



Dear Principal and/or Designated Healthy Kids School Champion:

Thank-you for taking the Healthy Kids School Pledge! We are excited to work together to promote the health and well-being of students at your school.

The Healthy Kids Community Challenge is now on its third theme, *Choose to Boost Veggies and Fruit*, emphasizing the importance of making vegetables and fruits part of your diet every day. By taking the Healthy Kids School Pledge, your school has committed to taking part in Veggie & Fruit Month this October! Veggie & Fruit Month is an important component of our Healthy Kids Community Challenge *Choose to Boost Veggies and Fruit* action plan. I want to thank-you for your commitment to promoting the consumption of vegetables and fruits for children and their families in Hastings and Prince Edward Counties!

In order to support your school in implementing Veggie & Fruit Month, we have created this Veggie & Fruit Month 2017 Administration Package. It contains supportive materials including:

- Veggie & Fruit Month Pledge Package distribution instructions
- Veggie & Fruit Month Launch Party Instructions
- A sample school newsletter insert
- Sample Veggie & Fruit Month PA announcements
- A link to the Veggie & Fruit Month Teacher's Guide and Classroom Activities Package

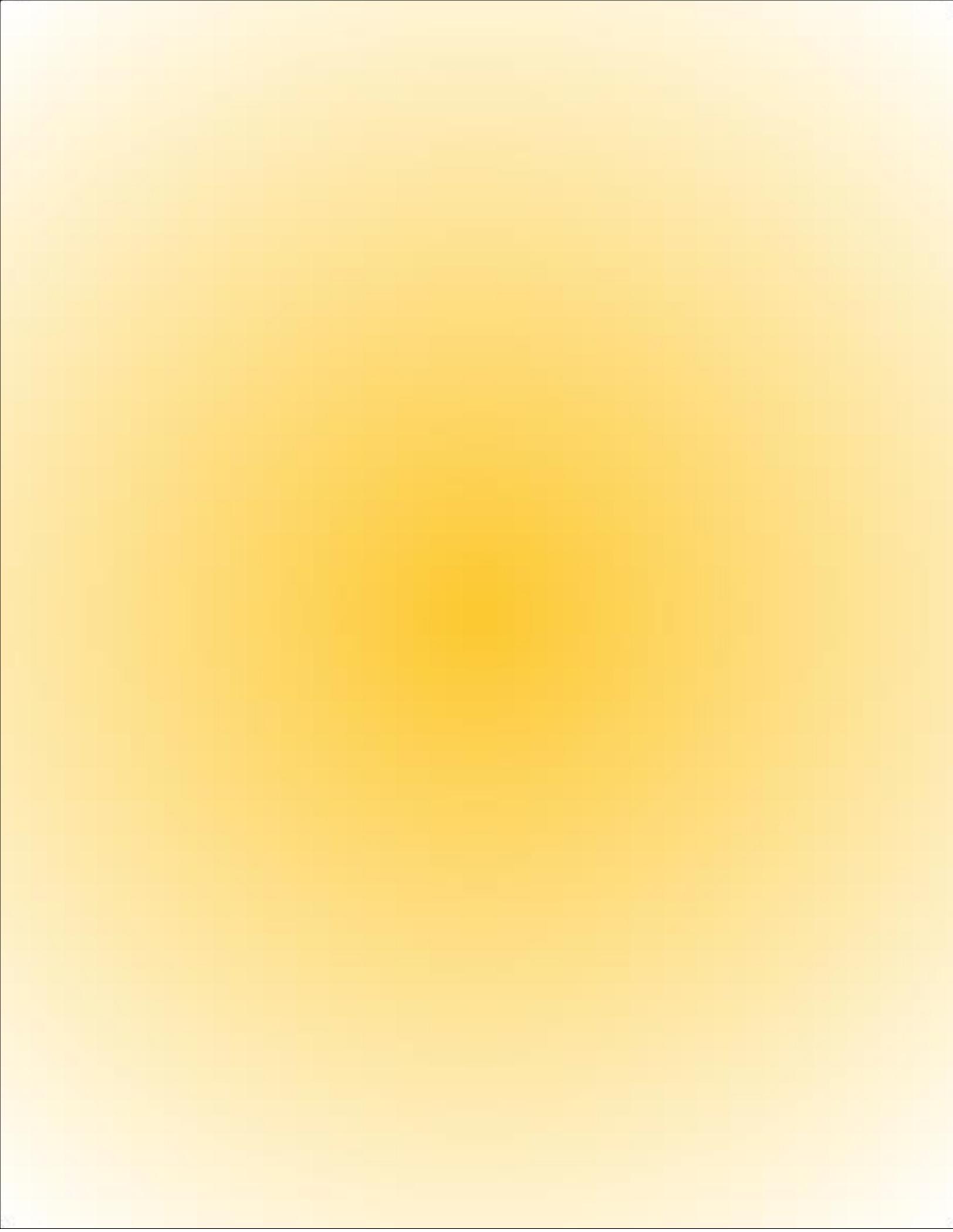
If you have any questions about Veggie & Fruit Month, please do not hesitate to contact me. Together, we can help to set every child on a path to success physically, socially, and academically!

Kindest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kristina".

Kristina Smith  
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# About the Healthy Kids Community Challenge

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The Healthy Kids Community Challenge is now focusing on the third theme, *Choose to Boost Veggies and Fruit*. This theme encourages kids and families to reach for more vegetables and fruit. Veggie and Fruit Month is a key component of our Healthy Kids Community Challenge *Choose to Boost Veggies and Fruit* action plan.

Hastings and Prince Edward Counties are among 45 regions across Ontario taking part in the Healthy Kids Community Challenge (“The Challenge”). The Challenge unites communities in a collective effort to support the health and well-being of our children.

The Challenge is a key part of Ontario’s Healthy Kids Strategy, which is a cross-government initiative to support children’s health. Over a three-year period, provincial funding up to \$375,000 annually will be provided to Hastings and Prince Edward Counties to promote children’s health through physical activity, healthy eating, and other healthy habits.

About every nine months, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care will launch a new theme for The Challenge related to physical activity or healthy eating. Themes will guide the development of local programs, policies, and initiatives that promote and enable healthy habits.

# Veggie & Fruit Month Key Messages

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## Why choose Vegetables and Fruit?

Vegetables and fruit help provide children and families with the vitamins, minerals, dietary fibre, and overall energy needed to be physically active and play. Canada's Food Guide recommends at least five servings of vegetables and fruit for kids every day. Most children are not meeting this goal. Kids get about 27% of their daily calories through snacks – food eaten outside of breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Snack time can thus be a key opportunity to encourage healthy choices, such as vegetables and fruit. Encourage kids to have vegetables or fruit with every meal and snack to help meet the recommended daily servings.



Kids need to eat a variety of both vegetables and fruit of many different colours to ensure they are getting sufficient nutrients. And remember to encourage kids to choose whole vegetables and fruit instead of juice because they get more fibre and less sugar.

## How can schools help to promote vegetables and fruit?

Here are some suggestions on how to promote vegetables and fruit throughout the school day with your students.

- Encourage healthy classroom celebrations that include vegetable and fruit options if food is being served.
- Use vegetables, fruit, or non-food items for classroom rewards for students instead of sugary snacks.
- Use vegetables and fruit as teaching tools as an opportunity to introduce kids to different vegetables and fruit. For example, in math class have students count vegetables or fruit or cut vegetables and fruits into fractions.
- Consider fundraising with vegetables and fruit or non-food options instead of less healthy foods like chocolate bars. (See “Fresh from the Farm” below)
- Incorporate gardening and food skills into your lesson plans.

## Additional Resources for Promoting Vegetables and Fruit

- [BrightBites](#) - This non-profit project allows teams to earn badges for transforming the nutrition environment at their school – one bite at a time.
- [Fresh from the Farm](#) – A healthy alternative to traditional fundraising; schools can earn funds by selling Ontario-grown vegetables and fruit.

# Veggie & Fruit Month Timeline Summary

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Below is a summary of important dates leading up to and during Veggie & Fruit Month. Please see further details outlined in the rest of this package.

## September 18 to 22

- Registration deadline (September 18) for the professional development day, [Choose to Boost Nutrition in Schools](#).

## September 25 to 29:

- Distribute the Veggie & Fruit Month Teacher's Guide and Classroom Activity Package to teachers at your school.
- School Champions who have registered will attend the [Choose to Boost Nutrition in Schools](#) professional development day on September 27<sup>th</sup>.

## October 2 to 6:

- Week 1 – Why Choose to Boost Veggies and Fruit?
- Week 1 announcement and classroom activity.
- You are encouraged to host your school's Veggie and Fruit Month Launch Party this week.
- Giveaways for students which will include a Healthy Kids Community Challenge lunch bag, healthy snack item and flyer. These will be delivered to schools this week. Please ensure the healthy snack item is shared with students the same day as delivery if possible or the next day.

## October 10 to 13:

- Week 2 – How to Boost your Veggies and Fruit.
- Week 2 announcement and classroom activity.

## October 16 to 20:

- Week 3 – Where do Veggies and Fruit Come From?
- Week 3 announcement and classroom activity.

## October 23 to 27:

- Week 4 – What Influences our Veggie and Fruit Choices?
- Week 4 announcement and classroom activity.

## October 30 - 31:

- Week 5 – Continue to Boost Veggies and Fruit!
- Week 5 announcement and classroom activity.

# Pledge Package Components & Distribution Instructions

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Your school will be receiving the following Pledge Package items to use during Veggie & Fruit Month:

- Veggie & Fruit Month posters for your school
- *Choose to Boost Veggies and Fruit* posters for your school
- Healthy Kids Community Challenge lunch bags for all students in your school
- *Choose to Boost Veggies and Fruit* and Good Food Box promotion flyer for every student in your school
- Healthy snack item for all the students in your school

All items are scheduled to be delivered together in the first week of October. Please be prepared to accept the delivery when it arrives.

## Posters

Your school will receive the following posters:

- 4 medium Veggie & Fruit Month Posters.
- 2 medium [Choose to Boost Veggies and Fruit Posters \(version 1\)](#).
- 2 medium [Choose to Boost Veggies and Fruit Posters \(version 2\)](#).

Please hang these posters in highly-trafficked locations. The *Choose to Boost Veggies and Fruit* posters can stay up throughout the school year. The Veggie & Fruit Month Posters can be taken down in November once Veggie & Fruit month has ended.

## HKCC Lunch Bags, Healthy Snack Item and Flyer

**Each student at your school** will receive a HKCC lunch bag, a healthy snack item and a *Choose to Boost Veggies and Fruit* flyer. Please be prepared to accept this delivery and enjoy handing out the free items to your students! Use a method that works best for your school (e.g. leadership students organizing materials and distribution, student or teacher collect number of each item needed for their classroom, an assembly line for classes to walk through with each student picking up their own lunch bag, snack item and flyer, etc.). Please ensure the healthy snack item is shared with students the same day as delivery if possible or the next day.

Please note that the lunch bags are all the same colour, it is recommended that students write their name on their lunch bag in permanent marker or attach a name tag to distinguish their lunch bag from others.

# Veggie & Fruit Month Launch Party Instructions

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October is Veggie and Fruit Month! In order to start things off, we are asking that all participating schools host a Veggie & Fruit Month Launch Party in the first week (October 2 to 6) or second week (October 10 to 13) of October. You may choose to host one large assembly or several smaller assemblies depending on the size of your school. This assembly can either be a short stand-alone event, or it can be included in an existing monthly assembly – it is up to you to select what works best for your school.



Your school's Veggie & Fruit Month Launch Party should contain the components detailed below.

## Veggie and Fruit Month Launch Party Video

Please start off the assembly by showing this short *Choose to Boost Veggies and Fruit* Launch Party Video, which will be available on the [Healthy Kids HPE YouTube Page](#) at the start of October. The video provides an overview about why it is important to eat vegetables and fruit and gives examples of what vegetables and fruit to eat and how much. These key messages will be re-enforced throughout the duration of Veggie and Fruit Month through the classroom activities outlined in the teacher's package.

## School Champion Presentation

Following the Launch Party video, please have your designated Healthy Kids School Champion (or School Principal) give a brief (5 to 10 minute) presentation on what your school has planned during Veggie & Fruit Month. The Launch Party Video does not go into details about Veggie & Fruit Month, so this is your chance to let kids know what to expect! Please use the presentation found on our [website](#) and suggested speaking notes as guides to help structure your presentation.

# The Great Big Crunch

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As part of Veggie and Fruit month we encourage schools to organize The Great Big Crunch. This can be part of your launch party or can be done in each classroom at any time during Veggie and Fruit month. The Great Big Crunch is a fun activity to celebrate healthy snacking and ends with a synchronized “crunch”! Choose crunchy fresh produce such as apples, carrots, cucumbers or items from a veggie tray. Don’t forget to count everyone down so you get the loudest crunch you can.



FoodShare offers a number of [Great Big Crunch activities](#) you can download to use in your classroom.

Share your experience online with other “crunchers” by using #greatbigcrunch.

# October Newsletter Insert

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Please consider putting this newsletter insert into your school's October Issue. Feel free to make any additions or changes to customize this message for your school. You may also include the provided picture should you wish.

## October is Veggie and Fruit Month at *[your school's name]*!



As part of the Healthy Kids Community Challenge in Hastings and Prince Edward Counties, our school has taken a Healthy Kids School Pledge. Our Veggie and Fruit month celebrations will include a launch party and activities to learn more about the benefits of vegetables and fruit. We will also be organizing a “Great Big Crunch” – an event where students take a bite of crunchy fresh produce at the same time to celebrate healthy snacking. Each student has also been given [or will soon receive] a reusable lunch bag and a fresh healthy snack item.

This month is a great time to start boosting veggies and fruit. Did you know that kids need 5 servings of vegetables and fruit each day? Here are some tips to make sure they get enough:

- Try offering vegetables and fruit at every meal and snack.
- Choose canned or frozen vegetables and fruit made with little or no added salt, sugar, or fat
- Whole vegetables and fruit are a healthier choice than juice – offer these more often!
- Include your child in planning meals and picking out new vegetables and fruit they would like to try.
- Offer vegetables and fruit without pressure and let your child decide whether and how much to eat.

- Keep trying! Kids may need to taste a new vegetable or fruit many times before they like it
- Aim for a variety of vegetables and fruit each day.
- Be a role model! Fill half of your plate with vegetables at meals and try new veggies and fruit with your child.

Vegetables and fruit are full of nutrients that keep kids healthy and give them the energy to play. Let's all Choose to Boost Veggies and Fruit!

## **Additional Resources**

[BrightBites Newsletter Inserts](#) – These sample newsletter inserts feature other nutrition-related topics including superfoods, picky eating, and organic foods.

# PA Announcements

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Please use the following PA announcements as a guide to help promote Veggie & Fruit month at your school. Feel free to make any additions or changes to customize these messages for your students.

## Week 1 - October 2 to 6

October is Veggie and Fruit Month at [your school's name]! As part of the Healthy Kids Community Challenge Healthy Kids School Pledge to promote vegetables and fruit, we will be holding a launch party on [fill in date and time] that you are all invited to! We will also have classroom activities throughout the month. We're counting on you to help make this month a success, so let's all Choose to Boost Veggies and Fruit!



## Week 2 – October 9 to 13

Did you know that whole fruit is a better choice than juice? Even though the sugar in juice is natural, it can have just as much or even more sugar than pop! Whole fruit is lower in sugar and has fibre, which our bodies need every day. Choose whole fruit more often than juice - why not try a crunchy apple, a tasty plum, or a ripe pear? Let's all Choose to Boost Veggies and Fruit!

## Week 3 – October 16 to 20

Did you know that some foods we call vegetables are actually fruit? Cucumbers, peppers, pumpkins, squash, and tomatoes all contain seeds, which means they are fruit! Whatever you want to call them, they taste great and have lots of vitamins, minerals, and fibre. Let's all Choose to Boost Veggies and Fruit!

## Week 4 – October 23 to 27

It's almost the end of Veggie and Fruit month – have you tried any new ones? If you haven't, it's not too late to start! Kids need 5 servings of vegetables and fruit each day to stay healthy and strong. Let's all Choose to Boost Veggies and Fruit!

## **Week 5 – October 30 to 31**

**Announcement:** Although Veggie and Fruit Month has come to an end, let's all continue to Boost Veggies and Fruit! What spooky Halloween veggie and fruit creations can your class come up with? We hope you enjoyed Veggie and Fruit month and enjoy your classroom celebrations!

## **Additional Resources**

[BrightBites PA Announcements](#) – These sample announcements are arranged by month and can be used throughout the school year.

# Veggie & Fruit Month Classroom Activities

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In order to make Veggie & Fruit Month a success, we are asking that teachers at your school include one Veggie & Fruit Month classroom activity into their weekly lesson plans during the month of October. In order to support teachers in doing this, we have created a Veggie & Fruit Month Teacher's Guide and Classroom Activity Package. This package contains key messages, activity ideas, teacher prompts, curriculum connections, and resources to help teachers in planning and executing Veggie & Fruit Month classroom activities. It is meant to act as a guide to initiate conversations with students about the importance of eating vegetables and fruit every day and to increase their knowledge of healthy eating. Teachers are welcome to adapt these activities to best suit their students' needs and learning environments.

Please share this Veggie & Fruit Month Teacher's Guide and Classroom Activity Package with educators at your school and encourage them to integrate these activities into their weekly lesson plans during October.

The Veggie & Fruit Month Teacher's Guide and Classroom Activity Package will be available on our [website](#).

## Contact Information

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Should you have any questions about Veggie & Fruit Month execution, please contact:

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