



Fruit - What is the difference between fruit and vegetables?

Fact

- The main difference between fruit and vegetables is that fruit have seeds inside and vegetables come from other parts of the plant like the roots, or flowers.
- Oranges, apples, grapes, feijoas, tomatoes, pumpkin and mangos are all fruit because they have seeds inside. Some have lots of tiny seeds and some have just one big one.
- Potatoes, kumara, taro and carrots are vegetables because they're the tubers or the root of the plant.
- Broccoli, cauliflower and brussel sprouts are the flower part of a plant so they're vegetables.
- Lettuces, spinach, bok choy and silver beet are all leaves of a plant so they're veges too.

Do you know

- Plants have sweet, juicy fruit to attract animals which will eat the fruit and distribute the seeds by spitting them out or pooing them out to grow new plants. This helps spread the seed away from the parent plant.
- Another reason is that if the fruit doesn't get eaten it drops off onto the ground when it's ripe and the seed has fresh compost to grow in when the fruit rots under the plant.
- It's been recorded in the history books that lentils, pumpkins and beans were being eaten around 8000 years ago.
- A mushroom isn't a fruit or a vegetable because it's actually a fungi or a type of mould.

Experiments you can do

Next time you're helping to prepare the evening meal think about the vegetables your going to eat. What part of the plant did they come from? Are they the fruit of the plant with all the seeds or are they a root or leaf? Test your family - do they know which part of the plant they are and the difference between a fruit and a vegetable?

Other Investigations

What's your favourite fruit and vegetable? Find out more about them. Which country did they first come from? Can they be grown here in New Zealand or do we have to import them in? Try growing them and see what happens.

Jokes

Why did the tomato go bright red? Because it saw the salad dressing!