



## Let's Learn About Strawberries and Wild Rice!

*Teachers, please review this insightful background info on our strawberry and wild rice muffins and share with your students in an age-appropriate way before eating the snack. Use the guiding questions to inspire discussion while your students enjoy the snack.*

**Indigenous History Month:** June is Indigenous history Month in what we now call Canada, a time to recognize the history, resilience and diversity of First Nations, Métis and Inuit people. It is also a time to reflect on the legacy of colonialism and how indigenous communities have had to fight to regain their languages and cultural practices that were lost over the past generations, including their food!



**Food Memories:** Chef Shawn Dockstader of Oneida Sweet Treats shared this original muffin recipe with us. Chef Shawn is co-owner of an amazing bakery based out of Oneida Nation of the Thames First Nations, which makes muffins, cakes, cookies, and a delicious assortment of desserts. Shawn attended Fanshawe for Food and Beverage Management and had over 15 years experience in entertainment catering before the pandemic hit and that career was paused. Shawn and his partner created Oneida Sweet Treats during the pandemic as a way to cater for birthdays and small celebrations and bring joy to people's lives in their community, and then it grew from there based on word of mouth!

Shawn reminisces that this recipe reminds him of spending time with his grandmother picking strawberries, which they would have with ice cream before freezing the rest. He notes that all cultures celebrate with food - it brings us together and can contribute to reconciliation.

**Strawberries, Wild Rice, and Maple Syrup:** These muffins incorporate several culturally significant ingredients that Shawn says provide both nourishment and medicinal benefits. In his culture, they give thanks for the food and for the journey that the food had to go on to get to us. Shawn shares that in his culture, they believe that you should be respectful, mindful and happy when making food, as that tone reverberates in the food you are making, and that joy can be felt by those eating the food.

The strawberry, also known as summer berry, heart berry or Awłhihte (a-**WUH**-heat) in the Oneida language, comes into season in June, which is known as the strawberry month. It is great for you to eat them at this time because they are at peak ripeness. Did you also know you can eat the leaves of strawberries?

The wild rice flour incorporated into the muffin was sourced from Trout Lake in northwestern Ontario from Flying Wild Rice, an indigenous owned and operated company. Devin Parks, the owner, says “I'm also proud to carry on the tradition of my ancestors. Living from the land, harvesting this staple food as they did many centuries ago, giving all my relations health and life.” Although wild rice is not harvested in Chef Shawn's own community which is further south, he says they would often trade their local products in exchange for wild rice, from further north, which is referred to as Manoomin in Anishinaabemowin, and is a spiritual, cultural, culinary and economic staple for the Anishinaabe people.

**We hope you enjoy this snack as much as Shawn and we do - and that you can feel the happiness and joy that went into making it!**



## Guiding Questions

### Junior/Intermediate/Senior:

1. Have you tasted any foods that originate from First Nations, Métis or Inuit Cultures? Discuss the flavours and the ingredients.

Examples: Fry bread, bannock, corn soup, three sisters stew, corn bread etc.

2. Do you have any happy memories of harvesting food you'd like to share? How do those memories make you feel? For example, picking berries from a farm, picking tomatoes from a backyard garden, picking apples from an orchard etc.

### Primary:

Sensory exploration encourages the use of descriptive language instead of just saying “yum” or “yuck”.

1. What are our five senses?
2. How does it smell?
3. How does it look?
4. How does it feel?
5. How does it taste?
6. How did it sound when you took a bite?
7. Is anyone nervous to try new foods? Explain that's okay. Why is it good to try new foods? Discuss the benefits.
8. What is your favourite muffin? Have you ever helped make it?
9. What is your favourite kind of berry? Why?



## Strawberry and Wild Rice Recipe

**Yield: 12**

**Level: Beginner**

### **Ingredients**

2 eggs  
½ cup sugar  
¼ cup grapeseed oil  
⅓ cup greek yogurt  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
½ cup maple syrup  
1 cup all purpose flour  
¼ cup wild rice flour  
½ tablespoon baking powder  
¼ teaspoon salt  
1 cup strawberries, diced

### **Equipment**

Cutting board  
Paring knife  
Spatula  
Whisk  
Measuring cups  
Measuring spoons  
Blender  
Sieve or mesh strainer  
Mixing bowls of various sizes  
Tasting spoons  
Muffin tin  
Muffin cups  
Dish towel  
Cooling wire rack

### **Directions**

#### **Get Organized!**

Gather your mise en place; get together all of the equipment needed for the recipe and gather your ingredients.

## **Get Prepped!**

In a blender, add the wild rice and turn to high speed. Grind until the wild rice becomes a coarse powder, then pass through a sieve.

Remove the tops from the strawberries and dice into 1 centimeter cubes.

Measure out all remaining ingredients.

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

## **Get Cooking**

In a large bowl, combine eggs and sugar and mix well with a whisk. Add grapeseed oil, yogurt, vanilla and maple syrup and continue to mix until well combined.

In a separate bowl, combine all purpose flour, wild rice flour, salt and baking powder.

Add the wet ingredient mixture into the dry ingredient mixture and mix until well combined.

Add the strawberries and use a spatula to fold in gently.

Portion the muffin batter into muffin cups and place into the oven.

Bake for 10 minutes, then rotate the trays and bake for another 8 to 10 minutes until the tops are golden brown and a pick inserted into the middle comes out clean.

Remove from the oven and let cool on a cooling rack.