

Lesson 4



Rinse Before Tasting

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explain why it is important to rinse fruits and vegetables before eating them.
2. Demonstrate how to properly rinse different types of produce using safe practices.
3. Identify types of produce that need extra attention (e.g., bumpy or leafy vegetables).
4. Understand what contaminants (e.g., dirt, germs, chemicals) rinsing helps remove.

Materials Needed

- Visual aids (slides or posters) showing rinsing techniques
- Real or plastic produce (variety of smooth, leafy, and bumpy textures)
- Sink or water source and colander (or demonstration materials)
- Garden journal or notebook for each student
- “Rinse Before Tasting” worksheet
- Timer (for practicing rinse time)
- Optional: soft brush or veggie scrubber

Lesson Activities

1. Introduction (10 minutes)

- **Provocation Question:** “If we grew lettuce in our garden, would you eat it without rinsing it first? Why or why not?”
- **Discussion Starter:** Talk about what might be on produce: dirt, bacteria, bugs, or chemicals. Emphasize that even garden-grown produce can carry germs.
- **Visual Aid:** Show images of produce being rinsed and explain how water helps clean it.



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2. How to Rinse Produce (15 minutes)

Demonstrate:

- Use clean, cold running water (no soap or bleach)
- For soft produce (berries, herbs, etc.): “gently rub produce under cold running water”
- For firm produce (apples, cucumbers, etc): “scrub with a clean vegetable brush under running water”
- Dry with a clean towel or air dry

Key Point: Washing removes dirt and many surface germs, but doesn’t sterilize, which means it doesn’t get rid of every single germ.

3. Hands-On: Produce Rinse Stations (15 minutes)

- Set up stations with real or toy produce
- For added understanding, you can add a small amount of safe, visible powder (like beetroot) to the toy or real produce before rinsing
- Students rotate and practice rinsing techniques for different types
- Use timers and journals to log how long they rinse each item

Ask for predictions: “Which fruit or veggie do you think is hardest to clean?”

4. Observation & Journal Activity (10 minutes)

Students record:

- What they observed on each type of produce before rinsing
- How easy/difficult each was to clean
- What they would do differently next time

Incorporate math by having students estimate and measure rinse times.



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5. Conclusion and Review (5 minutes)

Recap key ideas:

- Rinsing is essential, even for food from a home garden
- Different produce types require different techniques
- Clean food = safer food

Q&A: Students share their favorite fruit or veggie and how they should rinse it.

Assessment

- **“Rinse Before Tasting” Worksheet:** Match produce types with correct rinsing method and complete “safe or unsafe” sorting
- **Journal entries:** Observations and reflections on rinse activity
- **Participation:** Evaluate effort and hygiene practices at rinse stations

Lesson References & Resources

- [Safe Produce Handling](#)
- [USDA Produce Safety Resources](#)
- [USDA: How should fresh produce be washed before eating](#)



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Lesson Modifications for Different Ages and Abilities

Younger Students

- Use a water-rinsing rhyme (“Wash your fruit, give it a rinse, keep those germs out ever since!”)
- Turn produce into characters (“Broccoli needs a bath!”)
- Use color-coded cards for rinse methods

Older Students

- Conduct a mini-lab: observe rinsed vs. unrinsed under magnifier (if available)
- Research what happens if produce isn’t rinsed (e.g., outbreaks, illnesses)
- Graph how long different produce types take to rinse thoroughly

Students with Learning Differences

- Use picture cards for each rinse step
- Provide tactile examples (dry vs. wet produce, soft brush)
- Simplify worksheet options to multiple-choice or Yes/No
- Model rinse process multiple times and allow practice with support



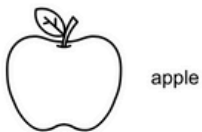
Rinse Before Tasting – Student Worksheet

Name: _____ Date: _____

Match the Plant to the Water

Draw a line from each plant to the kind of water it should get. Some plants have more than one water source that matches.

Plants:



Water Sources:

Scrub with a clean vegetable brush under running water

Gently rub produce under cold running water

Scrub with a clean vegetable brush under running water

Gently rub produce under cold running water

Safe or Not Safe?

Circle the Correct Answer

I should use soap to wash fruits.

A. True B. False

It's okay to eat berries without rinsing them.

A. Yes B. No

Washing produce helps remove germs and dirt.

A. True B. False

Draw and Label!

Draw yourself rinsing a fruit or vegetable at home. Label the steps you take to make it safe to eat.

Bonus: Think and Write

Why is it important to rinse fruits and vegetables?

Newsletter: "Rinse Before Tasting!"

Dear Families,

This week in our garden-based learning, students explored the importance of rinsing fruits and vegetables before eating them. Through hands-on activities, they learned how proper rinsing removes dirt, germs, and potential contaminants, even from produce grown in our own gardens.

What We Learned:

Why Rinse? To remove soil, bacteria, and other contaminants.

How to Rinse: Use clean, cold running water. No soap needed!

Different Techniques: Understanding that soft produce is rinsed and firm produce is scrubbed with a clean vegetable brush

Try This at Home:

Rinse Together: Involve your child in washing fruits and vegetables during meal prep.

Observation Game: Examine different produce and discuss how to clean each type.

Career Spotlight:

Food Inspector

Food Inspectors play a crucial role in ensuring the safety of our food supply. They examine food products and processing facilities to prevent contamination and ensure compliance with safety standards.

Learn more at
USDA Career Profiles:
www.fsis.usda.gov/careers/career-profiles

Learn More:

Safe Produce Handling:
www.fightbac.org/food-safety-education/safe-produce/

FDA 7 Tips for Cleaning Fruits, Vegetables:
www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/7-tips-cleaning-fruits-vegetables

Thank you for reinforcing these important lessons at home!