



Royal Botanic Gardens Kew

Plant Poets' Corner – Recipe poems

We all have different associations with food – whether from eating, preparing, or growing it. In this activity, we take inspiration from recipes to create our own poems, thinking particularly about fruit and vegetables that might be growing or being harvested somewhere near us.

At Kew, we grow fruits, vegetables and edible flowers in our Kitchen Garden, and experiment with unusual crops that may become important food sources as the climate changes. In Georgian times, the Kitchen Garden grew food for members of the royal family living at Kew Palace; today we supply Kew's restaurants and inspire people to try growing their own food, whether in a garden or on a windowsill.

Write a recipe poem

1. Write a list of things you like to eat, cook, or prepare – they can be very simple.
2. Write down a memory of food or cooking, perhaps connected to someone you know.

3. Choose one meal or dish and write down what you need for the recipe, along with some instructions (e.g. gather five large lettuce leaves...)
4. Now add some personal touches that might add to the recipe, including:
 - a season
 - a sound
 - an emotion
 - a memory (if you wish)
5. Read some of the poems below for inspiration.
6. Have a go at writing your own recipe poem.

The important thing with a first draft poem is not to judge it. Write it, find something you like in it, play with it if you want to. Then leave it for a bit. You might want to show it to someone else, you might not. We love receiving poems and will reply when we can: communitylearning@kew.org

Here's an example:

Spring Omelette

*Take whatever's wilting in your fridge
and two fresh eggs with fluff stuck to
their shells.*

*Go to the windowsill or outdoor pots
and pluck*

*whatever's green: a chive, a sprig
of spring.*

*Cook up the old and add the new
and season with a song.*

*Wherever you eat, let your heart go
to a kitchen where you belong.*

Some poems:

'Bread Soup: An Old Icelandic Recipe'
by Bill Holm

'lessons' by Jacqueline Woodson

'Perhaps the World Ends Here'
by Joy Harjo

Created for Kew by poet Miriam Nash.
For more information on Kew, visit kew.org

Learn more about growing and cooking at Kew:



Read and watch:
The Kitchen Garden



Read: What has Kew
brought to the plate?



Read: Edible flowers
in the kitchen garden



Read: A spicy treat in
an English Kitchen Garden



Try: Cook with kids
from your garden



Try: Five things to do in your
vegetable garden this spring



Try: Best plants to grow
on your windowsill

