Objectives
Participant will:
1. Explain a health benefit provided by watermelon.
2. Describe cost- and time-effective strategies for incorporating watermelon into family meals.
3. Explain how to select watermelon.
4. Describe preparation and storage techniques for watermelon, including cleaning, trimming, cooking, and storing.
5. Prepare and taste food that includes watermelon.

Required Materials:
- Recipe ingredients and utensils for demonstrations.
- Lesson handouts (see pgs. 5-6).
- Required paperwork for program.

Optional Supplemental Materials:
- Watermelon in various forms such as fresh, frozen, and juiced.

Preparation Required:
- Practice lesson material so you are comfortable giving lesson.
- Practice recipes for demonstrations and understand recipe instructions and techniques (see pgs. 5-6).
- Gather ingredients and utensils needed for lesson and demonstration.
- Pre chop fruits and vegetables needed for each demo.
- Make copies of handouts – enough for all class participants.
- Make copies of paperwork required by program.
LESSON PLAN

Introduction:
Time: 2-3 minutes
- Welcome the class and thank them for making time to come.
- Briefly introduce yourself and the program.
- **Ask the class:** What is a common picnic fruit used by children who participate in seed spitting contests?
  - Watermelon!
- In this lesson we will be talking about watermelon. This fruit is 97% water, yet provides us with essential nutrients such as vitamin C, potassium, vitamin A, and lycopene.
- Technically, watermelon is considered a vegetable and is member of the gourd family but people call it a fruit because of its sweet taste.
- Watermelon originated in Africa where the region is dry and the temperature is hot. People used it for a source of water because of its high water content. It was first introduced to the United States by slaves in the 1600’s. Native Americans in Florida were also growing watermelon around this time.
- Today, there are more than 1200 different kinds of watermelon grown in the United States.

Objective 1: Explain a health benefit provided by watermelon.
Time: 2-3 minutes
- **Ask the class:** Does anyone know what is in watermelon that makes it a healthy food choice?
  - Vitamin C – an antioxidant that is needed to stop free radicals from doing harm in our bodies. Free radicals form in our bodies from activities that we do every day like being out in the sun or breathing air with pollution. They promote aging and disease.
  - Vitamin A – a nutrient that boosts the immune system, improves cell growth, increases eye health, and helps fight off a variety of diseases and cancers.
  - Potassium – Getting enough potassium helps reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, cancers, and more.
  - Lycopene- Research has shown that lycopene helps reduce the risk of certain cancers and heart disease.
  - Watermelon is also a great snack because it’s so low in calories. Due to the high water content, watermelon is a very filling snack.

Objective 2: Describe cost- and time-effective strategies for incorporating watermelon into family meals.
Time: 1-2 minutes
- Watermelon can easily be made into juice by using a regular blender. After it’s made into juice, it can easily be made into ice cubes for a punch!
- Watermelon is perfect for fruit kabobs with other melons or berries.
- Watermelon is always a refreshing topping for salad with a vinaigrette dressing.
- Grilling watermelon with some simple seasonings can be a nice and healthy dessert option.
- If you get a seeded watermelon, you can season and toast the seeds just like pumpkin seeds!
- **Ask the class:** How do you incorporate watermelon into family meals? How do you prepare it?

Objective 3: Explain how to select watermelon.
Time: 2-3 minutes
- Watermelon can be found in many grocery stores throughout the year although the cheapest times to buy them are from July through September.
• **Ask the class:** Does anyone have any tips on how to select fresh and ripe watermelon at the store?
  o As the watermelon gets ripe, the white spot that was formed when it was growing on the ground will start turning yellow. When this happens, the watermelon is maturing and indicates that it’s ready to eat.
  o Another indicator that a watermelon is ready to eat is if the stem is brown and dry.
  o A trick for determining whether or not a watermelon is ripe is to hold the melon with one hand and hit it with your other hand. If the watermelon makes a hollow type sound, you have found a mature watermelon that is ready to eat.
  o Always chose a watermelon that is heavy for its size. This means that it is juicy and full of flavor.
  o Purchasing whole watermelon will be significantly cheaper than buying pre-cut watermelon.

### Objective 4: Describe preparation and storage techniques for watermelon, including cleaning, trimming, cooking, and storing.

**Time:** 5 minutes

- Besides the great taste and health benefits, watermelon is a filling treat.
- Once you bring your ripe watermelon home from the store you need to think about properly storing it.
- **Ask the Class:** Does anyone know the ideal way to store watermelon?
  o Ripe watermelon should be cut up and refrigerated right away. If you purchase a watermelon that is not yet ripe, you can allow it to sit on the counter for a few days for it to ripen.
  o Wash the watermelon before cutting it up. When cutting up a watermelon, make sure you have a sturdy cutting board and a sharp knife. First, cut the ends off of the watermelon. Next, stand the watermelon on one of the cut ends (it should be nice and flat so the watermelon should not move when you’re cutting) and slice the watermelon through the center. Now, take one piece of the watermelon and lay it on the cutting board with the flat side down. Follow the cuts that are already made from cutting off the ends of the watermelon. Cut the watermelon into 1 inch strips. You can cut each piece in half one more time for easy eating off the rind, or you can choose to cut off the rind and chop the watermelon in smaller pieces (about 1 inch).
  o After the watermelon is cut, put it in a covered container and put it in the fridge.
  o Ripe watermelon can be cut into 1 inch pieces and frozen, but the taste and texture will change.
- **Ask the Class:** Has anyone ever tried freezing watermelon?
  o Follow the instructions above to cut the watermelon into 1 inch pieces. Place the watermelon pieces on a cookie sheet. Place it in the freezer for a few hours to freeze. Then you can take the cookie sheet out and put all the watermelon in a Ziploc bag. Make sure to label and date the bag.
  o Frozen watermelon works great for baking muffins and making a frozen slush.

### Objective 5: Prepare and taste food that includes watermelon.

**Time:** 20 minutes

- **Ask the class:** Is there anyone in the class who hasn’t had fresh watermelon before? Today we will learn a few quick and easy watermelon recipes that are easy to fit into your family’s meals.
- This recipe works great for a side or an appetizer for any meal. *Demonstrate Sweet Watermelon Salad (see recipe pg. 5).*
- An easy and delicious way to include watermelon in any meal is by making a fruit kabob. *Watermelon Kabobs (see recipe pg. 5).*
Salsa is a great snack, especially when it uses watermelon. Demonstrate Tomato and Watermelon Salsa (see recipe pg. 6).
This soup can be served as a main dish, an appetizer, or even a dessert. Demonstrate Watermelon Soup (see recipe page 6).
Watermelon makes great drinks for kids or adults and can go with any meal. Demonstrate Watermelon Slushy (see recipe pg. 6).

Conclusion
Time: 2-3 minutes

• **Ask the class**: Would anyone like to share a favorite way to use watermelon that we didn’t cover in class today?
• **Ask the class**: What did you learn today that you didn’t know about watermelon before taking this class?
• **Ask the class**: What will you do to make watermelon a part of your families’ diet now that you have had this lesson?
• **Ask the class**: Are there any questions?
• Thank you for attending.

Serve samples.

References:

This material was funded by USDA’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – SNAP. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact 1-800-221-5689 or visit online at [http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/](http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/). In accordance with Federal Law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, political beliefs or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800)795-3572.
Watermelon Salad

1/4 cup pineapple juice  2 teaspoons salt
2 tablespoons honey     1 1/2 teaspoons ground ginger
1/4 cup lime juice      1 (5-pound) watermelon

In a small bowl, mix together the pineapple juice, honey, lime juice, salt and ginger. Cut the watermelon into 1 inch chunks (remove the seeds if using a seeded watermelon) and put in a large bowl. Drizzle mixture over the watermelon. Chill or serve immediately.
Yield: 4 servings

Did you know?
Watermelons are loaded with antioxidants needed to stop free radicals from promoting aging and disease.
They also contain vitamin A, another powerful nutrient that also helps us have healthy skin and proper vision.
Did we mention it’s also a great source of vitamin C, vitamin B6, vitamin B1, and manganese?

Watermelon Kabobs

1/2 small seedless watermelon, rind removed, cut into 1 inch pieces
1 pound large seedless green grapes, rinsed and removed from stems
1 pint blueberries
1 lime
15 wooden skewers

Cover a baking sheet with plastic wrap. Skewer pieces of fruit, alternating the kinds. Arrange the skewers on the baking sheet. Squeeze the lime juice over each skewer of fruit and serve.

HINT: If you think the lime will be too sour for your preference, mix the lime juice with a tablespoon of sugar and brush onto kabobs.
HINT: If you don’t have wooden skewers, just put all the fruit in a large bowl and drizzle the lime juice on top.
Yield: 6 servings

HINT: You can use any combination of fruit in this recipe. Try adding pineapple, mangoes, melons, apples or pears for a different taste and fun twist.

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## Tomato and Watermelon Salsa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredient</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seeded watermelon</td>
<td>5 cups (¾ inch)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomatoes</td>
<td>1 ½ pounds ripe, cut into ¾ inch cubed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td>1 teaspoon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt</td>
<td>½ teaspoon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red onion</td>
<td>1 small red onion, quartered and thinly sliced</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red wine vinegar</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra virgin olive oil</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romaine lettuce</td>
<td>leaves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Combine the tomatoes and watermelon in a large bowl and sprinkle with sugar and salt. Let stand for 15 minutes. Stir in the red onion, red wine vinegar, and olive oil. Cover and chill until serving. Scoop up salsa and place in the middle of the lettuce leaf. Wrap the lettuce and eat!

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### Cut up watermelon should be stored in a covered container in the refrigerator where it will keep for 3-4 days.

## Watermelon Soup

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredient</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seedless watermelon</td>
<td>1 (7-8 lb) cut into 1 inch pieces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek yogurt</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemon juice</td>
<td>Juice from ½</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ginger</td>
<td>1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutmeg</td>
<td>Dash of ground</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mint leaves</td>
<td>5-6 mint leaves, chopped (optional)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Add all ingredients to the blender and blend until smooth. Refrigerate (at least 2 hours) and serve chilled.

Yield: 4 servings

## Watermelon Slushy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredient</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seedless watermelon</td>
<td>8 cups cubed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lime juice</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soda</td>
<td>1-2 cups diet lemon-lime</td>
<td>chilled (amount varies depending on how juicy the watermelon is)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Add all ingredients to the blender and blend until smooth. Pour into a freezer proof container. Put in freezer for 30 minutes or until slushy begins to freeze. Stir the slushy and return it to the freezer. Freeze for approximately 60 additional minutes, stirring occasionally. Spoon ¾ cup into bowls for serving. Add additional soda if needed.

Yield: 4 servings

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### How About That!

Every part of a watermelon is edible. Most commonly eaten is the flesh of the melon, although the seeds can be roasted and the rind can be canned. Remember to wash the outside of the watermelon before cutting into it.

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