



# DIRT fresh news

Issue 1

## Strawberries!

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### Greetings Teachers and Parents!

University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) is committed to providing school teachers with nutrition-based education materials by UC Davis researchers. We also provide healthy foods for students to sample.

Teachers and parents are role models, so it's important to taste and experiment with our featured fruits, vegetables and nuts too!

### Strawberry Facts

Strawberries are the first fruit to ripen in the spring. California is the biggest producer in the U.S. that grows them.

A serving of strawberries give more than the daily needed allowance of Vitamin C. Strawberries also contain iron and calcium.

Strawberries are peppered on the outside with seeds that add 3 grams of fiber (12% RDA) to your diet.

### What's Local

Kouei Saechao is a Mien strawberry farmer. His patch is on the corner of Crows Landing and Whitmore in Ceres. Thanks for our strawberries Mr. Saechao!!



To find out more about the Mien, go to [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mien\\_Americanfdf](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mien_Americanfdf)

### Grower's Recipe

#### Strawberry fruit salad with lemon-grass syrup

##### Lemon Grass Syrup

- 1/2 cup Brown Sugar
- 2 Sticks Lemon Grass (bruised)
- 1/2 cup Water
- 2 tsp Lime Juice
- Coconut Cream

##### Fruit Salad

- 1 basket Strawberries (hulled and halved)
- 3 Kiwifruit (peeled and cut into chunks)
- 1/2 Cantaloupe

##### Method

Place sugar, lemon grass and water into a saucepan over medium heat. Stir until sugar is dissolved. Bring to boil and simmer for 5 minutes. Cool syrup to room temperature. Add lime juice and mix well. Combine strawberries, kiwi, and cataloupe. Add lemon grass syrup and toss gently. Serve salas with drizzled coconut cream.

## Who Grows Them?

Read to your Child or Students

You may have seen strawberry fields by the side of the road while riding in your car. Some of these small "farms" are tended by Southeast Asians, many of whom are Hmong. Who are the Hmong?

The Hmong pronounced (hmawng) are a Southeast Asian mountain people

who worked closely with the United States during the war in Vietnam. After the end of the war in 1975, thousands of Hmong escaped from Laos; many settled in the United States. As of 2004, there were approximately 350,000 Hmong in the United States with more than 85,000 in Central California.

The Hmong also grow cherry tomatoes as well as over 100 varieties of Asian

vegetables. These include green beans, long beans, eggplant, bitter melon, *bok choy*, *gia choy*, *daikon*, *dunqua*, *gailon*, lemon grass, *lo bok*, *napa*, *yuchoy*, *bobo* and sugar and sweet peas. Look for these photos on the Internet or in library books and show them to students. What do some of these vegetables look like? You may have to look them up on the Internet to find out.

## Throw Out the Frosted, Sweetened, Sugary, and YES Even Yogurt Covered Cereal!

By Theresa Spezzano, Nutrition, Family & Consumer Sciences Advisor

**Breakfast is the most important meal of the day**, and I'm alarmed at the kids I see eating donuts, Starbucks, and even granola bars.

Foods packed with sugar are like the kindling used to start a fire; it burns quickly with little heat. To make that fire hot and able to last all day "good wood" is needed. Examples include protein, whole grains and fruit.

**I'm a working mom** too, but before I buy anything I read the label. It's important to **know your sugar!** Sugar goes by many names today. If the names on this list are among the first 3

ingredients of a product, **PUT IT BACK!**

*High fructose corn syrup, corn syrup, sucrose (glucose and fructose), maltose, invert sugar, lactulose, lactose, sugar, sugar syrup, brown sugar syrup, evaporated cane juice, honey, maple syrup (Acer saccharum), molasses, jaggary, turbinado sugar are among them.*

**Remember, YOU are in control of what YOU buy and what YOUR child eats.** Limit treats to Grandma's house (after 2 years old). The majority of meals your grade school child eats are at home or at school in most

cases. Plan ahead but make it simple!

On weekends we often have banana pancakes. The banana makes them sweet, and I make a double or triple batch and it in the refrigerator for the week. Then I can just pop them in the toaster for a fun, quick breakfast. Make oatmeal or brown rice ahead of time and heat it up with milk and dried fruit.

Also, **check out your school's breakfast program!**

Most schools have a comprehensive breakfast program. Many are free regardless of income.

### Advisor's Recipe

#### Strawberry Breakfast Pizza

10 refrigerated biscuits  
8 oz. light cream cheese, softened  
3 tsp honey  
1 pint fresh strawberries  
Preheat oven to 400°  
Knead 2 biscuits together, then roll out into 6" circle. Do this for all the biscuits, then prick with a fork.  
Place on ungreased baking sheet. Bake until golden, 6-8 minutes.  
In a small bowl, mix 3 tsp honey with cream cheese. In a large bowl, mix together 3 tsp honey and strawberries.

Spread cream cheese on top of biscuits. Increase oven temperature to 425° and bake until cheese edges brown lightly. (from CSC)



## Teacher's Corner

### Math + Strawberries

Have students count the number of seeds on their strawberry and then come up with an average for the class. The answer should be about 200 seeds!

### Outside

Make 3 strawberry shaped bean bags out of red felt. Dot them with a fine tipped sharpie or if you have more time help the children embroider speckles on it before sewing them together, place a basket on the ground for the children to toss the strawberries into

And / Or

Divide students into two, three or four teams

Line teams up in single file

Give strawberry bag to first student on each team

Position cone about 30 feet

from students. Use whistle as

START cue for first student to run around cone and back to team; students hand the bag to next teammate and repeats until all teammates have run around the cone. Repeat activity as time permits

**Also try:** Having students skip, hop, or run backwards.

**Fun websites to try:**

<http://www.strawberryville.com/>

<http://www.harvestofthemonth.com>

### Local Fun Family Events

**Riverdance Farms**

Pick and Gather; May 30 & 31

For more info go to:

<http://pickandgather.wordpress.com>



### More Fun At Home

**Try the recipes with your kids!!**

#### Strawberry Playdough

1 cup flour  
1 tablespoon vegetable oil  
1 package unsweetened strawberry KoolAid

1/4 cup salt

2 table spoons cream of tartar

1 cup water

Mix flour, salt cream of tartar, in a medium saucepan. Add water and oil. Stir over medium heat 3 to 5 minutes. When mixture forms a ball in pan, remove. Knead until smooth. Store in covered container or bag.

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