

Duration: 90 minutes

Standards:

National Standards for FCS

8.5.7 Prepare various fruits, vegetables, starches, legumes, dairy products, fats, and oils using safe handling and professional preparation techniques.

CT Career and Technical Education Performance Standards

K.35 Describe and demonstrate the process for preparing eggs, grains, and batter products.

Description:

Grains native to our continent include both corn and the lesser known “wild rice.” Not actually related to the more familiar domesticated brown/white rice varieties, this grain can either be hand harvested from the shores or grown commercially. Students will learn about how this grain is produced, as well as the absorption method for cooking grains.

Objectives:

- Describe the ways in which wild rice grows and the ways we harvest it.
 - Utilize the absorption method to cook a grain.
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Vocabulary:

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| ■ Manoomin- the word for wild rice in Ojibwe language meaning “good berry” | ■ Wild Rice - North American plants from the genus <i>Ziziana</i> that grow in the wild near water and have a harvestable grain; not related to domesticated brown/white, but can be cultivated |
| ■ Ojibwe - the most populous tribe throughout the northeastern part of North America and along the Atlantic Coast. Part of the Anishinaabe group | ■ Absorption method - cooking a grain with a specific amount of liquid to be absorbed during cooking |

Materials:

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| ■ Sticky notes | ■ Bowls |
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- Tongs
- Measuring spoons
- Ramekins
- Chef knife
- Cutting board
- Rubber spatula or spoon
- Serving items
- Ingredients for [Sean Sherman's Wild Rice Pilaf](#)

Recipe:

- [Sean Sherman's Wild Rice Pilaf](#)
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Procedure:

1. Give each student a sticky note as they enter the classroom. Write on the board: What comes to mind when you hear "wild rice?" Once students jot down their responses, have them discuss their responses with a partner. Then have students post their notes at the front of the class, and ask for a volunteer to read out responses. Responses may include: wild, natural, away from society, no preservatives or additives.
2. Explain that food companies/marketers know that when we hear the word "wild" sometimes we assume it is out in nature growing naturally. Ask if anyone knows how wild rice grows? Tell the students we will watch two video clips on how wild rice is grown at the end of the lesson. Then we will decide if it should be called "wild rice" or think of a new name. Wild rice needs some time to cook, so the class will need to get that started before watching the videos.
3. Introduce to students the absorption method for cooking rice. We will use a 1:2 ratio, meaning 1 measure of rice and double the liquid. Our goal is for all the liquid to be absorbed into the rice. Sometimes we may have to use our judgment and add more liquid. Note: see your packaging for the ratio/timing they recommend.
4. Explain that before cooking, we should rinse the rice. Ask students: why would we rinse rice when it comes in a clean package? Students may answer that it helps remove debris and remove any extra starch on the outside of the rice - which are both correct answers.
5. Show students a pan that has a heavy bottom and tight fitting lid. Why does the lid need to be tight? - so steam doesn't escape. We want all the liquid going into the rice. Once the timer is done we will turn off the heat and leave the rice alone without removing the cover. After the rice rests we will fluff it with a fork.
6. Ask students: what liquid should we cook the rice in? Some may say water or broth. Both answers are correct, broth would have more flavor and more sodium.

7. Have students start their rice. Once groups have rice ready and cooking, set a timer per group.
8. While students wait for the rice to cook, show:
 - ▶ [Wild Rice Harvesting](#) and ▶ [AgweekTV: Wild rice tradition](#)
 - a. Ask students what they notice and have a quick discussion, making the following points:
 - i. Wild rice is a food source of cultural significance for many indigenous groups.
 - ii. Traditional methods of collection might not be able to feed many people in our food system so farms have created an industrial way for collection.
 - iii. Wild rice is not the same plant as the brown/white rice we might be more familiar with.
 - iv. Wild rice grows both wild and is cultivated. Cultivated wild rice is more likely what you find in a grocery store.
9. Introduce [Sean Sherman's Wild Rice Pilaf](#) recipe to the students and ask for any questions. Remind the students to prep mise en place before they start cooking.
10. Check that students are using their professional knife hold and cutting board is secure, and remind students to clean as they go.
11. Depending on the class, students may eat in class or package to eat next class. Then clean up the kitchen/lab.
12. At the end of class ask students what would they name wild rice? Explain that the Ojibwe term for this crop is *manoomin*, meaning the "good berry." Have them think of how it was grown, how it tastes, the appearance, etc. Depending on time, the class can have a discussion about which name is more marketable/profitable and why?

Assessment(s):

- Formative assessment: Students will write on a sticky note what comes to mind when they hear the term "wild rice."
- Summative assessment: Students will participate in the small group discussion at the end of class where they will consider different names for wild rice, drawing on all they've learned about the crop.

Resources:

- [Sean Sherman's Wild Rice Pilaf](#)
- ▶ [Wild Rice Harvesting](#)
- ▶ [AgweekTV: Wild rice tradition](#)

Extensions:

- [Wild Rice in the CT River](#)
- [The Ojibwe People | Historic Fort Snelling | MNHS](#)
- [Dietary fiber: Essential for a healthy diet](#)
- Introduce Robin Wall Kimmerer's concept of "[The Honorable Harvest](#)." How do the different methods of harvesting wild rice reflect or reject this concept?
- [Who is manoomin? A clash between culture and climate change – Danielle Johnson](#)
- Could do a taste test of the different rices the group investigated.
- Stress that wild rice gives great health benefits as it is much higher in dietary fiber. Explain dietary fiber is in the carbohydrate family and is helpful for our digestive system. Ask students how fiber is classified? Soluble fiber dissolves in water and insoluble doesn't dissolve and adds bulk to our waste. Ask students what are some benefits of a high fiber diet? (answers may vary from; lower cholesterol levels, helps control blood sugar, helps bowel health, and can help with maintaining healthy weight).