

# Springing for seeds

By Caty Schnack, Food Educator

Did you know that almost all plants on earth come from seed? Seeds may seem small, but they actually have big things going on inside of them!

A seed contains everything a plant needs to **reproduce**, or make more of itself. Farmers plant many seeds in the spring, when the ground is soft and the sun is warm. Seeds need soil, sunlight, water, space and nutrients to grow. So don't worry—if we eat seeds, we don't grow plants in our bodies because there is no soil, sun or space for them to grow!

The plants have all summer to grow and provide us with beautiful fruits and vegetables which are harvested in the summer (strawberries, blueberries and peaches) and in the fall (pumpkins, grapes and apples). The part of the plant that holds the seed is the **fruit**. So if your vegetable contains seeds, it's technically a fruit—but both are so good for you!

All seeds have an outer layer called a **seed coat**. The seed coat protects the inside of the seed from being damaged. Seed coats can be thin or thick and hard. We can eat seeds with thin seed coats, but seeds that have thick seed coats cannot be eaten—think of the pit of a peach or avocado! Some seeds are inside fruits and some are on the outside. Some examples of fruit with thin seed coats are green beans, strawberries and tomatoes.

