

# Garden Plot Crackers

Instructions and ingredient quantities are written for a class of approximately 20 children.



## Materials

### At Each Student Cooking Station

Cutting boards or paper plates (one for each child)  
Plastic knives (one for each child)  
Paper bowls (three for each table)  
Tablecloths (one for each table)

### At Teacher's Station

Knife  
Cutting board

### At Sink Area and for Clean Up

Sponge, dish soap, paper towels

## Ingredients

7-8 local cucumbers (cut into large chunks that each child will slice into smaller pieces)  
2 local sweet green, red, or yellow peppers (cut into large chunks that each child will slice into smaller pieces)  
4-5 local carrots (cut into small pieces ready for children to use)  
1 small head of broccoli (broken into pieces children will cut or break into smaller pieces)  
1 spinach or lettuce leaf for each child  
Large crackers or pieces of bread (one for each child and teacher)  
(2) 8 oz. spreadable cream cheese (divided evenly between the student tables and placed bowls)  
(2) 8-12 oz. hummus (divided evenly between the student tables and placed in bowls)

### Before you start cooking:

Set up the students' tables for the cooking class. Wash the tables/desks, lay table cloths over them, put a cutting board and plastic knife at each student's place. Put the prepared ingredients at each table or child's place.

## Steps with the Students

### Keep it clean

Ask students to wash their hands. Review proper hand washing techniques: Wet hands with clean water, add soap, rub hands together vigorously and scrub thoroughly. Rub hands with soap for at least 20 seconds (sing the ABC's), rinse with clean water.

### Introduce the Ingredients and Concept

Write the list of ingredients on the board. Show students the ingredients in their whole form and point out which part we eat. For this recipe, tell the students they will be making a cracker snack that is like a painting or sculpture of their ideal or dream garden. Which of the vegetables would students want to plant in their garden? Those will be the ones they include on their garden plot crackers. Explain that the cream cheese and/or hummus will be their "soil."

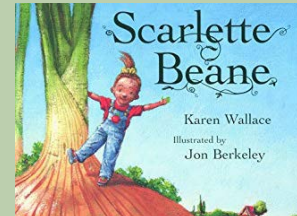
### Introduce the Equipment

Show students the tools they will use to make their garden plot crackers. Demonstrate the proper way to hold and handle the tools. Show students that both their pepper and their cucumber have a thick peel or skin on the outside of the vegetable. Demonstrate how to cut the vegetable with the peel side down towards the table (this enables the knife to easily cut through the vegetable).

## Literature Connections

*Scarlett Beane*

by Karen Wallace



## Curriculum Connections

Use hands-on cooking classes as a mechanism for teaching curriculum concepts. A few ideas for activities to accompany the garden plot cracker recipe are:

1. After the cooking experience, guide students in writing and/or illustrating the steps of making a garden plot cracker.
2. Read students *Scarlett Beane* and ask them to reflect on what Scarlett Beane created in with her garden. What was the main idea in the story? Who were the characters?
3. Talk with students about the nutritional value of the ingredients. Ask them to identify several unhealthy snacks. Explain why garden plot crackers are a good food choice.
4. Looking at the list of the recipe ingredients written on the board, can the kindergartners spot their letters of the week? Can first and second grade students sound out the number of syllables in each of the ingredient words?

## Curriculum Alignment

Find a list of which Common Core State Standards and NC Essential Standards this lesson plan aligns with on the lesson plan page at [www.growing-minds.org](http://www.growing-minds.org).

## What's going to happen? Review the Steps with Students

Go over each of the steps of making the recipe, from washing the vegetables to trying the cucumber stacks. **Write the steps on the board.**

**Step 1:** Wash all vegetables.

**Step 2.** Choose which vegetables you would want in your dream garden. Prepare the vegetables you have chosen.

**Step 3.** Using a plastic knife, cut the cucumbers and peppers into small pieces or slices. Set the vegetables aside.

**Step 4.** Using your fingers, tear the spinach or lettuce leaf into pieces. Break the broccoli into very small pieces.

**Step 5.** Using your plastic knife, spread hummus or cream cheese on top of your cracker

**Step 5.** Place pieces of the pre-cut carrot, cucumber, broccoli, lettuce/spinach and/or pepper on the hummus or cream cheese. If you use more than one vegetable, make a pattern or design with the vegetables.

**Step 7.** Try it!

**Step 8:** Clean up.

## Get Them Cooking!

### Wash and prepare ingredients.

Wash and prepare the veggies! Choose several children to wash the vegetables by running them under water (with a teacher's assistant or volunteer's help). Bring the veggies back to the teachers' cooking station and prep them in front of the class while talking a bit more about each ingredient. See preparation instructions in the ingredient list. Place the prepared ingredients at each child's place. Put a bowl of pre-cut carrots, hummus, and cream cheese at each table.

### Chop, Assemble

Ask students to take a seat at the tables/desks. Remind them that instructions for the recipe are on the board and they should refer to them if they have questions. Prompt students to start cutting or breaking their ingredients into very small pieces using their plastic knives or fingers (the smaller the better!). Students should then spread either cream cheese or hummus onto their cracker (give students a taste of each on a small piece of carrot if they are unsure which to choose). Top with the vegetables pieces.



## Last Steps

### Taste it!

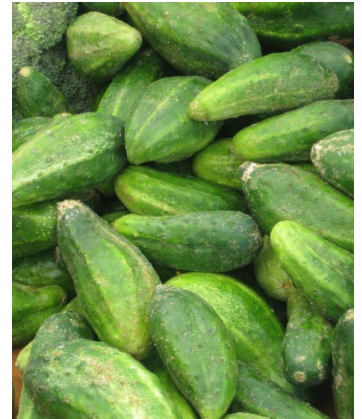
Prompt the children to try their stacks together all at once (Give them a count down by saying, "One, two, three, try it!").

### Clean Up

Kids can help in the clean up process by putting their plates in the trash and helping to pick up debris on the floor. While you finish clean up, ask a volunteer to read the suggested books.

## Did you know. . .

Cucumbers are more than 90% water.



Cucumbers belong to the same botanical family as melons (including watermelon and cantaloupe) and squashes (including summer squash, winter squash, zucchini, and pumpkin).

Cucumbers are one of the oldest cultivated vegetables and have been grown in India for over 3,000 years!

## More Cucumber Activities

### What's inside?

Show students the cucumbers in their whole form and ask them to predict what they think the cucumbers will look like on the inside. What color will they be? Will they feel wet or dry? Will they have big seeds or little seeds? How many seeds are in a cucumber? Two, twenty, two hundred?!

### Make Cucumber Water

What do students think would happen if they put cucumber slices into water? Would the water take on the flavor of the cucumber? Would it be sweet, sour, or bitter? Have students cut two to three cucumbers into slices or chunks. Put the cucumbers into a water pitcher or jar with or without ice. Refrigerate for at least 20 minutes. Have students taste the water. Which of their predictions were correct?