Legume ID and Beads

Fiber Activity

Objectives:

1. Explore the variety of legumes available to eat.
2. Review roles and benefits of fiber for the body.

Age:

10 years and older.

Length:

Approximately 20 to 30 minutes.

Supplies and Materials:

1. Variety of dried legumes. Legumes are plants that have pods with tidy rows of seeds inside including beans, peas, lentils, and peanuts. Soak overnight to soften. To avoid wasting food, try to use beans that are not intended for sale. Contact a bean elevator or a plant to see if they have beans that have been sorted as unsellable (cull beans). Cull beans can be especially interesting in shape and size (shriveled, cracked, different color, deformed). Another option is to contact the local grocery store for dried beans that are past their “sell by” date.

2. Display showing legumes (dried peas, lentils and beans) using index cards to identify each one. Some varieties of dried beans include: navy, chili, lima, black, butter, Great Northern, kidney, and pinto.

3. Thin elastic cording.

4. Sewing needles with eyes large enough to thread the elastic cording.

5. Legume Labels to record legumes used in each bracelet.

6. Pencils.

Special Considerations:

Smaller Hands: Some participants may have difficulty pushing the needle through the beans. You can boil the beans to make them softer or have another participant help out. Due to the safety issues with the needles, for young participants you may utilize older youth or adult helpers to thread the beans while the participant selects the types of legumes and the pattern for the bracelet.
Activity Directions:

1. Share information about fiber in food and how it helps the body. A suggested script follows:

   Fiber, or roughage, is plant material that your body cannot digest. It picks up water in your intestines, like a sponge, and carries it through your system. This helps move food through your digestive tract.

   We get fiber from many foods including fruits, vegetables, and whole grain breads and cereals. Legumes are another great source of fiber. They are plants that have pods with tiny rows of seeds. Common legumes are beans, lentils, and peas.

2. Have a display with the various types of beans, peas, and lentils. Point out and name the different legumes. Mention some common foods we eat with legumes such as burritos, chili, and soup.

3. Have each person make a bracelet using the legumes as beads. They will need a needle, piece of elastic cording and a variety of beans. Allot a set amount of time for this activity. When time is up, have participants stop and tie their bracelets. The legumes will need to dry overnight before wearing the bracelet.

4. On their Legume Labels, have participants write down the legumes in their bracelets. They can take this home with the bracelet to tell others the types of legumes they used.

Take Home Tidbit
Participants will take home their bracelets and Legume Labels.

Sources:

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