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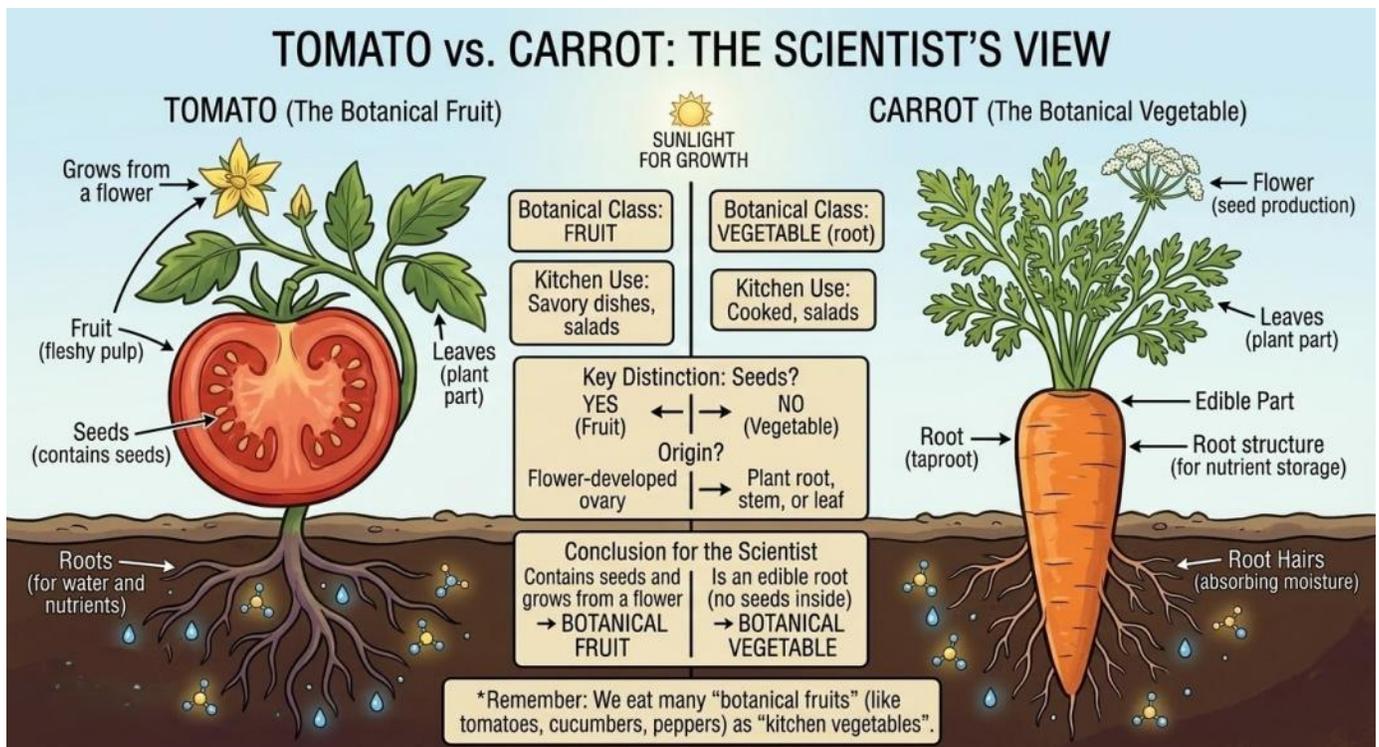
Fruit or Vegetable?

Have you ever eaten a crunchy carrot or a juicy slice of watermelon? You might think you know exactly which is a vegetable and which is a fruit. In the kitchen, we usually decide based on taste. Fruits are sweet treats, while vegetables are savory parts of a meal. However, if you ask a botanist—a scientist who studies plants—you might be surprised by the answer!

To a scientist, the difference isn't about sugar; it's about how the plant grows. A fruit is the part of a plant that develops from a flower and contains seeds. Think of a tomato. Even though we put it in salads instead of fruit bowls, it has tiny seeds inside and grows from a yellow flower. That means a tomato is actually a fruit! Other "sneaky" fruits include cucumbers, pumpkins, and even pea pods.

A vegetable, on the other hand, is any other edible part of the plant. This includes the roots, the leaves, and the stems. When you eat a carrot, you are eating a root that grew deep underground. When you eat lettuce, you are eating leaves. Because these parts do not have seeds inside them, they stay in the vegetable category.

So, the next time you are at the grocery store, look closely at the produce. If it has seeds, it's a fruit in disguise!





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1. What is the main idea of this passage?

- A. Carrots are the healthiest roots to eat.
- B. Scientists and cooks define fruits and vegetables in different ways.
- C. All fruits are sweet and all vegetables are salty.
- D. Botanists only like to eat plants that have seeds.

2. Based on the text, what can you infer about a bell pepper? (Hint: Think about what is inside a bell pepper when you cut it open.) It is a fruit / vegetable.

3. The author uses a "Comparison and Contrast" text structure. How does this help the reader?

- A. It shows the order of how a plant grows from a seed.
- B. It explains the problems that botanists face in gardens.
- C. It highlights the specific differences between how fruits and vegetables are identified.
- D. It lists the best recipes for cooking different types of produce.

4. Use context clues from the first paragraph to define the word "botanist."

A botanist is _____

5. Drawing Conclusions: If a chef is making a "vegetable soup" and adds zucchini (which grows from a flower and has seeds), is he using a botanical fruit or a botanical vegetable? Explain why.

6. Why does the author call some fruits "sneaky"?

- A. Because they hide under the dirt.
- B. Because they are often mistaken for vegetables.
- C. Because they grow very quickly.
- D. Because they don't have any seeds.