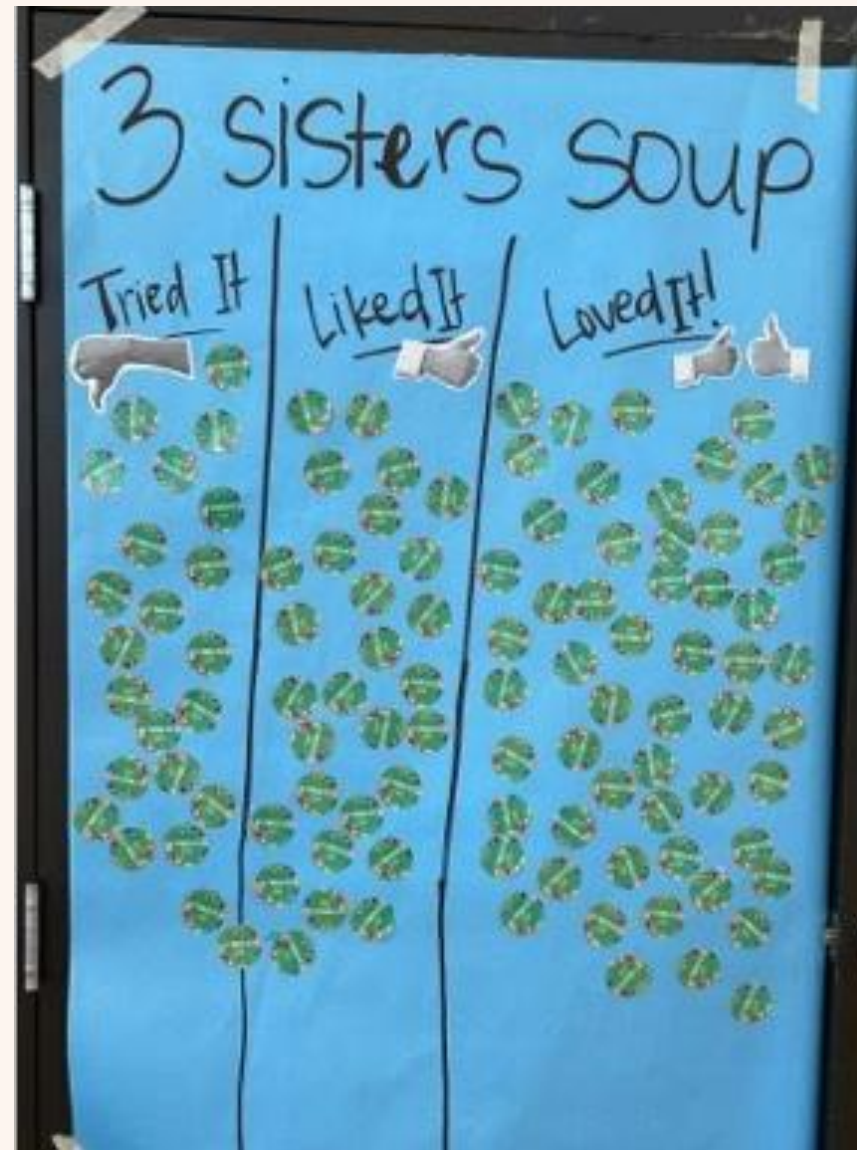


Apple Crisp

Somers School HoM



Taste Test Voting

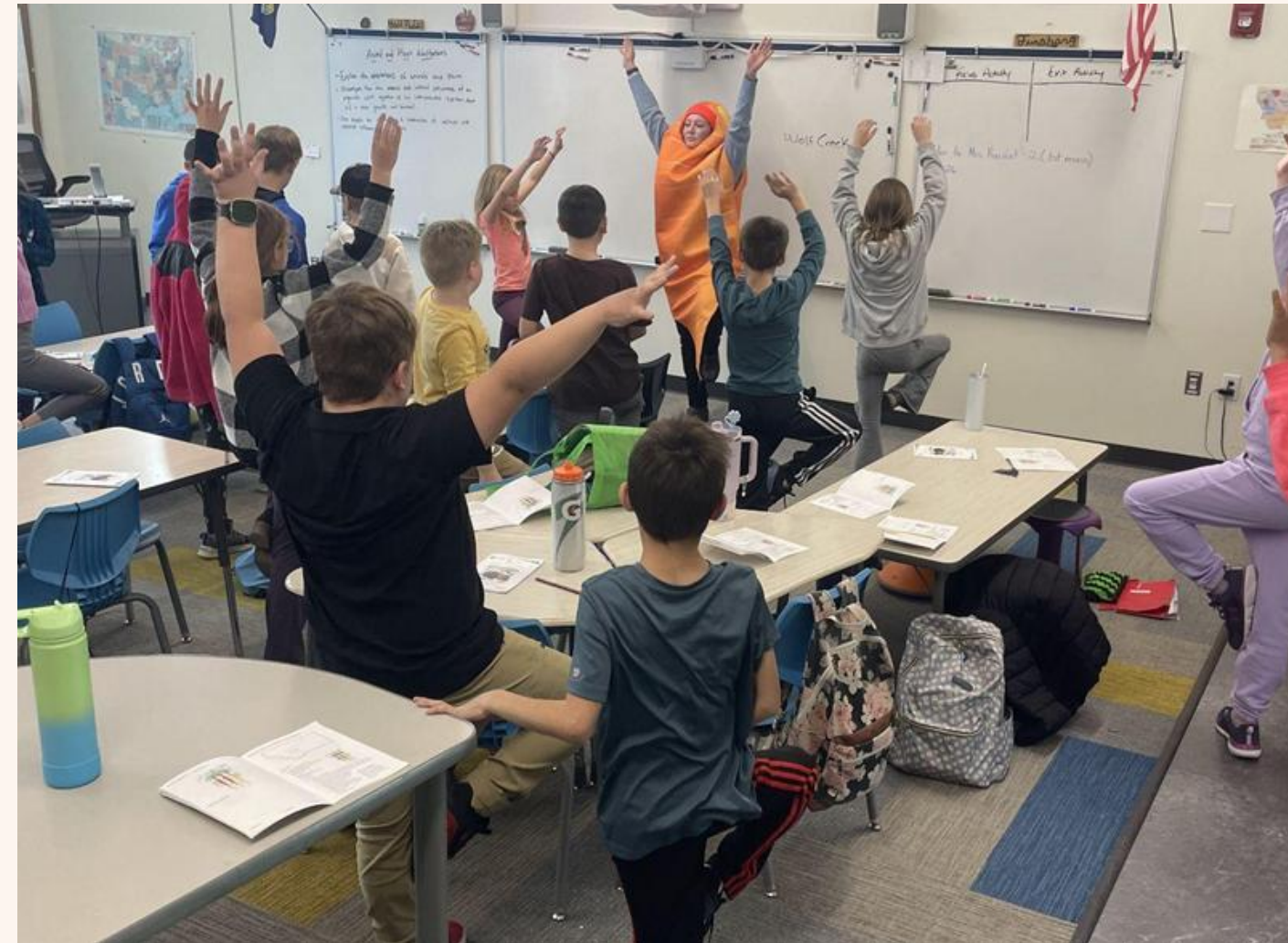


Tried it, Liked it, Loved it



HoM Poster Display

Example- St. Peters Health





Challenges

- Sustainable funding source to ensure program maintenance
 - New model does not allow for as thorough tracking
- 
- 



Game Time!

True or False: You have to register for HoM, create a team, and do monthly taste tests to participate in the program





FALSE!

These used to be requirements, but we have updated the program to allow participants to use it more freely.





True or False: Sites must serve or sell food in order to participate in HOM.



FALSE!

University extension, libraries, dentists, fitness/wellness centers, development centers, etc. can all participate by promoting the HOM item.





True or False: The annual calendar is available as a guide, but you are welcome to celebrate any seasonal item any month



TRUE! The calendar is meant to provide a guide if a site would like to use it, but since the materials are available publicly, any site can utilize them in whichever order works best for them.



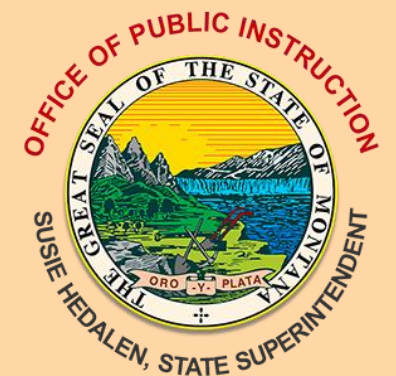
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MT Harvest of the Month
mtharvestofthemonth.org/

Montana Farm to School
montana.edu/mtfarmtoschool

Facebook
facebook.com/montanafarmtoschool

Instagram
instagram.com/mtfarmtoschool/





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