



Serving up Salsa

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For many families, one of the joys of summer is tending a garden. If you have a garden, consider planting basic salsa ingredients: tomatoes, peppers, onions, and cilantro. Even if you do not have the space for a garden, a container garden is a great option. You can start plants in pots inside and move them outside when the weather permits.

Salsa is simple to prepare and can include many different fruits and vegetables depending on what you have on hand or what you are craving. Gardening can teach children about where food comes from. Have them help prepare the foods from the garden and it will increase the chances that they will try different fruits and vegetables. Making salsa is also something that children of all ages can help with. Age appropriate kitchen tasks related to making salsa include:

At 2 years:

- Pick produce out of the garden
- Rinse fruits and vegetables

At 3 years (items mentioned above, plus):

- Add ingredients
- Talk about cooking
- Name and count foods

At 4 years (items mentioned above, plus):

- Help measure ingredients

At 5 years (items mentioned above, plus):

- Cut soft fruits and vegetables with a dull knife

At 6-8 years (items mentioned above, plus):

- Wash dishes
- Put away ingredients
- Light chopping of fruits and vegetables

At 9-12 years (items mentioned above, plus):

- Follow a recipe
- Use small appliances like blenders and mini-choppers

Fresh Salsa

4 cups fresh tomatoes, chopped, washed
¼ cup finely chopped onion, washed
1 jalapeno, seeded and chopped
1 tablespoon vinegar or lime juice
1 teaspoon cumin
1 teaspoon minced garlic
1 teaspoon salt, optional



1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. In a medium bowl, combine all ingredients and mix well. For better flavor, let the ingredients stand in the refrigerator for at least one hour.
3. Refrigerate until ready to eat.
4. Serve with veggies, tortilla chips, quesadillas, or on a salad or baked potato.

Makes 14 servings. Each serving contains 13 calories, .6 g protein, 0 g fat, 3.3 mg sodium, 3 g carbohydrate, .7 g fiber.

For more information check out Food Fun for Young Children at <http://go.unl.edu/chi>