About the Garden Lessons

Grow Eat Learn
Nourish Nova Scotia

Over the course of the Garden Lessons, we will walk educators and young gardeners through the process of starting a garden, from planning to harvest to putting the garden to bed for winter. Inside, you'll find activity guides, curriculum connections, and tips and strategies for successful school gardening.

Printable worksheets accompany each lesson and can be compiled into a single Garden Journal to practice record-keeping and support future growing success. This hands-on series of Garden Lessons will support educators, youth leaders, and students to start and tend to a garden project. These lessons were originally adapted from the Nova Scotia School Garden Resource Guide (2014).

Getting youth in the garden offers them opportunities to shape their food system, learn healthy food choices, connect with nature, and build resiliency in a changing climate—all while having fun along the way!

Goals of Lessons

- Grow food and engage in hands-on learning
- Gain food literacy skills
- Demonstrate connections between the food web and climate action
- Support youth well-being and connection to the more-than-human world

Gardening & Climate Action

Look for these climate action icons in Grow Eat Learn resources to learn more about the connections between gardening and the climate!



Habitat Creation & Biodiversity



Circular Systems



Growing & Processing Food



Water Care



Soil Care



Climate Justice

Adapting to climate change is critical for our food system. Through gardening, students participate in the food web. They learn about food production and its interdependence with plants, animals, and weather.

Garden Lesson 7

Harvest & Reflection

Introduction

Depending on crops and time of plantings, these activities can be completed between May and November, and longer if you are doing hydroponics inside. Lesson 7 will cover when and how to harvest, as well as pick-and-choose activities to reflect on this past growing season and the future of the garden.

After all that hard work, the garden is finally ready for harvest. Different vegetables need to be harvested at different times. Refer to either the seed package or the Seed Exploration worksheet from Lesson 2 (if completed) to help decide when to harvest, or ask a local gardener, visit the library, or research on the internet.

Almost every vegetable has a different way to indicate when it's ready for harvest. For some, it might be the texture, and others it may be the size, shape, or colour. Additional factors like weather and location can impact harvest time. If you're still not sure if the plant is ready for harvest, taste it!

Skills

Science

Question, Observe, Monitor

Language Arts

Comprehend, Read, Write

Visual Arts

Design, Create, Draw, Colour

Mathematics

Calculate, Quantify

Food & Nutrition

Prepare healthy food

Climate Connections



Growing & Processing Food

Seeing the results of growing food reinforces an experiential connection to where food comes from and how it's grown. Eating from the garden means there were no carbon emissions from food transportation.



Climate Justice

This lesson promotes sharing the harvest and garden meals, increasing local food access either at school or in community.

NS Curriculum Outcomes

Primary Science

- Learners will compare living things through the senses
- Learners will test movement of objects
- Learners will investigate sand and water through the senses
- Also teaches life cycles of plants

Primary - Grade 6 Mathematics

- Counting, measuring, data collection, applying math to real world situations, 3D objects and 2D shapes, comparing measurement of objects, length and mass, area

Primary - Grade 3 Visual Arts

- Learners will create artworks that express feelings, ideas, and understandings

Grade 1-2 Science

- Learners will analyze interconnectiveness of living things and the environment

Grade 3 Science

- Learners will analyze soil in the environment
- Learners will investigate plants in the environment

Grade 4-6 Science

- Learners will investigate a variety of local natural habitats
- Learners will analyze the interconnectedness of and within local habitats, inclusive of a Mi'kmaw perspective
- Learners will investigate sound in the environment
- Learners will investigate how the Earth's surface changes over time

NS Curriculum Outcomes

Grade 1-6 Language Arts

- Learners will apply understanding of foundational language knowledge and skills when reading and writing
- Learners will apply knowledge of sentence structure, grammar, capitalization, and punctuation when reading and writing
- Learners will apply pre-writing skills and strategies to create various texts for a range of authentic audiences and purposes
- Learners will apply knowledge and understanding of text forms and genres to write a variety of texts
- Learners will use suitable and effective media, techniques, and tools to publish and present final texts in a range of genres

Things you'll need for upcoming activities:

- ☐ *Harvest Methods* worksheet
- ☐ *Seed Exploration* worksheet from Lesson 2 (if completed)
- ☐ *Preparing and Sharing the Harvest* worksheet
- ☐ *Writing About the Garden* worksheet
- ☐ Blank paper
- ☐ Pens or pencils
- ☐ *From Garden to Table* worksheet
- ☐ *Daily Garden News* worksheet
- ☐ Cookbook or device with wifi access for research
- ☐ Harvest tools, like gloves and scissors
- ☐ Supplies for colouring or drawing

Optional: Smart phone or camera, tape, glue, and ingredients if you're making the dish

Activity 1: Harvesting methods

1. Distribute *Harvesting Methods* worksheet and pens or pencils.

2. Prompt students to write a list of everything they grew on the worksheet.

3. Have students use discussion, books or the internet to research proper harvesting methods for each plant.

4. Choose the best harvesting method for each of your plants using the information collected in the completed *Harvest Time* worksheet. For example, you should cut spinach but pull carrots.

5. Harvest, inspect, trim and rinse the produce well to remove any insects or dirt.

Cut: Harvest by cutting parts of the plant with scissors or pruning shears.

Use for: Herbs and leafy plants



Pick: Harvest produce gently with two hands.

Use for: Plants with "fruits" (like beans, zucchini, peppers)



Pull: Harvest by pulling up the whole plant by hand. Soil may need to be loosened.

Use for: Root vegetables (like carrots, turnips, beets)



Activity 2: Preparing and sharing the harvest

1. Distribute *Preparing and Sharing the Harvest* worksheet and pens or pencils.

2. Prompt students to write/draw how they will prepare or use their harvest on the worksheet.

3. Prompt students to write how they will share their harvest with their community on the worksheet.

4. Prompt students to share their answers back with the larger group once the worksheet is completed.

Activity 3: Observing the harvest

1. Gather the plants you harvested earlier and have them on display so the students can observe them as a reference for this activity. Distribute *Observing the Harvest worksheet* and pens or pencils.

2. Prompt students to choose one of the produce items from the harvest and write about it on their worksheet using the 4 senses. How does the produce smell? Feel? Look? Taste?

Mindfulness practice: Before the harvest, invite students to slow down and spend a few moments sitting near or exploring the garden. Encourage them to gradually settle and use their senses to notice what is around them—what they can see, hear, smell or feel.

Activity 4: Poetry about the garden

1. Write a short poem or haiku about your garden on a piece of paper.

2. Once the poem is complete, copy it onto the *Writing About the Garden* worksheet on the lines provided.

3. When finished writing, draw a fancy border around the poem and decorate the rest of the page however youth wish.

Garden Poetry Prompts:

- Visitors like birds and bugs
- Your favourite part of gardening
- An ode to your favorite vegetable or plant
- What you notice exploring the garden with your senses
- How your garden might look in a different season. How do you think it will look later, in the fall? In the winter? What was spring or planting day like?



"SQUASH" – A Haiku

by Nourish Nova Scotia

Yesterday a seed
Today a butternut squash
And tomorrow, soup



Tips and Tools

You can incorporate sensory experiences into your garden in simple, low-cost and even free ways using the the senses! Get creative with it!



Nourish Resource Features

Nourish Recipes

Check out our recipe page to find inspiration for how to prepare the harvest.

Activity 5: From garden to table

1. Distribute *From Garden to Table* worksheet and pens or pencils.

2. Start a group discussion asking students what's growing in the garden. Have students refer to the *"What we grew"* list in the *Harvest Methods* worksheet to discuss what has been planted and what vegetables or herbs they are excited to try from the garden.

3. Ask students to use books or the internet to find a recipe with one or more of the vegetables or herbs from the garden. Students can use the worksheet to record the recipe information.

4. After researching what recipes use ingredients from the harvest, choose something from the garden that the class can sample. Serve it on its own or pair it with a dip from Nourish Nova Scotia's recipe library.

Activity 6: Daily garden news

1. Distribute *Daily Garden News* worksheet and pens or pencils.

2. Ask students to write a news story about the garden. Ask them to use their imagination! They could write about the garden growing the biggest tomato in the world or how they discovered that a garden gnome was stealing the veggies. The possibilities are endless! Ask students to give their news story a fun headline and illustrate it with pictures or photos from the garden.



Tips and Tools

Keeping track of what was harvested, how much was grown, and what surprises and successes arose during the growing season can help with future planning.

If there is more produce than you can manage, consider sharing the abundance with:

- students families to try out researched recipes at home
- a local food pantry or food bank



Nourish Resource Features

Summer Herb Dip

This recipe can use different herbs from the garden and be a great way for students to try out new and familiar vegetables from the garden.

Additional Resources

Using All Five Senses in the Garden
https://www.fantasticfunandlearning.com/five-senses-garden.html

Step-by-Step Guide for Building a Sensory Garden with Children: Cultivating Teamwork and Nature Appreciation
https://www.kidsandthegarden.com/articles/sensory-garden-guide-children-teamwork/

Designing a Sensory Garden
https://kidsgardening.org/resources/garden-activities-designing-a-sensory-garden/

How to Can your Harvest: A step-by-step guide
https://ecologyaction.ca/how-can-your-harvest-step-step-guide-including-sample-recipes

Find more resources at nourishns.ca

Nourish Resource Features

Fall Planting Guide for School and Community Gardens

The growing season is longer than ever, meaning school gardens can grow food in the fall when class is back. Check out this guide to learn more about what to plant, when, and different strategies for growing food until December! It features information on cover crops, row cover, planting perennials before winter, and lots of ideas on what plants to grow.

Fruit and Vegetable Garden Alphabet Colouring Book

This printable colouring activity will help kids learn to name and recognize new vegetables.

Harvesting Methods

1. Write a list of everything you grew.
2. Research proper harvesting methods for each plant.
3. Write vegetables/herbs/flowers under the best harvesting method below.



Cut: Harvest by cutting parts of the plant with scissors or pruning shears.



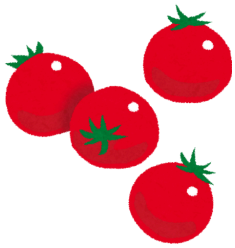
Pick: Harvest produce gently with two hands.



Pull: Harvest by pulling up the whole plant by hand. The soil may need to be loosened.

What we grew:

Write/draw about how you can prepare and use your harvest!



Write about how you will share the harvest with your community.

Observing the Harvest

Reflect on your harvest with your senses.

Name of fruit or veggie:



How does the produce...

Smell?

Feel?

Look?

Taste?

Writing About the Garden

1. Write a short poem or haiku about your garden below.
2. Decorate your poem with a fancy border and artwork.

Possible topics:

- Your favourite part of planning a garden
- An ode to your favourite vegetable or plant
- What you experience when you explore your garden with all senses
- How your garden might look in a different season? How do you think it will look later in the fall? In the winter? Next spring?

1. Find a recipe containing one or more of the vegetables that you're excited to try from the garden. Write the recipe below and why you chose it.

The vegetable I want to cook with is: _____

Recipe Name: _____

Ingredients

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Instructions

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

I chose this recipe because... _____

_____

2. Cook the recipe in class or at home with the help of an adult, and taste it together. Record your thoughts and your friend or family member's thoughts about the recipe. How does it taste? Would you make it again?

_____

_____

_____

Use your imagination and write a newstory about the garden! You could write about how your garden grew the biggest tomato in the world or discovering that a garden gnome was stealing your veggies... Give your news story a fun headline and illustrate it with pictures or photos of your garden.

DAILY GARDEN NEWS

HEADLINE:

STORY:

PHOTO: