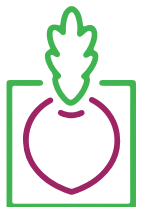


Let's See with Betsy
Winter Spices

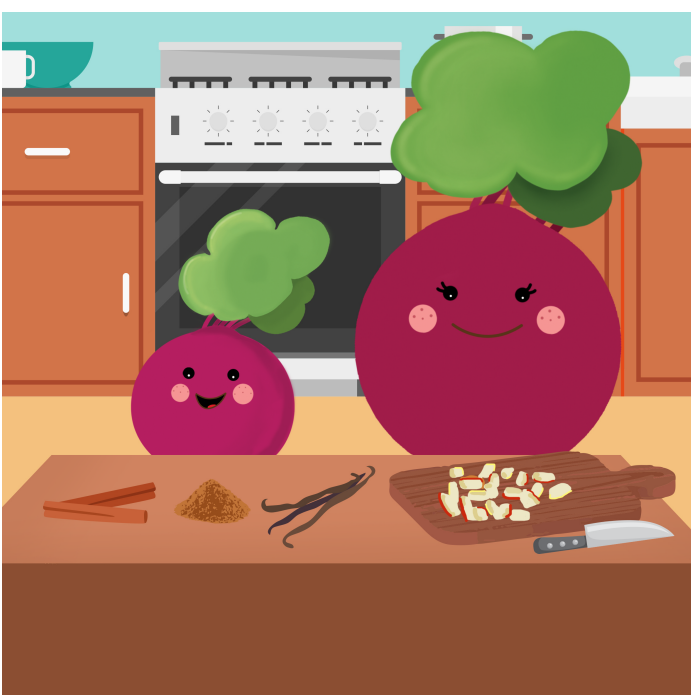


Winter is Betsy’s favorite time of year. Every winter she looks forward to the snow falling, family visiting, and cooking delicious treats with her mother. Most of all, Betsy is excited about visiting the Winter Market with her classmates for a special school trip.

After arriving at the Winter Market with her classmates and her teacher, they walk through the busy rows of stands. People from all over the world are selling handmade goods such as winter hats and scarves, holiday decorations and gifts as well as yummy jams and pies. Betsy smells a delicious scent in the air. It is warm, sweet, and spicy. It reminds her of the yummy treats she will make later with her mom. She thinks to herself: “What will we make this year?”

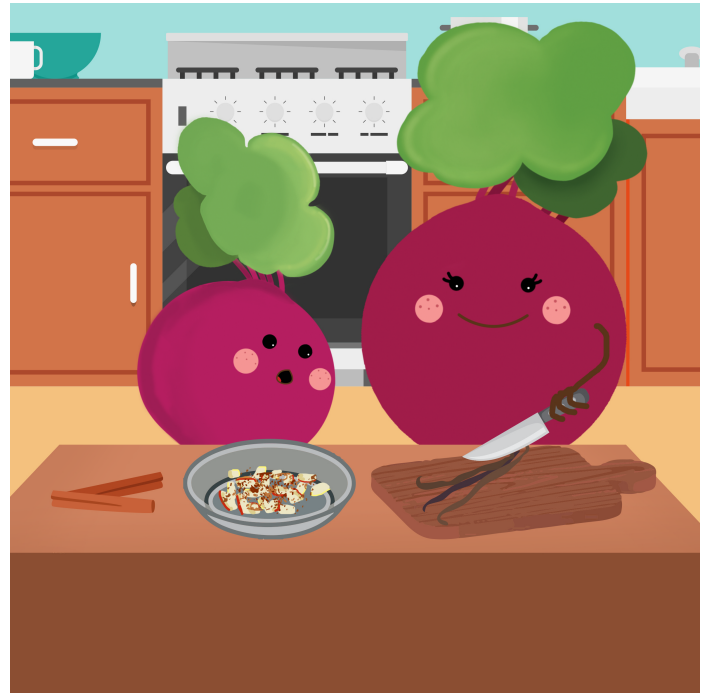
After some more exploring, Betsy ran into her friend Farmer Joe. He is selling all sorts of fruits and vegetables, as well as little glass jars, filled with something different. Betsy has never seen them before. “What’s in these jars?” asks Betsy.

“These are spices. Spices are made from seeds, fruit, roots, or bark that we can use to flavor our food and make it taste delicious. You can use different spices in cooking and baking. Your mother was just here, she picked out a few spices to use in your holiday cooking.”



Betsy REALLY could not wait to get home! She was excited to learn more about the spices. When Betsy walked in, Mrs. Beet was in the kitchen. “Wash your hands and we’ll get started! We will prepare baked apples for our friends and family to enjoy this year.” After washing her hands, rinsing the apples, and chopping them to remove the seeds, it was finally time to use the spices.

Mrs. Beet sprinkled a brown powder over the apples. "This is cinnamon. It is actually the bark of a tree! We take the bark from the tree in 'sticks', then grind it up to make a powder. It makes our food taste yummy and smell delicious" she said. Next, Betsy watched Mrs. Beet slice open something that looked like a thin, long, black bean. "This is vanilla bean. The tiny beans are inside this pod, and just like the green beans you eat for dinner, it grew from a seed and came from the ground. It gives our food a yummy taste and yummy smell." Betsy put her nose up to the vanilla bean. It smelled just like vanilla ice cream!



Betsy and her mother put the apples in the oven, and the most wonderful smell filled the air in the kitchen. Betsy loves learning about the food she eats. She knows that most of the food she eats started as a seed. Next year when she visits the holiday market, she'll remember the spices she used with her mother. When she smells the cinnamon, vanilla, and other spices, she'll picture the bark of the tree and the beans from the ground. Just thinking about it, she is already excited for next winter!

