

# Experiential Activities Grades 3-5



## Cleaning and Storing Blueberries!

After you pick up your blueberries from your local Farmer's Market, or after you pick them yourself at a Pick-Your-Own farm, you may be wondering "what do I do with these berries?" Read below to learn about cleaning and storing your nutritious, yummy berries!

### Cleaning

Picking blueberries is the fun part! But before eating, baking or freezing them, you need to make sure that all the blueberries are clean. This part is not as much fun, and can be time consuming depending on the amount of blueberries you have picked. Check out the "trick" to get the blueberries the cleanest without damaging them.

1. Pour a small amount of berries into a colander.
2. Set the colander in a clean bowl of water. Move the colander up and down, swishing them around a bit. While the blueberries are floating, run your hands through them to pick out all the stems and bad blueberries. Rinse.
3. Gently spread the wet blueberries on a towel in a single layer.
4. Let them dry completely, if you are going to freeze them – otherwise, grab a handful and enjoy!



### Storing

- Store *fresh berries* in the refrigerator for up to five days. If your berries have some red on them, ripen on the counter, out of the sun, for up to 24 hours before refrigerating. They will ripen fully.
- Berries can be stored *frozen* at 20 degrees F for up to one year. After washing as described above, put in a plastic bag and place in the freezer. You can freeze all berries, except raspberries and tayberries, which should be eaten fresh, or frozen without washing, as the berries are quite soft.

\* The natural wax on the berries helps keep them fresh, but will be removed when washed, so washing should be done just prior to eating.

Adapted from: <https://theeducatorsspinonit.com/2012/05/30-ways-to-eat-blueberries.html> and <http://www.bryantblueberries.com/recipes-health/cleaning-storing/>



## FARMERS MARKET SCAVENGER HUNT

\*Go to <https://www.ams.usda.gov/local-food-directories/farmersmarkets> to find a Farmers Market near you, ask an adult to take you there and don't forget this scavenger hunt list (or as an alternative, go to the produce section of your local grocery if no farmers market exists in your town)! Write your findings after each question (don't be afraid to ask a farmer, or produce worker, for help) and share what you've discovered with your family and friends!

1. Find one yellow **fruit** and one yellow **vegetable**, write their names here:
2. Ask three farmers how many miles they had to travel to get to the market. Ask them how long it took them to get there and what time they got up that morning.
3. Name one fruit or vegetable that comes in many different varieties. Name the fruit/vegetable and varieties below:
4. Find and name something sold in a jar:
5. Find and write your favorite fruit or vegetable:
6. Find and name three green vegetables:
7. Find and name a vegetable that grows underground:
8. List how many different kinds of berries you find there:
9. How many different colors of peppers are sold there?
10. Ask a farmer what his or her favorite thing to grow is, and why:
11. Can you find a fruit or vegetable that you've never heard of before?
12. Find and name something that grows on a vine:
13. Try any free samples and write your favorite here:
14. Find two stands that sell strawberries. Are the prices different?  
How and why might they be different?
15. Find a green food that you have not tasted before, list it here:



The badge is a white rectangular card with a red border decorated with yellow dots. It is set against a background of a strawberry field with green leaves, white flowers, and red strawberries. A silver bucket filled with strawberries is visible in the lower right. The text 'Official Strawberry Picker' is written in a large, red, cursive font. Below the title is a horizontal line for a name, with the word 'NAME' printed in red above it.

# Official Strawberry Picker

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

To learn more about strawberries or obtain  
more copies of this booklet, visit  
[www.ncstrawberry.com](http://www.ncstrawberry.com)

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### PICK-YOUR-OWN BERRIES!!

Ask an adult to help you find, and visit, a local farm where you can pick your own strawberries, blueberries, or raspberries (<http://www.pickyourown.org/#states>). But before you go, there are some important things you need to do, take, and remember:

1. Call ahead to the farm to make sure the berries are ready to be picked!
2. Go in the early morning or early evening, if possible, as it could get very hot in the berry fields!
3. Don't forget the sunscreen, boots (it might be muddy!), hats (sun could get hot), drinks/snacks, and something to put the berries in! And a camera!
4. Wear old clothing!
5. Use the bathroom before you leave! (there likely will not be any bathrooms at the farm)
6. Watch where you step – you don't want to crush or injure the berry plants.
7. Use both hands when you pick – hold the stem with one hand and grasp and pull off the berry with the other.
8. Ask before you sample – eating while you are picking might not be allowed!
9. Don't pick more than you plan on buying!
10. Tell your parents, or the adult taking you, to bring cash - the farm might not accept credit cards.
11. Bring towels or baby wipes in case you get really messy! Even plastic bags for dirty shoes and a change of shoes/clothing.
12. Bring a wagon or stroller to put the picked berries in (you might have to walk a bit to get back to your car from where you were picking)!
13. Be prepared to have lots of fun, meet bugs, get dirty, and taste yummy fruit as fresh as you will ever get it!

Adapted from: <http://www.frugallivingnw.com/strawberry-picking-with-kids/> and <http://kiddingaroundgreenville.com/picking-your-own-berries.html>



### Refrigerator Strawberry Jam for Kids!

#### What You Need:

- Containers of strawberries
- Sugar
- Heavy saucepan
- Jar with lid
- Stirring spoon

Before making your yummy refrigerator strawberry jam from the berries you picked up at your local Farmers Market or Pick-Your-Own farm,\* spend some time explaining to your children how a strawberry grows. Point out the plant, blossom, white berry, red berry, and then, eventually jam!

- For fun and extra learning, ask younger children to pick out three berries of varying sizes. Can they put them in order from the smallest to the biggest?
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- After the berries have been washed, help younger children with husking them. This is an activity that involves the use of both hands. Encourage them to use their thumb and index finger to pinch and twist the husks, or teach them to use a strawberry huller.
- Finally, make a batch of fresh refrigerator jam! Assist younger children in mashing about a pint of strawberries (2 ½ cups). Put in a heavy saucepan. Add ¾ cups sugar. Cook over medium-high heat, stirring constantly. Bring to a full rolling boil. Continue boiling for two full minutes. Remove from heat and pour into a clean jar. Let the jam cool first before putting on the lid and storing in the refrigerator. Enjoy your homemade jam for up to two weeks!
- If you have plain mailing or address labels at home, let your child draw/color labels for the jars!

\*If you are picking strawberries, show your children how to use both of her hands to pick berries so they do not hurt the plant. They should hold the stem above the berry with one hand, and grasp the berry with the other, then pull gently.

Adapted from: [https://www.education.com/activity/article/Lessons\\_From\\_the\\_Berry\\_Patch/](https://www.education.com/activity/article/Lessons_From_the_Berry_Patch/)

