

Harvest of the Month

STRAWBERRIES



Farm to ECE

EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

NEBRASKA



Download and print items from
the Harvest of the Month toolkit at:

www.education.ne.gov/ns/farm-to-school/harvest-of-the-month

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NEBRASKA
**AGRICULTURE
IN THE CLASSROOM**
NEBRASKA FARM BUREAU FOUNDATION

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HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

FLEXIBILITY – FOR YOU!

Use the provided activity calendars as a guide to incorporate this resource into your classroom. Follow the calendars as written, or use them as inspiration and select the activities that work best for you, the children, and your schedule.

TRY READING THE SAME BOOK EVERY DAY FOR A WEEK.

Reading the same book every day for a week allows children to learn more about the story and dive deeper into the book's meaning. Rereading a story leads to greater reading confidence. Ask discussion questions to encourage children to retell the story. This practice will help prepare children for more complex narratives down the road.

DON'T HESITATE TO REPEAT ACTIVITIES.

Repetition provides the practice that children need to learn and master new skills. As children repeat activities, they will improve speed, increase confidence, and strengthen the connections in their brain that help them learn!

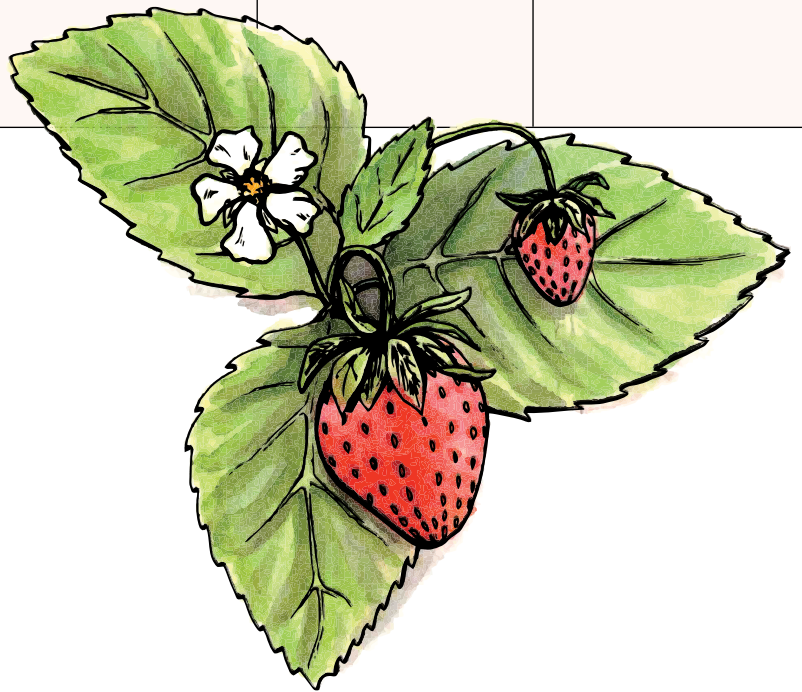


ACTIVITY CALENDAR: PLANNING FOR ONE MONTH

WEEKLY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Student Understanding: Strawberries grow on farms. Book of the Week: <i>Strawberries are Red</i> by Petr Horacek	Farm Story with Props Video: <i>Picked a Strawberry</i> Read and Send Home Strawberry Fun Facts	Story Time with Book of the Week Dramatic Play Activity	Sensory Activity Fine Motor Activity	Fine Motor Activity Music Activity	Story Time with Book of the Week Recipe: <i>Berry Fruit Salad</i>
Student Understanding: A strawberry has seeds. Book of the Week: <i>I Love Strawberries!</i> by Shannon Anderson	Story Time with Book of the Week Quick Bite One	Story Time with Book of the Week Quick Bite One	Video: <i>The Strawberry Patch</i> Quick Bite One	Story Time with Book of the Week Quick Bite One	Craft Activity Quick Bite One
Student Understanding: Farmers pick strawberries. Book of the Week: <i>A Berry Good Project</i> by Rick Henningfeld	Farm Story with Props Dramatic Play Activity	Story Time with Book of the Week Fine Motor Activity	Story Time with Book of the Week Recipe: <i>Easy Overnight Oats and Berries</i>	Story Time with Book of the Week Dramatic Play Activity	Video: <i>Strawberry Fruit Rhyme</i> Sensory Activity
Student Understanding: There are many types of berries. Book of the Week: <i>Grow Your Own Smoothie</i> by John Malam	Story Time with Book of the Week Quick Bite Two	Story Time with Book of the Week Quick Bite Two	Story Time with Book of the Week Quick Bite Two	Sensory Activity Quick Bite Two	Recipe: <i>Berry Blast Smoothie</i> Quick Bite Two

ACTIVITY CALENDAR: PLANNING FOR TWO WEEKS

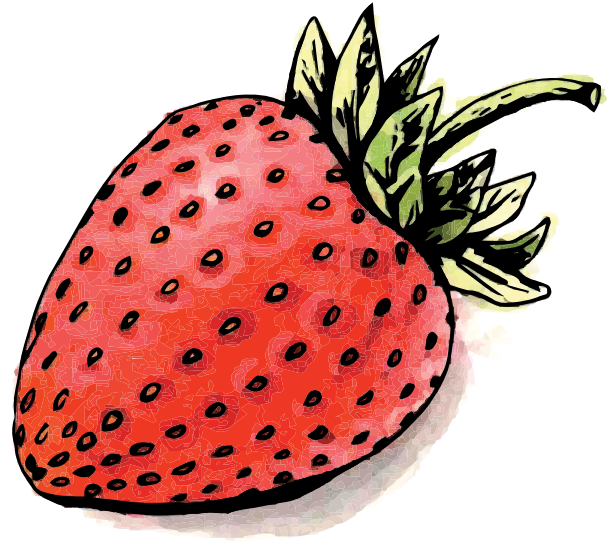
	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
WEEK ONE	<p>Story Time with Suggested Books for Reading</p> <p>Quick Bite One</p>	<p>Story Time with Suggested Books for Reading</p> <p>Quick Bite One</p>	<p>Video: <i>The Strawberry Patch</i></p> <p>Quick Bite One</p>	<p>Story Time with Suggested Books for Reading</p> <p>Quick Bite One</p>	<p>Craft Activity</p> <p>Quick Bite One</p>
WEEK TWO	<p>Farm Story with Props</p> <p>Dramatic Play Activity</p>	<p>Story Time with Suggested Books for Reading</p> <p>Fine Motor Activity</p>	<p>Story Time with Suggested Books for Reading</p> <p>Recipe: <i>Overnight Oats and Strawberries</i></p>	<p>Story Time with Suggested Books for Reading</p> <p>Dramatic Play Activity</p>	<p>Video: <i>Strawberry Fruit Rhyme</i></p> <p>Sensory Activity</p>



ENGAGEMENT TOOLS

SUGGESTED BOOKS FOR READING

- *A Berry Good Project* by Rick Henningfeld
- *Grow Your Own Smoothie* by John Malam
- *I Love Strawberries!* by Shannon Anderson
- *Strawberries are Red* by Petr Horacek



SONGS, POEMS, AND VIDEOS

- Picked a Strawberry
 - » www.youtube.com/watch?v=DW92IXc10cQ
- Strawberry Fruit Rhyme
 - » www.youtube.com/watch?v=e38VdQdQwwU
- The Strawberry Patch
 - » www.youtube.com/watch?v=sIHwhBXG0GE

INVOLVING FAMILIES

Involve families in the strawberries unit by sharing the Strawberry Fun Facts document. Add the information to a newsletter, incorporate the fun facts into a bulletin board, or send the sheet home so families can read through it and learn more together. Additional ways to involve families using the resources in this lesson could also include sharing the recipes and suggested books or inviting them to participate in one of the activities.

QUICK BITES

Harvest of the Month Quick Bites encourage children to participate in taste testing and provide activities for exploration. Children have the opportunity to learn more about the food on their plate and give feedback on food samples.

HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES

These activities are aligned with the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for children ages 4-5. Use the lessons to engage children in hands-on activities to practice fine and gross motor skills, explore crafts and music, engage the senses, and more! All activities are “center” or “play station” based for small groups of children to complete at a time. Reference the Activity Calendars for scheduling inspiration.

STRAWBERRY FUN FACTS

Children are learning about strawberries! Extend learning outside of the classroom by creating a positive experience for children with a conversation. Help them learn more about food and farming in Nebraska!



STRAWBERRIES ARE EATEN
BY 94% OF AMERICANS.



STRAWBERRIES CAN BE GROWN FROM
SEED, BUT USUALLY FARMERS GROW
THEM THROUGH PROPAGATION.

In propagation, farmers cut off a tiny piece of an adult strawberry plant, like a leaf or a stem, and plant it in the ground where it will grow into a new strawberry plant.

STRAWBERRIES SHOULD BE
PICKED EVERY OTHER DAY OR
ABOUT 3 TIMES A WEEK.

The best time to pick is in the
early morning hours.



QUICK BITES

Did you know? Children may need to try a new food 10-15 times before they determine whether or not they enjoy it. Taste tests are a great opportunity for children to try new, healthy foods in a low risk environment. Refer to the Taste Test Guide for food allergy information, precautions, and safety ideas before completing these activities with children.

QUICK BITE ONE

Pair strawberries with different condiments!

- Example: Try dipping strawberries one at a time in each of these condiments: vinegar, black pepper, sugar, and salt. Mark how the four tastes compare to the original taste of the strawberry. Try one each day and record observations. At the end of the week, vote on a favorite! Are there any surprises?

QUICK BITE TWO

Prepare smoothies using different types of fruit.

- Example: Try strawberry, blueberry, and banana smoothies. Then, try mixing fruits together to find the children's favorites! Try a new flavor every day and then mix fruits together on the final day.

ACTIVITY FOR EXPLORATION

Grow Strawberries!

1. Talk to someone at the garden center to help you choose one of four kinds: June-bearing, ever-bearing, day-neutral, or Alpine.
2. Start with transplants rather than seed; they're easier to manage and kids will get to see them grow faster!
3. Keep it simple – plant them in a container. Just remember, container plants need more water than those in the ground!
 - » Strawberry plants can be grown in containers as small as 10-12 inches in diameter and 8 inches deep. Plastic and light-colored pots will keep the plant cooler.
4. Strawberries like well-drained fairly rich soil, so be sure to add compost or other organic matter when preparing your pot!
5. Strawberry plants do best in full sun.
6. Then, comes the most fun: picking the fruit!
7. For more information visit: bonnieplants.com/blogs/diy-garden-projects/grow-a-strawberry-fountain#sthash.6tJZKo00.dpbs



HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES

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DRAMATIC PLAY ACTIVITY - PICKING STRAWBERRIES

Children pick strawberries and gather them in baskets to simulate how farmers harvest strawberries.

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FINE MOTOR ACTIVITY - RUNNING STRAWBERRIES

Children lace together strawberries in a line to mimic how strawberries grow in runners and spread across the field.

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CRAFT ACTIVITY - CLAY STRAWBERRIES

Children identify strawberries have seeds that we can see and eat.

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MUSIC ACTIVITY - I JUST SWALLOWED A STRAWBERRY SEED

Children sing along to a song about strawberry seeds to the tune of Frere Jacques.

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SENSORY ACTIVITY - PLANTING STRAWBERRY SEEDS

Children discover where strawberry seeds come from and how we make more strawberry plants by plucking seeds off of strawberries and planting them in the ground.

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FARM STORY WITH PROPS

Read the story and have children follow along with the photos. Use the circle time activity props to enhance the experience!

DRAMATIC PLAY ACTIVITY

PICKING STRAWBERRIES

Standard (CA.02): Expresses creativity using puppetry, storytelling, dance, plays, and theater.

Dramatic play has many benefits for children. It allows children to explore self-empowerment while allowing them to make choices and act out their feelings. It helps them to find new connection to themselves while they learn conflict resolution and problem-solving skills while playing with their peers.

THE GOAL

Children pick strawberries and gather them in baskets to simulate how farmers harvest strawberries.

INSTRUCTIONS

This activity is best implemented as a small to medium center with 2-4 children.

1. Using velcro, stick felt strawberries to a long rope, preferably green. (Alternatively, thread paper strawberry cutouts onto green pipe cleaners.)
2. Provide a small basket to each student participating in the center.
3. Show children how they are to pluck the felt strawberries off of the rope, or the paper strawberries off of the pipe cleaners. Then, place the strawberries inside of their small baskets.

ENGAGE THE STUDENTS

Engage children to help develop language, socialization, fine motor, and touch sensory skills.

1. Ask children about what they are doing.
2. Ask children to provide explanations.
3. Ask children the following questions to help them make the connection from their lives to the farm.
 - » How many strawberries did you pick?
 - » What color are the strawberries? The vine? (red, green)
 - » Who picks strawberries in a field? (farmers)

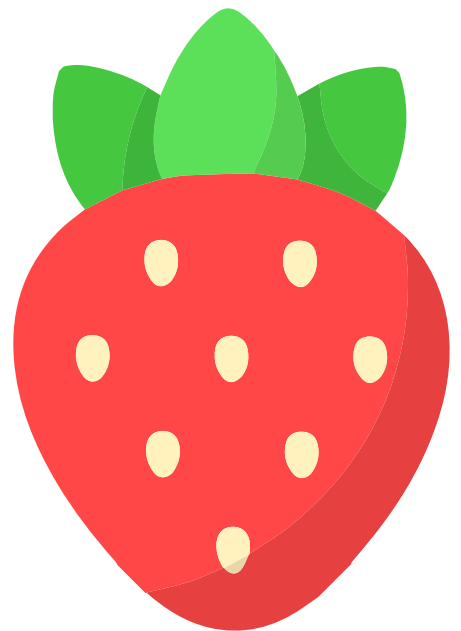
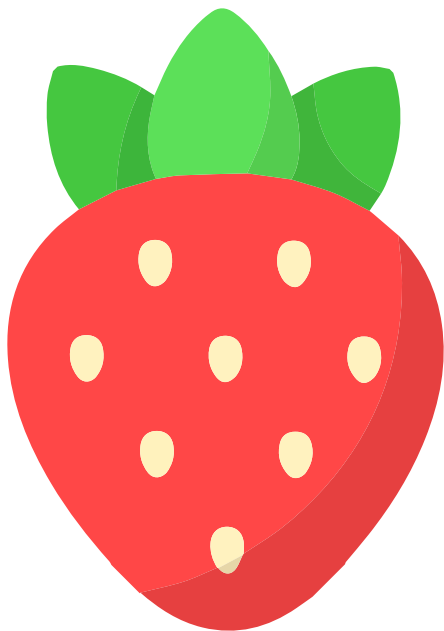
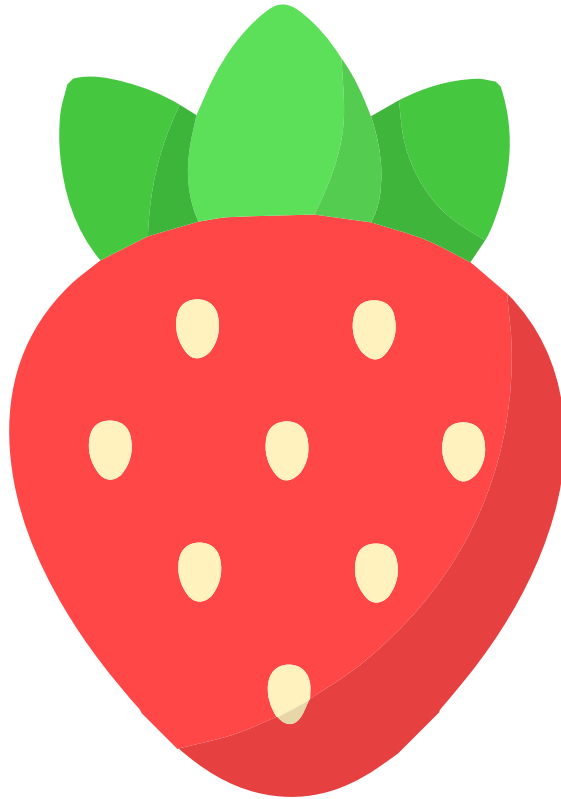
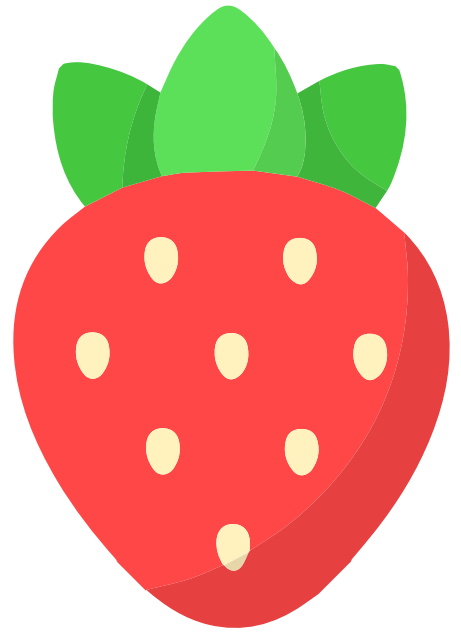
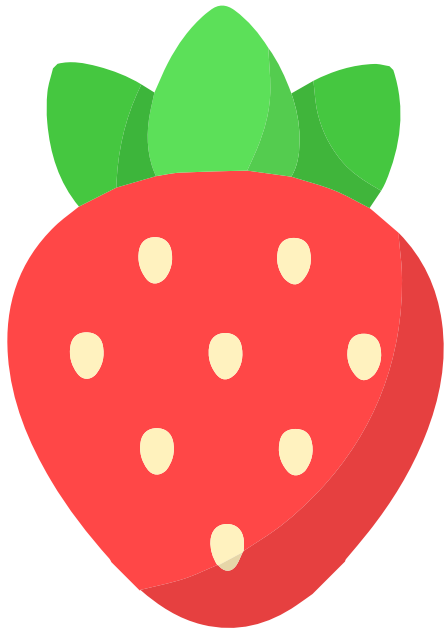


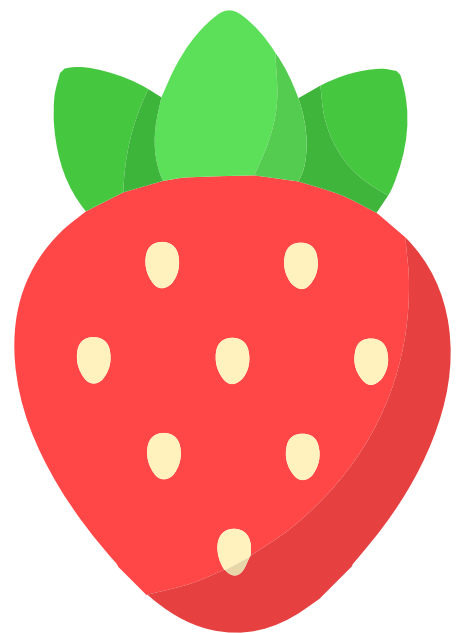
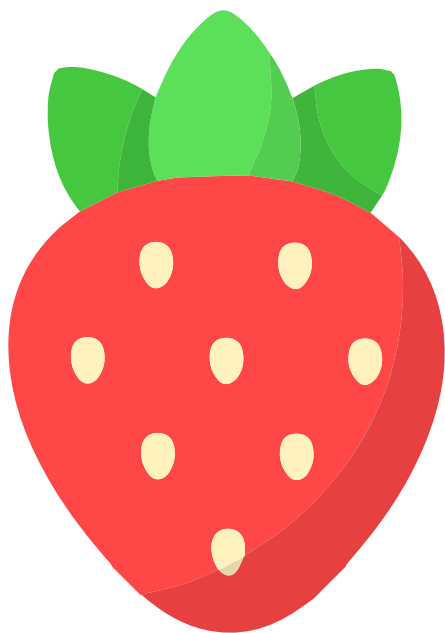
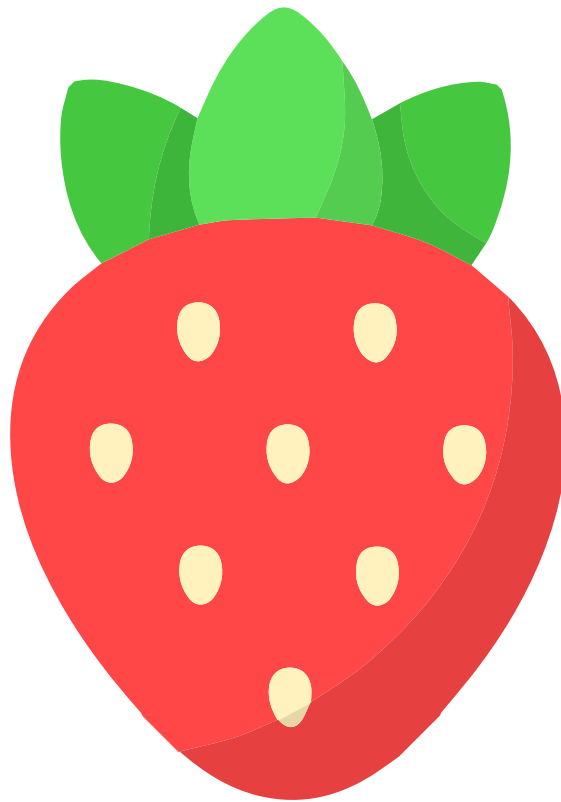
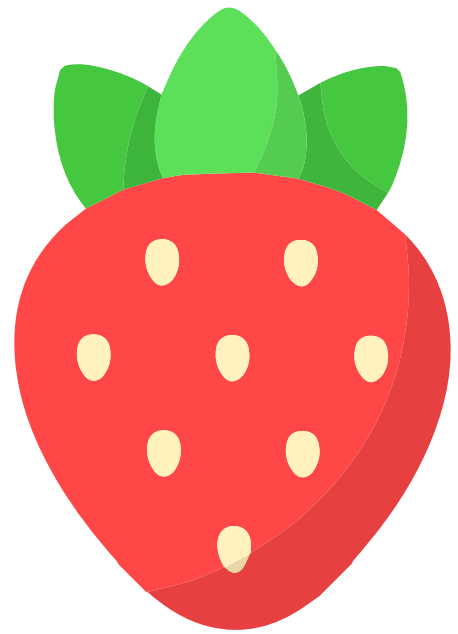
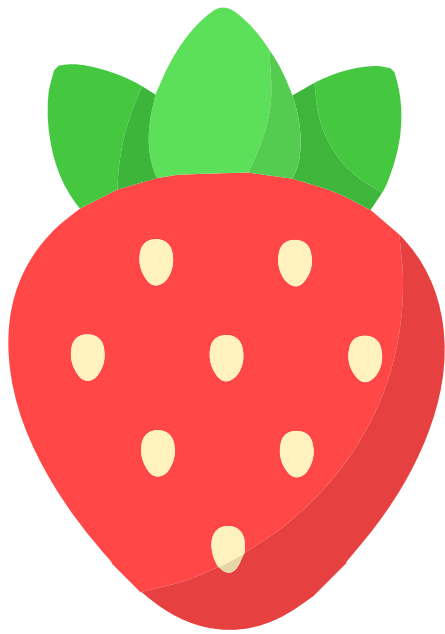
MATERIALS NEEDED

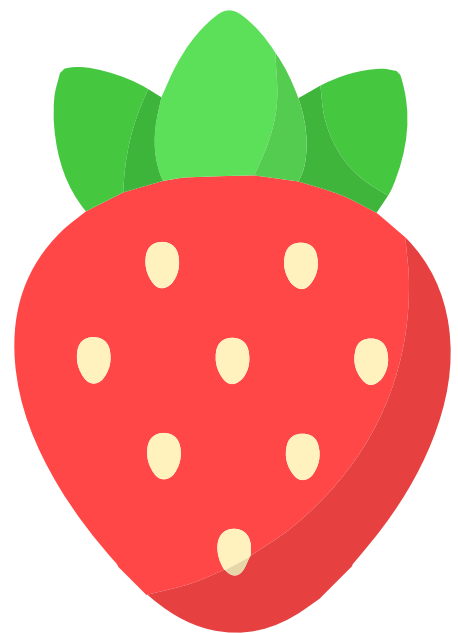
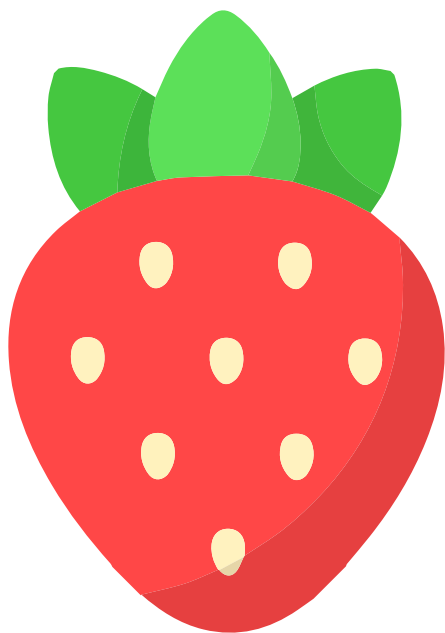
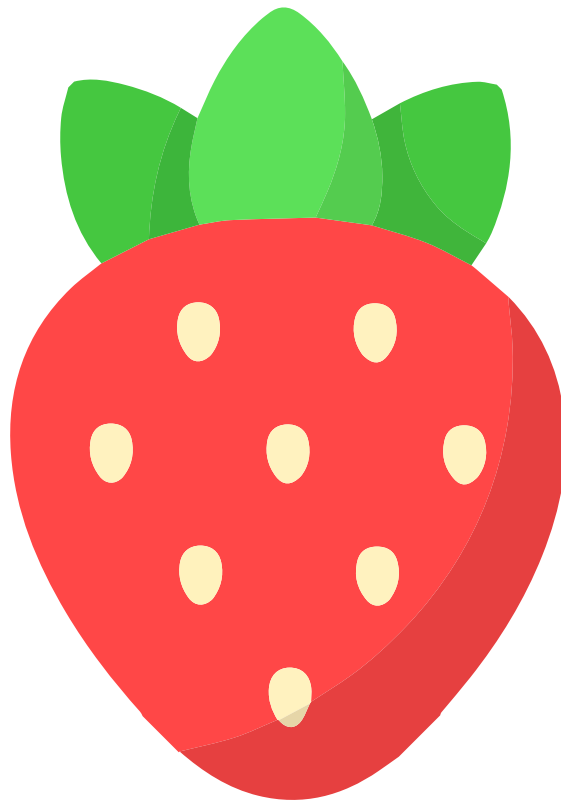
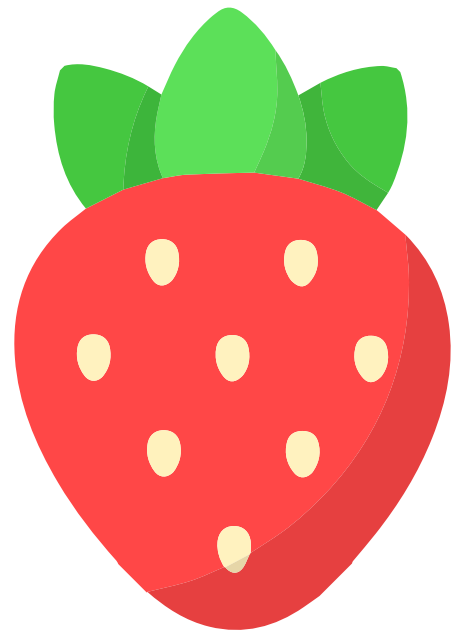
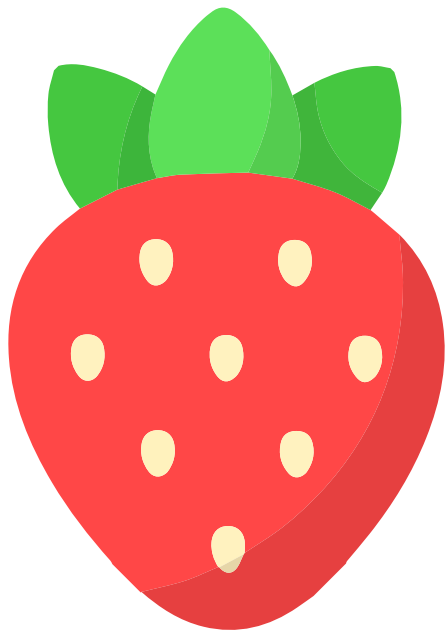
- Velcro
- Rope
- 20 Felt strawberries
- 2-4 Small baskets

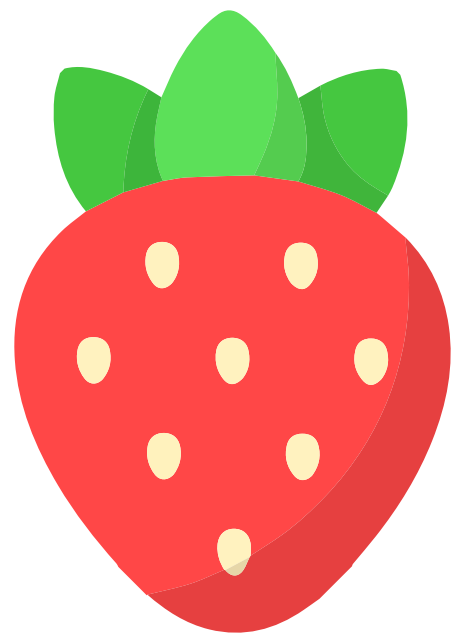
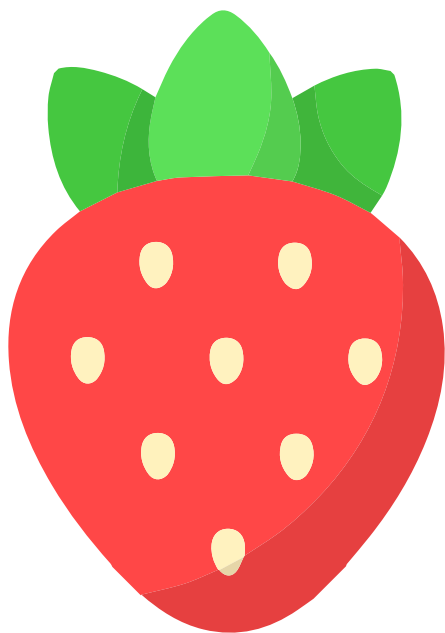
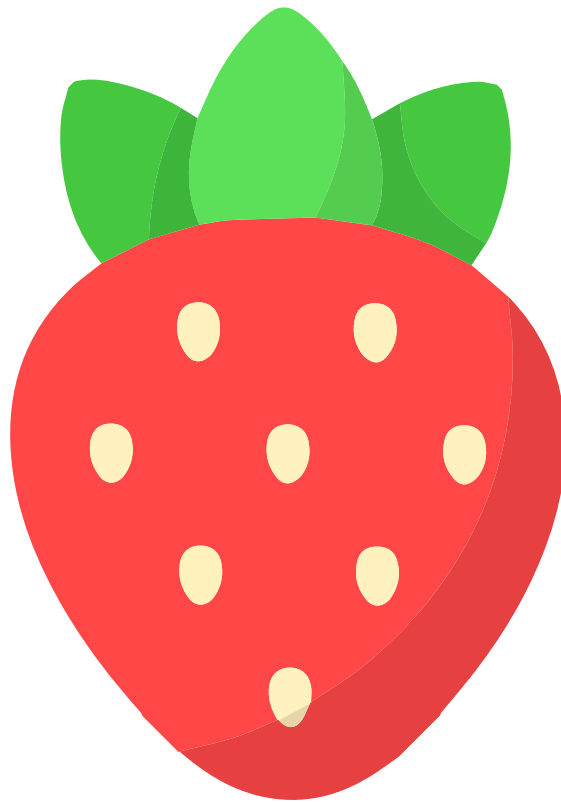
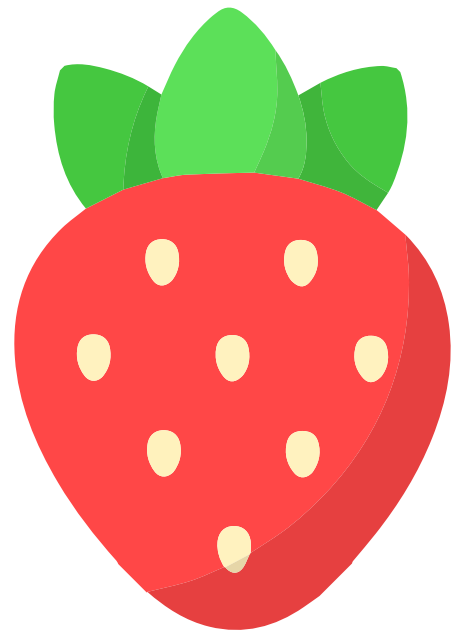
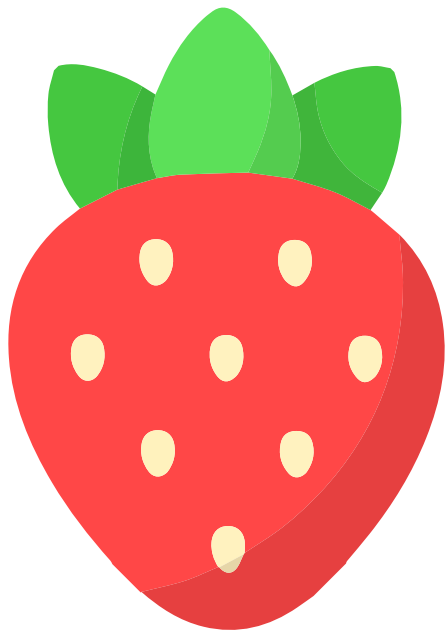
Alternative Materials

Use pipe cleaners (green) and paper cut outs of strawberries in place of velcro, rope, and felt strawberries.









FINE MOTOR ACTIVITY

RUNNING STRAWBERRIES

Standard (HP.01): Uses finger and hand control to operate and use small objects demonstrating fine motor coordination.

Fine motor skills are the building blocks that allow a child to self-care. Practicing fine motor skills helps children with the skills and techniques needed to do important independent activities such as tie their shoes, feeding themselves, and cleaning their own teeth.

THE GOAL

Children lace together strawberries in a line to mimic how strawberries grow in runners and spread along a field.

INSTRUCTIONS

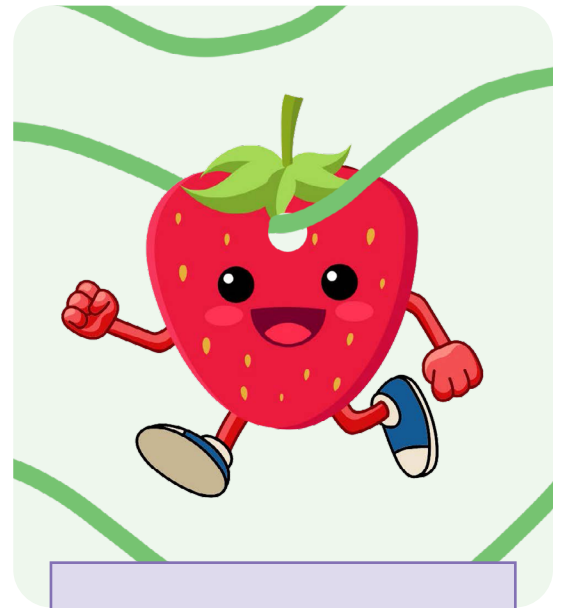
This activity is best implemented as a small center with 1-2 children.

1. Cut out 10-15 “running strawberries.”
2. Hole punch a hole at the top of each strawberry.
3. Cut 3 feet of green yarn and wrap each end in clear tape (for easier threading).
4. Have children practice threading as they add and remove the “running strawberries” on the green yarn.

ENGAGE THE STUDENTS

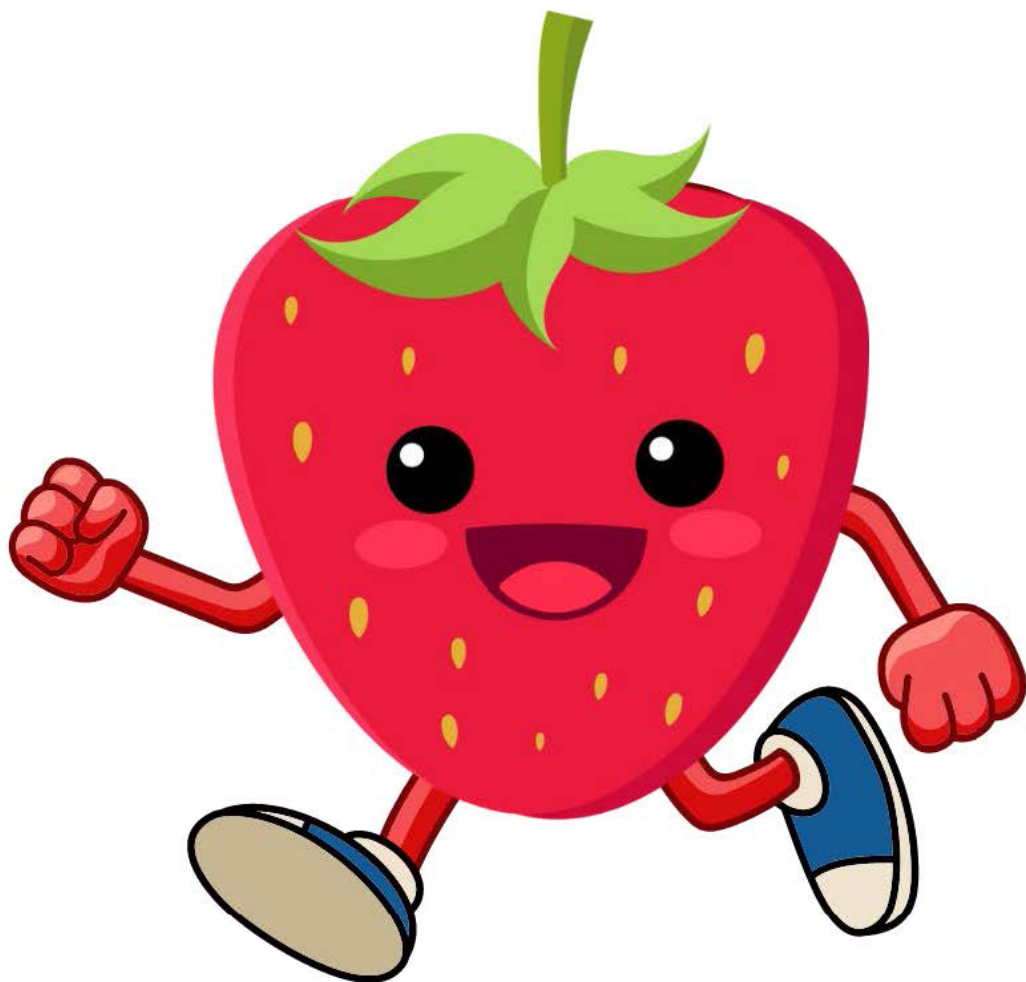
Engage children to help develop language, socialization, fine motor, and touch sensory skills.

1. Ask children about what they are doing.
2. Ask children to provide explanations.
3. Ask children the following questions to help them make the connection from their lives to the farm.
 - » Why are these strawberries running? (Strawberries grow along the vine, and the vine sends out runners. This allows the vine to continue to grow and produce more strawberries.)
 - » Do you like to eat strawberries?
 - » Do you like to run?



MATERIALS NEEDED

- Running strawberries
- Green yarn
- Hole punch
- Clear tape



ART ACTIVITY

CLAY STRAWBERRIES

Standard (CA.02): Develops foundational skills that support creative expression through the process, production, and appreciation of visual art forms.

Creating art helps children develop observation and interpretation skills. They learn important concepts like symbolism and abstraction while also strengthening pattern recognition and visual/spatial skills to understand relationships between parts of a whole.

THE GOAL

Children identify strawberries have seeds that we can see and eat.

INSTRUCTIONS

This activity is best implemented as a medium center or play station with 3-4 children.

1. Give each student approximately a three-inch cut of red or pink clay.
2. You may provide children with clay or playdoh tools as you see fit.
3. Place three small cups of black paint at the center of the table.
4. Show/help children to mold their clay into a conical or strawberry shape.
5. After they have shaped their strawberry, show/help children paint black spots on the clay to represent the seeds.
6. Set clay strawberries aside to dry.

ENGAGE THE STUDENTS

Engage children to help develop language, socialization, fine motor, and touch sensory skills.

1. Ask children about what they are doing.
2. Ask children to provide explanations.
3. Ask children the following questions to help them make the connection from their lives to the farm.
 - » Do you eat strawberry seeds? (yes)
 - » How many seeds do you think one strawberry has? (around 200)



MATERIALS NEEDED

- Red/pink air dry molding clay
- Black paint
- Small cups for paint
- Paint brushes
- Playdoh or clay tools

MUSIC ACTIVITY

I JUST SWALLOWED A STRAWBERRY SEED

Standard (CA.01): Develops foundational skills to support creative expression through voice, instruments, and objects.

Music enhances all areas of a child's development equipping them with the tools to be ready for school. This includes intellectual, social-emotional, motor, language, and literacy all together. Music helps a child's mind and body work together. Music also helps children learn the sounds and meanings of words.

THE GOAL

Children sing along to a song about strawberry seeds to the tune of Frere Jacques.

INSTRUCTIONS

This activity is best implemented as a large center with 3-5 children or as part of morning circle time.

1. Hang the "I Just Swallowed a Strawberry Seed" song poster in a location where all children can see it.
2. Demonstrate to the children how they should repeat the song lyrics after you.
3. Allow children to play and sing the song using instruments.

ENGAGE THE STUDENTS

Engage children to help develop language, socialization, fine motor, and touch sensory skills.

1. Ask children about what they are doing.
2. Ask children to provide explanations.
3. Ask children the following questions to help them make the connection from their lives to the farm.
 - » Where does a strawberry have it's seeds? (on the outside)
 - » What does a strawberry seed need to grow? (soil, air, water, and sunshine)





IN THE TUNE OF FRERE JACQUES

I JUST SWALLOWED,
(I just swallowed)

A STRAWBERRY SEED,
(a strawberry seed)

WILL I GROW A STRAWBERRY.
(will I grow a strawberry)

DEEP IN ME
(deep in me)

THAT SEED WON'T GROW
(that seed won't grow)

IN MY TUMMY
(in my tummy)

THERE'S NO RAIN OR SUNSHINE
(there's no rain or sunshine)

DEEP IN ME.
(deep in me)

SENSORY ACTIVITY

PLANTING STRAWBERRY SEEDS

Standard (AL.02): Demonstrates active inquiry, persistence, problem identification, and application of knowledge to new situations.

Sensory play has multiple benefits for children such as sensory exploration, improving motor skills, increased socialization, promotion of life skills, language development, and calming techniques. With this simple activity, you will be promoting multiple growth opportunities for children.

THE GOAL

Children discover where strawberry seeds come from and how we make more strawberry plants by plucking seeds off of strawberries and planting them in the ground.

INSTRUCTIONS

This activity is best implemented as a small center with 1-2 children.

1. Velcro 10 dried black beans to a large foam or cloth strawberry.
2. Fill a small or medium tub with brown rice to represent soil.
3. Provide plastic sand rakes and shovels, along with gardening gloves for each student in the center.
4. Show children how they are to pick the seeds off the strawberry and plant them into the soil.

ENGAGE THE STUDENTS

Engage children to help develop language, socialization, fine motor, and touch sensory skills.

1. Ask children about what they are doing.
2. Ask children to provide explanations.
3. Ask children the following questions to help them make the connection from their lives to the farm.
 - » What would happen if you planted a strawberry seed in some dirt? (If you take care of the seed in the ground, then it will grow and produce more strawberries.)
 - » What does a strawberry need to grow? (soil, water, air, and sunlight)



MATERIALS NEEDED

- Velcro
- Foam/cloth strawberry
- Dried black beans
- Plastic gardening tools/gloves
- Small or medium tub
- Brown rice

TEACHER SCRIPT FOR FARM STORY WITH PROPS

INSTRUCTIONS

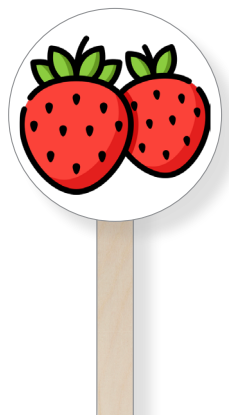
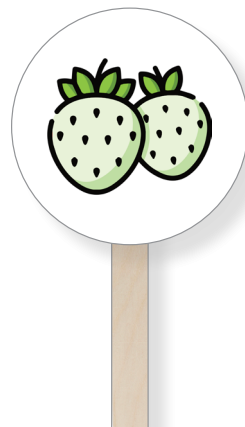
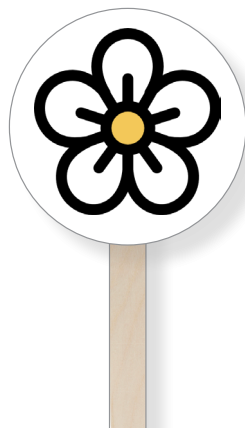
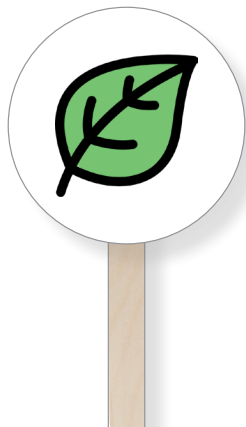
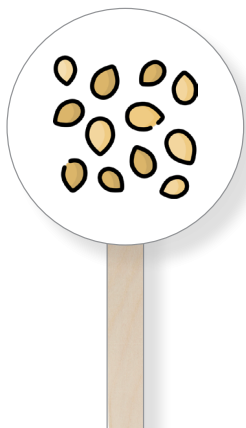
Read the story and have children follow along with the photos on the front of this page. Use the circle time activity props to enhance the experience.

- Strawberries start as a tiny seed. Those seeds grow into a little sprout with three to four leaves. The leaves then grow flowers. These flowers are where the strawberry will be someday!
- As the plant continues to grow, the flowers fall away. In the yellow center of the flower, a strawberry will begin to appear as the flower petals fall away. There are usually three to eight flowers on one strawberry plant.
- The first berry to grow on the strawberry plant is referred to as the “King” berry. This will be the biggest berry plant to grow! It will start off as the color green or white before it is ready to pick. Once the strawberries are red, they are ready for the farmer to pick!
- Strawberry plants are perennials which means farmers can leave the strawberry plant where it is and year after year more strawberries will grow.



CIRCLE TIME PROPS

Ahead of the activity, cut out the shapes and glue each one to a popsicle stick. Distribute the props before you read the story and have children act out the story with the props. Practice sequencing: when children hear their item called, they would stand in order at the front of the room with the teacher.



FARM STORY

STRAWBERRIES

Learn more about how strawberries start as a tiny seed on a farm and grow to get to you!



1

Strawberries start as a tiny seed.



2

The seed grows into a tiny sprout with 3-4 leaves.



3

The leaves produce flowers.



4

As the plant grows, the petals fall off and the center becomes a strawberry.



5

When the strawberry turns red, it means it is done growing and ready to be picked.



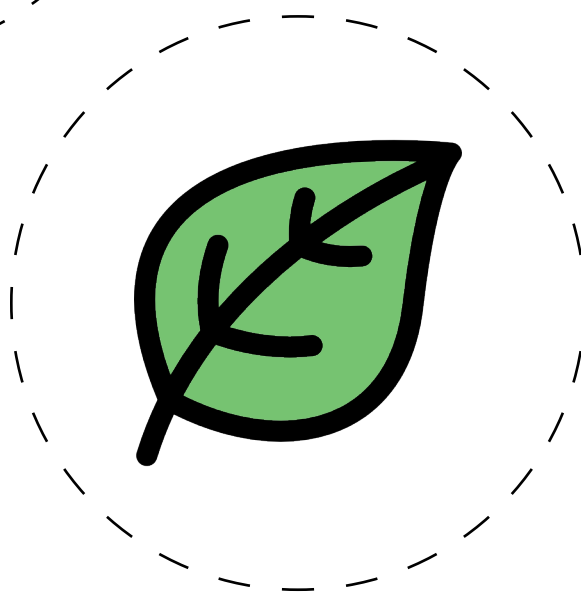
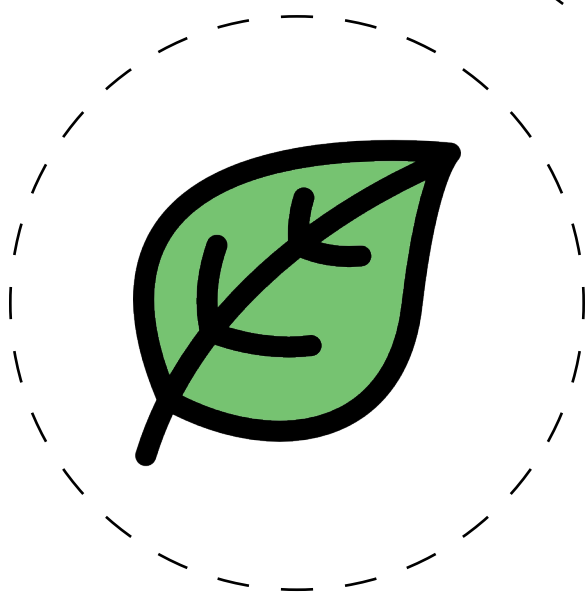
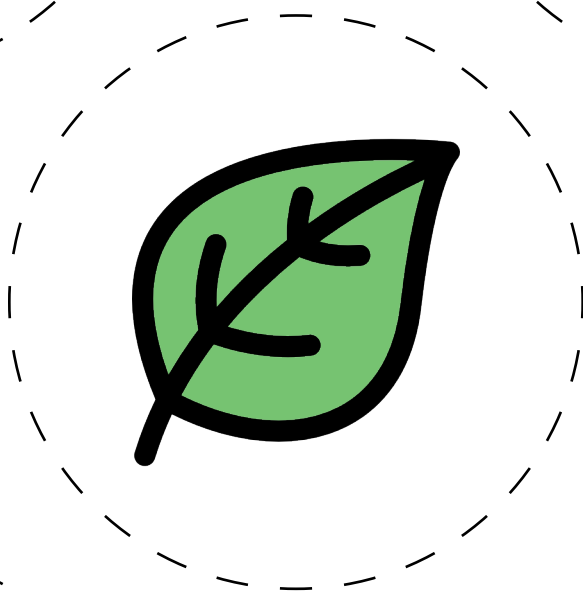
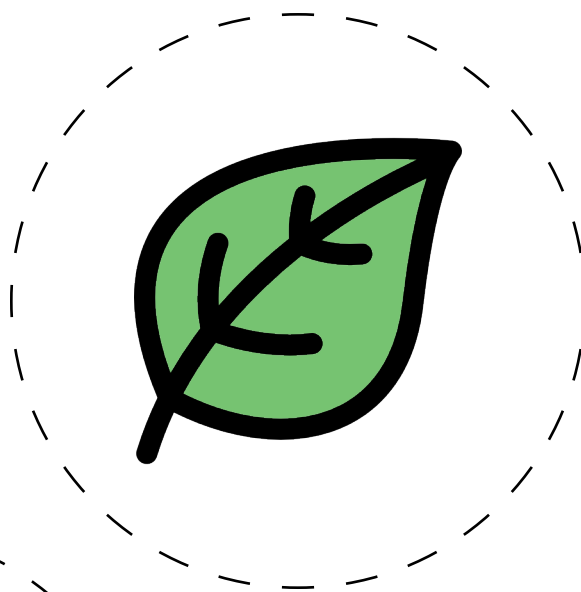
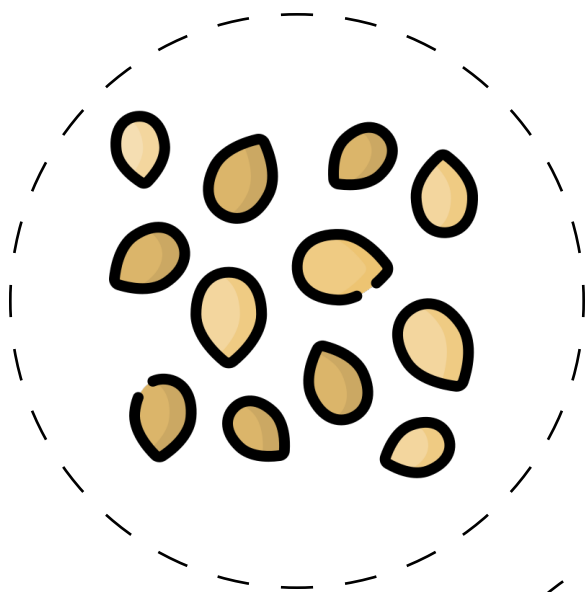
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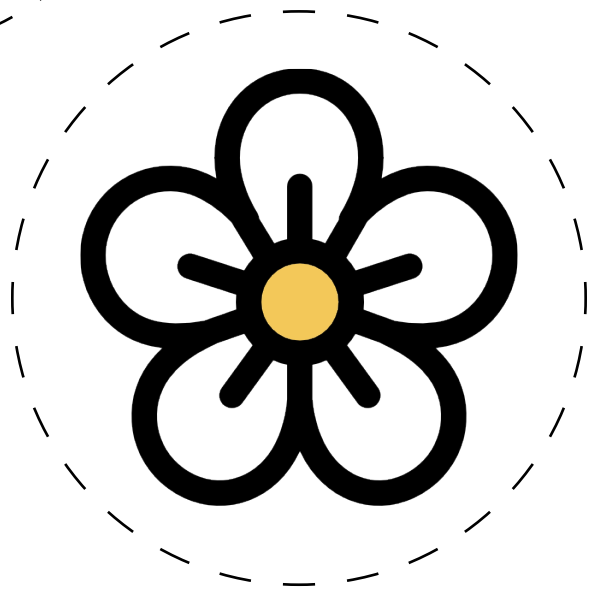
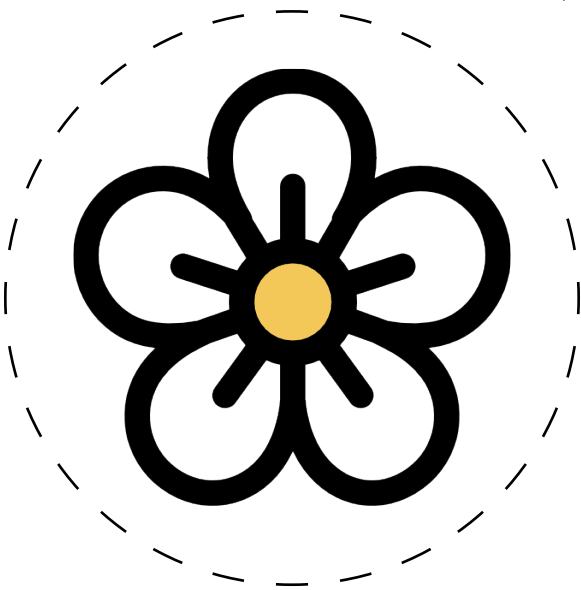
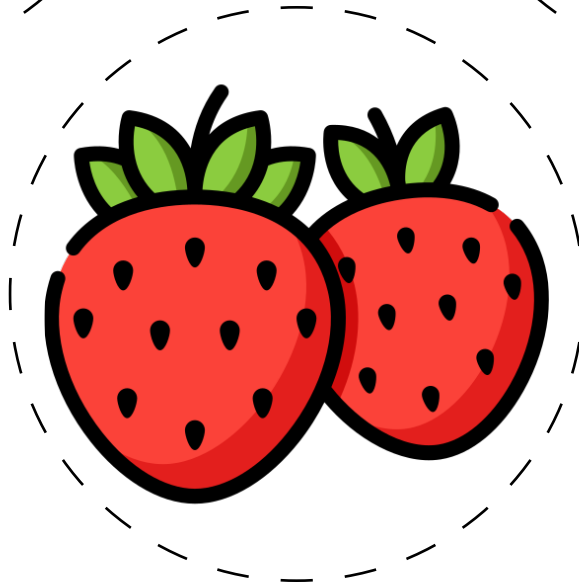
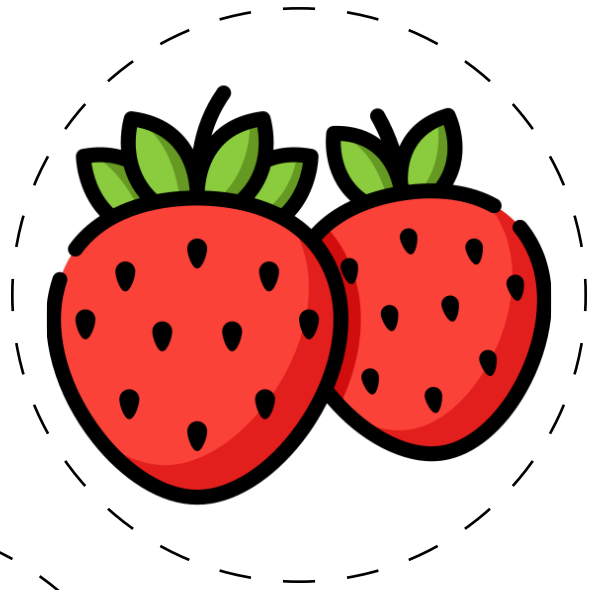
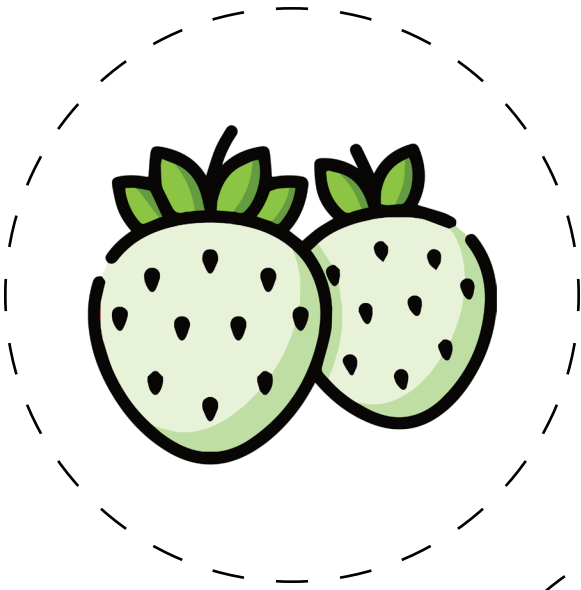
Farmers pick the strawberries and they begin their journey from the farm to your plate.



7

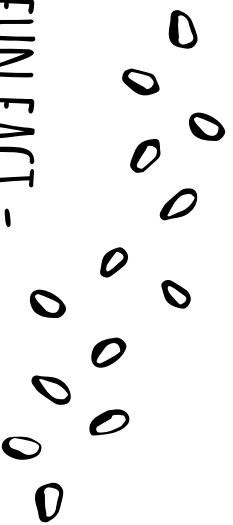
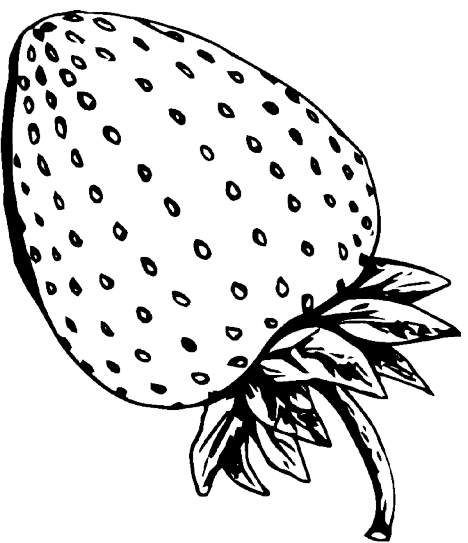
Strawberry plants are perennials. This means the same plant can regrow year after year.





Harvest of the Month

STRAWBERRIES



FUN FACT -

On average, every strawberry has around 200 seeds. They are the only fruit with seeds on the outside!

