



## Harvest of the Month

*Provided by: Tahoe Forest Health System*

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For over fifteen years, Tahoe Forest's *Harvest of the Month* program has been a vital part of our community, reaching thousands of elementary school students each month. The program brings fresh California fruits and vegetables and nutrition education into elementary school classrooms and is supported by over 120 parent volunteers.

Each month, Tahoe Forest Community Health provides TK-5th grade classrooms with a locally sourced fruit or vegetable to explore and taste with their peers. Dedicated classroom volunteers orchestrate interactive tastings and cultivate an engaging learning atmosphere for the students. This year's lineup featured a diverse range of flavors and textures including bell peppers, winter squash, rainbow chard, kale, blood oranges, asparagus, English peas, and cucumbers. The *Harvest of the Month* program supports lifelong healthy habits by:

1. **Increasing Access:** We aim to make fruits and vegetables more approachable and accessible, ensuring that healthy options are within reach for all children in our community.
2. **Building Preferences:** By introducing children to a variety of fresh produce in the classroom through tastings and educational activities, we seek to cultivate a preference for healthy foods from an early age.
3. **Collaborating with Local Farms and Businesses:** We collaborate with Tahoe Food Hub and Produce Plus to bring local California produce to our schools each month. Connecting local growers with the Tahoe/Truckee community provides support to our agricultural industry while establishing students' understanding of where our food comes from.
4. **Promoting Physical Activity:** In addition to nutrition education, we emphasize the importance of physical activity as part of a healthy lifestyle through our *BFit* program.
5. **Expanding Awareness:** By highlighting California-grown produce and local farming, we aim to raise awareness of the benefits of consuming locally sourced foods for children and their families.

*Harvest of the Month* uses education and hands on experiences to foster healthier eating habits and reduce the risk of chronic diseases. As we look ahead, Tahoe Forest remains dedicated to the continued success and growth of this impactful program, ensuring a brighter, healthier future for our community.