

The Scoop on this Week's Snack!

Cool and the Gang!

We may be small – they call us mini.
We're not too wide and not too skinny.
We like to grow under glass where the sun gets hotter
After we're picked, we like the fridge better
You would too if you were 95% water.

We're cool, we're smooth and we pack a crispy crunch,
We're green, we'll keep you lean, we're tougher than we seem.
Grab a bunch and take us out for lunch!



Have you ever heard the expression 'cool as a cucumber'? With their high water content cucumbers really do keep their cool and stay cooler on the inside – making them the ideal snack on a hot day. Their coolness also makes them a natural remedy for soothing sunburnt skin.

Cool cucumber Facts...

Mini cucumbers are special varieties related to the Long English Cucumber but only grow to 10 cm in length. Take a Bite – aren't they crunchy and sweet!

Since cucumbers are mainly water their skin acts like a natural wrapper keeping the moisture in. Most of the flavour is in the seeds! You can eat the fibre rich skin too.

Cucumbers have been cultivated for thousands of years in India and Asia making them one of the oldest vegetables in the world. Although we think of cucumbers as vegetables, indeed they are fruit. Cucumbers develop from a flower and have enclosed seeds – that's a fruit, right?

Cucumbers grow on a creeping vine that roots in the ground. Mini Cucumber vines grow in a hot house. The vines are trained to grow up long wires that keep the cucumbers off the ground and easier for the grower to pick.



From hot, to cool, to you - keeping it fresh with the cold chain!

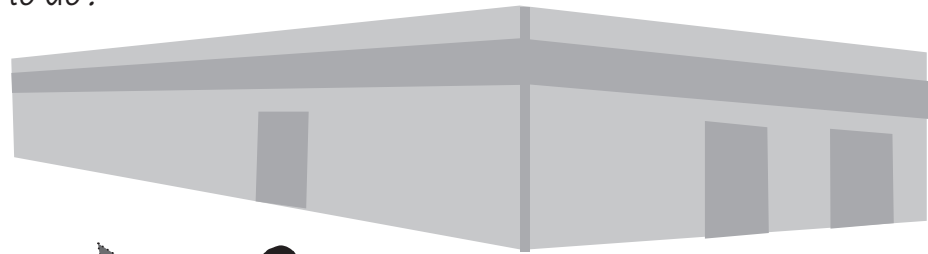
Cucumber plants thrive in a warm climate. Thanks to hot houses, we can enjoy BC grown cucumbers in all seasons. Although the plant likes it hot, as soon as the fruit is picked the heat causes the fruit to spoil quickly. But, we all want our fruit and vegetables to be as fresh and nutritious as the day they were picked. What's a grower to do?

Send it on the cold chain... that means keeping your cucumber in a cool, controlled climate every step of the way.

Picture your cucumber as part of a food chain consisting of a series of steps. Planting, growing and harvesting – that's just the beginning...

1 In the Hot House

The grower knows when the cucumbers are ready to be picked. Right after they are picked they are off to the packing house.



2 At the Packing House

Sorted, Washed, Packed and Cooled - Ready for transport!

All freshly picked fruits breathe (take in oxygen and give off carbon dioxide). This is called respiration and is part of the ripening process. The packing house is kept cold to reduce the rate of respiration keeping the fruit fresh for us to eat. Here the fruit is washed and packed ready to be shipped.



3 On the Way to You

Keep it cool, to keep it fresh and undamaged.

BC fruits and vegetables are shipped all over the province, across Canada and around the world. The cold chain continues throughout the entire journey.

From cool packing house to shipping container, the temperature is maintained and remains at this temperature until arriving at its final destination.



4 At Home or... At School

Unless they need to ripen keep them in the fridge!

4 degrees These are the stickers you will find on all of the product brought to your schools through the BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program. Follow the directions so you keep the cold chain tight and keep your fruits and vegetables as fresh as possible..fresh tastes best!!