



Healthy BLOOMers Harvest Zucchini and Cook Tacos

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The summer sessions of Healthy BLOOMers began this week! Healthy BLOOMers is the Bed-Stuy Campaign Against Hunger's program for children ages 4-11 years, where we utilize our community garden to teach students about eating healthy, being active, and living sustainably. On the first day, the children harvested 24 lbs of zucchini from our urban garden, and used it to make the following recipe for vegan Three Sisters Tacos.

The children learned that the "three sisters" are corn, beans, and squash. This combination derives from Native American farming and eating traditions. The Native Americans utilized a system of "companion planting" where each of these crops benefited from being planted alongside the others: the corn stalks act as poles for the beans to climb, the beans provide the soil with nitrogen, and the squash spreads over the ground to block sunlight and weed growth. The "three sisters" are also some of the healthiest foods to eat together. By combining the whole grain corn with the beans, you get "complete protein", the nutritional equivalent of the protein you get from eating meat!

Ingredients:

Two ears of corn, kernels removed

1 large or 2 small zucchini, chopped

2 cans of beans, rinsed**

¼ cup mild salsa

3-4 medium garlic cloves, minced

2 teaspoons olive oil or vegetable oil

2 teaspoons chili powder

2 teaspoons cumin

Salt, to taste

Corn tortillas

Avocado, sliced

****You can whatever beans you prefer or have available. Feel free to mix and match, too! We made our tacos with a can of kidney beans and a can of blackeyed peas. Black beans and pinto beans would also work well!**

Directions:

Add the oil to a medium pot and sauté the garlic over medium heat until fragrant. Chop the zucchini according to your preference; we found that kids prefer smaller pieces. Add the chopped zucchini to the pot and sauté until the zucchini begins to brown and release some of its liquid, 5-8 minutes. Add the beans, salsa, chili powder, cumin and salt. Cook for another 5-8 minutes, until most of the liquid has cooked off. Add the corn kernels last, so that they stay sweet and a little crisp! Spoon about ¼ cup of taco filling on each tortilla. Top with avocado and a little more salsa. Other optional toppings include lime, chopped cilantro, chopped scallions, and pickled red onions. Customize until you've found your favorite vegan taco variation!

Image (optional):

