



# Seed to Salad: Campaign for Salad

## Overview

Campaign for Salad is a lively, fun, and democratic way to decide what types of greens and veggies will grow in the salad gardens.

Participants determine “candidates” based on certain growing criteria and then create campaign posters, slogans, and speeches in support of their favorites. They will display and share with others who vote to select the “winners” who “represent” salad in your salad gardens. Children then tally and announce the elected representatives.

## Activities & Timing

1. Choosing the Candidates: 1 session (40-60 minutes)
2. Campaign Posters, Slogans, and Speeches: 2-4 sessions (30-60 minutes)
3. Voting: 1 session (30-60 minutes)
4. Tallying the Votes: 1 session (40-60 minutes)

## Materials

- Seed Catalogs
- Paper
- Pencils, colored pencils, markers
- Access to computers and printers
- Masking tape
- Samples of political campaign posters and slogans

## Choosing the Candidates

1. Before you begin, you’ll need scrap paper, pencils, and seed catalogs. Look for seed catalogs with photos to accompany descriptions.

**A Note about Seed Catalogs:** most seed companies are willing to send you several catalogs if they know you are leading a youth or school project—give them a call. Plan ahead, since it can take 2 to 6 weeks for catalogs to arrive.

2. Brainstorm a “criteria list” that outlines the qualities you want in a candidate. Seed catalogs have a wide variety of vegetables, including many not suitable for salad gardens. To weed out tempting corn, watermelon, and tomatoes, it’s important to set some criteria before getting started.

Criteria might include:

*Needs to be able to be sown from seed outdoors.* You’ll want to avoid vegetables that require a head start indoors or in a greenhouse.

*Define days to maturity.* Most seed catalogs list days to maturity or harvest. Depending on where you live, you’ll want to choose veggies you can harvest by mid-June. In Upstate NY we typically say 55 days or less. Lettuces and greens (spinach, chard, etc) will be harvested as baby greens so ignore figures that define harvesting a mature head. You can harvest most lettuces and greens in 55 days or less as baby greens.

3. Brainstorm other relevant criteria with children, such as ease of growing, taste, pest resistance, etc.
4. Individually or in small groups review the seed catalogs and make lists. Depending on the number of participants and catalogs, divide into equal groups and allow ample time (at least 20-30 minutes) to look through the catalogs. Ask children to mark in their catalogs or make lists of the vegetable name, variety, and page number.
5. Share with the group to compile a master list. As children/groups share their finds, create a master list of the vegetable names and varieties.
6. If needed, pare down the list to include 8 or fewer varieties of lettuce and 3 or fewer varieties of other vegetables. If you have too many varieties of a certain vegetable, children can choose which ones to cut. Are two varieties very similar and therefore redundant?

## Posters, Slogans, Speeches

Creating campaign posters, slogans, and speeches is a great way to bring language arts skills into the gardening project. Here, we ask the youth involved to articulate why they think a certain variety should be grown in the salad gardens. They'll need to be convincing, especially if a small group (such as a classroom) is preparing a larger group (like the entire school) for voting.

1. Before you begin, determine what you would like this activity to involve and how much time you have. Are children working in pairs, groups or individually? Are they focusing on one variety or several? Can each youth or group complete a poster, slogan, and a speech, or choose one method?
2. Talk about when voting for the Candidates for Salad will take place and who will be voting. You might share some examples of other campaign materials, perhaps from local campaigns, and discuss what various posters, slogans, and speeches are trying to convey to voters. Brainstorm "good" and "bad" qualities of posters, slogans, and speeches (i.e. simple messages vs. long drawn out speeches, catchy phrases make things easy to remember, words too small on posters, etc.).
3. Allow ample time over at least 2 sessions for youth to work on their campaign pieces. If you have access to computers, encourage children to use simple graphic design programs like Microsoft Publisher to create posters. Samples:

### VOTE FOR FIRECRACKER



the only **RED LETTUCE**  
with **BOOM! POP! & FLASH!**

**Brilliant Red Color!**  
*Beautiful Ruffled Leaves!*

Tasty Too!

Want a Beet that can **STAND UP**  
to others?



Vote Strong! Vote for

**Bull's Blood Beets!**

**TORRO! TORRO! TORRO!**

## Voting

Be creative when setting up your method of voting and ask the youth involved for their input. Think about where voting will take place, how many people will be involved, and how long the voting period lasts. Enlist the youth in your group's help in designing materials and setting things up. Don't know where to start? Here are some examples:

### Ballots

Youth create ballots that reflect the choices and these are passed out to all voters who complete them and turn them in to a ballot box.

### Mural/Sticker Votes

In a main corridor or public place, hang a mural that includes a column for each vegetable variety. Provide each voter with a certain number of dot stickers that they may distribute as they see fit.

### Table Top/Sticker Votes

This follows the same method as the mural/sticker votes but allows smaller posters to be attached to tables rather than a wall.

### Voting Booth

Create a voting booth much like those used for political elections. Allow ample time over the course of a day or days in which youth can enter the booth and place their votes.

### Computer Voting

Involve the youth in your group in creating an online survey to serve as a voting ballot. Check out [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com) or other free sites that help you create online surveys.

**A Note about Young Voters:** if older youth are coordinating the campaign and voting that will involve younger youth, consider including a photo of each vegetable variety along with its name on ballots or other voting methods. We found the addition of photos really helped pre-K, kindergarten, and first grade students feel successful in voting.

## Tallying the Votes

This is a great way to bring math into the project. Tallying methods will depend on the method of voting you chose. Divide your group into two teams who will compile the exact same data. This helps to avoid mistakes.

There are many ways to expand this activity. If you want to go beyond counting and addition, consider engaging youth in creating charts and graphs to reflect the results. Or, compute the percentage of the vote that each candidate received.

Share the results. Make announcements on the school's PA system, write a press release for the local or school paper, create posters, etc.