

# SWEET PEPPERS

Educator | VermontHarvestoftheMonth.org

Harvest of the Month provides resources for the cafeteria, classroom, and community to promote the use of local, seasonal foods.

## Varieties

There are dozens of varieties of sweet peppers. The most common are: red, yellow, and green bell peppers, purple peppers, and lunchbox peppers.

## Benefits

Red and green peppers are an excellent source of vitamin C and vitamin A and a good source of potassium. They also contain vitamin B6 and folic acid.

## History of Peppers

Peppers are native to Central and South America. They are among the first plants to be cultivated there. Pepper seeds dating back to 5000 B.C. have been discovered in Mexico. After explorers from Portugal & Spain made their way to the Americas, they helped spread peppers to other parts of the globe. Because the pepper plant is very adaptable, many different areas of the world started to cultivate them.

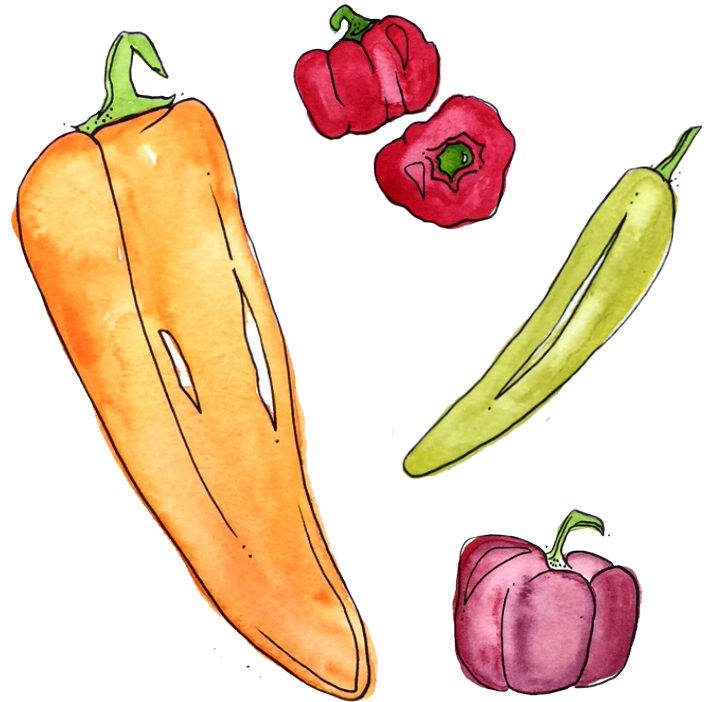
## Fun Facts

- Red and yellow peppers are just green peppers that have been left on the plant to ripen for longer.
- Yellow & red peppers have among the highest levels of vitamin C out of all fruits and vegetables.

## Reading Corner

### Children's Books

» *A Fruit is a Suitcase for Seeds*, by Jean Richards



## CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS

### Math

Assume a bell pepper plant is able to produce 10 bell peppers this growing season. If the bell peppers are harvested when they are green, the farmer will harvest 100% of her peppers. Green bell peppers will sell at the market for \$2.00 per lb. If the farmer waits 2 more weeks to harvest, the peppers will ripen further to become red bell peppers but she will lose 20% of her crop due to pest damage. Red bell peppers will sell at the market for \$4.00 per lb. Each pepper weighs 0.5 lb, regardless of color. Will the farmer make a greater profit if she sells the peppers after they turn red?

### Math

Dissect 1 bell pepper and show the students the pepper seeds. Count or estimate the number of seeds. If all of the seeds are planted and 70% of the seeds germinate (sprout) and grow to maturity, how many pepper plants do you have? If each pepper plant produces 10 peppers, how many peppers have you grown?