

Parts of a Plant

YOU MAY BE familiar with plant products as “fruits” and “vegetables.” But plants have six main parts, and humans consume each part—but not on every plant. You have probably eaten flowers, fruits, leaves, roots, seeds, and stems.



Objective:



Describe plant parts, and explain their functions.

Key Terms:



flower
fruit
leaves
roots
seeds
stem

The Whole Plant: Functions and Consumption

Plants have various parts, and each part has a specific role in maintaining the plant’s health and life. The plant parts also have a role in feeding humans.

THE ROLES OF PLANT PARTS

Plants have six main parts: the flower, fruit, leaves, roots, seeds, and stem. All of these parts have critical roles in sustaining the plant.

Flower

The **flower** is the reproductive organ of the plant that produces seeds. The flower may also attract insects for pollination.

Fruit

The **fruit** is the part of the flowering plant that contains the seeds.

Leaves

The **leaves** are the part of a plant that composes the “food factory” of the plant. Chlorophyll, water, sunlight, and carbon dioxide are used by the plant to make food.

Roots

The **roots** are the anchor of the plant. In addition, roots absorb water and nutrients from the soil to sustain the plant.

Seeds

The **seeds** contain embryos that provide food and water until the plant is able to make food for itself.

Stem

The **stem** of a plant is the structure that holds the leaves and flowers. However, tubes in the stem transport food and water from the roots.

PLANT CONSUMPTION

Fruits, vegetables, and spices are from plants. Some plant flowers that are commonly consumed include broccoli, cauliflower, artichokes, and whole cloves. Popular fruits include apples, grapes, avocados, pumpkins, cucumbers, tomatoes, and eggplants.



FIGURE 1. A bee is pollinating this flower.



FIGURE 2. Fruits and vegetables provide people with nourishment.

Humans also consume leaves in the form of cabbage, lettuce, Brussel sprouts, spinach, oregano, and basil. Roots can also be found on plates across America in the form of beets, carrots, radishes, turnips, and rutabagas.

Eating seeds is common at movie theaters in the form of popcorn. Peas, beans, corn, sunflower seeds, nuts, rice, and peanuts are also seeds. The stems that are eaten include celery, onions, mushrooms, potatoes, asparagus, cinnamon, and yams.

Summary:



Plants have six main parts: the flower, fruit, leaves, roots, seeds, and stem. All of these parts have critical roles or jobs in the life and for the survival of the plant.

Fruits, vegetables, and spices are all from plants. Humans eat all six parts of plants (e.g., broccoli, tomatoes, spinach, carrots, peas, and yams), but they do not necessarily eat all six parts of a plant. For example, they may eat the stems of one plant and the flowers of another.

Checking Your Knowledge:



1. What are the six main parts of a plant?
2. What is the role of seeds?
3. What is the role of the leaves and the stem?
4. What part of the plant is an artichoke?
5. What part of the plant is a turnip?

Expanding Your Knowledge:



For one week, keep a journal of what you eat and how much. Then visit the website www.mypyramid.gov to see if you are eating the right amount of the right foods to keep you healthy.

Web Links:



MyPyramid.gov

<http://www.mypyramid.gov/>

Plant Parts

<http://www.mbgnet.net/bioplants/parts.html>