

## Prunes, Dates, Raisins-Teaching Points

## Grades K-2



### Reasons to Eat Dried Fruit

- ❖ When you eat dried fruit you are also getting:
  - Vitamin C- helps fight off disease
  - Vitamin A- helps us see in the dark
  - B vitamins work together to help us grow the way we should
  - Fiber – moves food through our bodies
  - Iron – helps prevent you from being tired
  - Calcium – for strong bones

### Just the Facts

- ❖ The dried fruits we will be talking about are dates, figs, plums and raisins.
- ❖ Dates grow on palm trees.
- ❖ We grow date palms in California.
- ❖ The fig is actually an in-side-out flower while the seeds are called drupes. The seeds or drupes are the real fruit.

### Dried Fruit History

- ❖ Have you eaten a green grape? Most likely it was a Thompson Seedless grape. They are grown right in the central San Joaquin Valley where we live. Raisins are made out of Thompson Seedless grapes.
- ❖ People have been eating raisins for thousands of years.

### Eat Your Colors

- ❖ Fruits and vegetables come in a rainbow of colors. Eat lots of colorful fruits and vegetables every day – red, yellow/orange, white, green, and blue/purple.

Color Group	Health Benefits	Examples
Red	Help our heart stay healthy Help us remember	dried apples dried cranberries red currants
Yellow/Orange	Help our heart stay healthy Help our eyes to see in the dark Help fight sickness	golden raisins dried apricots
White/Tan/Brown	Help our heart stay healthy	dates, dried figs
Green	Help our eyes to see Help make strong bones and teeth	dried kiwi dried green apples
Blue/Purple	Help us to remember	dried plums raisins Zante currants dried blueberries



### Home Grown Facts

- ❖ Tulare County is one of the top dried plum producing counties in California.
- ❖ In the United States, almost all raisins are produced in California's Central Valley (mostly in Fresno County).
- ❖ We produce half of the world's supply of raisins.

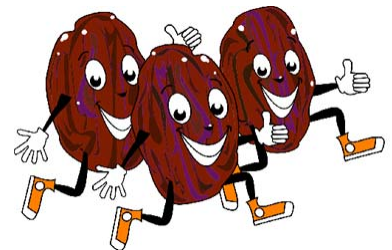
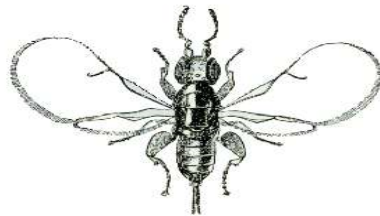
### How Do Fruits Dry?

- ❖ Fruits have water inside them. Fruits become dry when they lose water inside them.
- ❖ Fruit can dry from hanging on the tree or vine.
- ❖ Farmers can make fruit dry too.
- ❖ Farmers in California discovered on accident how to make raisins out of grapes.
- ❖ The weather turned very hot and the grapes lost their water and became dry. The dry, wrinkly grapes tasted good. This gave the farmers an idea.
- ❖ California plums are dried by machines that lower the water inside. Not all plums can be dried. The California plum variety is very special.

### Student Sleuths

- ❖ Dates, dried plums, figs and raisins are all sources of fiber. Fiber helps move food through our bodies.
- ❖ The Calimyrna fig needs pollination for fruit to grow but the pollination does not come from a bee. It comes from a tiny wasp called a *Blastophaga psenes*. It has no stinger and is smaller than a gnat. They are small enough to pass through a sewing needle.

*Blastophaga psenes*



This material was funded by USDA's Food Stamp Program through the California Department of Public Health's *Network for a Healthy California*. These institutions are equal opportunity providers and employers. The Food Stamp Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help buy nutritious foods for a better diet. For information on the Food Stamp Program in Tulare County, call 1-800-834-7121.