



Garden Climate Action Legend

Introduction

In the garden, youth learn about **food** production, **biodiversity**, and our **interdependence** with natural systems, while gaining valuable **climate action skills** that help shape their food system, teach responsibility & patience, and build community.

Our **Garden Climate Action Legend** was created in response to growing awareness that youth are experiencing climate change—and its associated anxiety. Gardening can be a source of hope and empower young people to take meaningful action for their communities and the climate, all while supporting well-being and increasing food literacy.

How to Use the Legend

The Garden Climate Action Legend (see page 2) sorts gardening into six climate action themes. In this resource, you'll find examples and activities for each climate action theme that show how gardening enables participation in climate action.

While using Grow Eat Learn resources, share the highlighted climate actions with youth so they can understand how different gardening activities support community and land health.

Look for the climate action icons in all **Grow Eat Learn resources** to see how gardening and growing food is climate action!



Garden Lesson 1
Planning a Garden
Introduction

Complete this lesson between January and March. We encourage you to work through *Creating a Garden Goal First*.

Anyone can grow a garden! As long as the essential components are present—sun, water, soil, and nutrients—any garden space can thrive. In this lesson you'll learn how to plan and map out a garden to meet your goals. Start your *Garden Journal* with activities to learn about what foods grow locally, how they grow and what these plants need to be healthy. This lesson will help set you up for a successful growing season ahead!

NS Curriculum Outcomes

Grade 1 **Mathematics**

- Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of repeating patterns (two to four elements) by identifying, describing, reproducing, extending, and creating patterns.
- Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of measurement as a process of comparing by: ordering objects, filling, covering, or matching.

Grade 3 **Science**

- Investigate factors that affect plant growth.
- Classify food items according to the plant part used.

Mathematics

- Practice measuring and recording length, width, and height.

Grade 4 **Science**

- Students are able to determine the impact that various amounts of light have on plants.
- Investigate factors necessary for survival of a plant in a local habitat.

Skills

- Science**
Question, Observe, Plan, Investigate
- Mathematics**
Measure, Map, Estimate
- Social Studies**
Comprehend, Read, Write, Describe
- Visual Arts**
Design, Draw

Climate Connections

- Soil Care**
By keeping soil moist and healthy (not too moist!), students learn the importance of caring for soil to grow food.
- Grow & Process Food**
Starting seeds is the first step in growing food in the garden. Learning to grow food is a resilient skill and sharing food strengthens communities.
- Habitat Creation & Biodiversity**
Adding pollinator plants to the garden provides food and shelter for important insects like bees, butterflies and moths.

Planning a Garden | Nourish Nova Scotia

Garden Climate Action Legend

This legend, created by Nourish Nova Scotia's Grow Eat Learn team, helps youth and facilitators to understand how gardening is a form of climate action.



Grow & Process Food: Growing and processing food locally reduces reliance on imported food, lowers carbon footprints, and builds community health.



Climate Justice: Community-minded action, whether local or global, addresses root causes of climate change while building social cohesion.



Habitat Creation: Gardens support pollinators, soil organisms, and wildlife, emphasizing the role of biodiversity in climate resilience.



Circular Systems: In the garden we can compost, eat locally, share knowledge, reduce food waste, and create closed-loop garden systems.



Water Care: Exploring elements like rainwater collection and soil moisture retention shows connection between plant growth, climate change and precipitation patterns.



Soil Care: Techniques like regenerative composting and no-till gardening support soil health as methods to lower carbon, reduce erosion, and restore biodiverse ecosystems.



Gardening and Climate Action

Grow & Process Food

Growing and processing food supports climate adaption skills and youth well-being. Preserving the harvest reduces dependency on imported foods during winter. Gathering around food cultivates community resilience and strengthens local food systems.

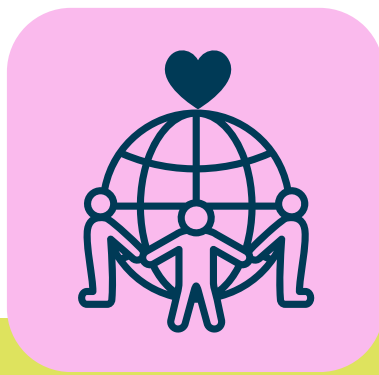
Examples of Growing & Processing Food

- Grow and harvest food
- Cook or preserve the harvest
- Share harvests and meals
- Eat local and reduce food miles
- Practice food sovereignty by saving seeds
- Cultivate resiliency skills

Learning Hub Resources

Explore these Grow Eat Learn resources, great for demonstrating how to **grow & process food** during youth activities in the garden.

- [Guide to Greenhouses](#)
- [Garden Lessons 1-8](#)
- [Grow your Own Micro-greens](#)
- [Vegetarian Guide](#)
- [Apple Tree Guild: How-to Guide](#)
- [Cooking with Kids](#)
- [Getting Started with Hydroponics](#)
- [Guide to Starting a School Garden Club](#)



Gardening and Climate Action

Climate Justice

Participating in community-minded action, whether local or global, addresses root causes of climate change. Community organizing, decolonization, and economic justice challenge systemic factors that contribute to climate change. Social Justice is climate justice.

Examples of Climate Justice

- Advocate and work together for local and global change
- Learn about and act for decolonization
- Centre community and land health
- Support Indigenous Land Stewardship/Land Back
- Increase food sovereignty, including food skills

Learning Hub Resources

Explore these Grow Eat Learn resources, great for demonstrating **climate justice** during youth activities in the garden.

- [Coalition for Healthy School Food](#)
- [Food for Thought: A Youth Zine Project](#)
- [Foraging with Kids in Mi'kma'ki](#)
- [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#) (external)



Gardening and Climate Action

Habitat Creation

Gardens support biodiversity and wildlife including pollinator animals and soil organisms. Habitat gardening connects youth with their landscapes and the more-than-human world, while boosting climate resilience and supporting native plants and animals.

Examples of Habitat Creation

- Create spaces for pollinators and wildlife
- Identify pollinators and connect with local ecosystems
- Grow native plants
- Build living soil
- Save native seeds

Learning Hub Resources

Explore these Grow Eat Learn resources, great for demonstrating **habitat creation** during youth activities in the garden.

- [Pollinator Bingo](#)
- [Winter Sowing Guide](#)
- [Coming this spring... Pollinator Plant Learning Tool, Bug Bingo & Observation Game, Gardening for Moths](#)
- *Garden Lessons:*
 - [What about Weeds?](#)
 - [Putting the Garden to Bed](#)
 - [Critters in the Garden](#)
 - [The Dirt on Soil](#)



Gardening and Climate Action

Circular Systems

By creating closed-loop systems through composting, eating local, sharing knowledge, seed saving, and reusing materials, youth learn resiliency skills, while also buying fewer things like fertilizer, top soil and seeds.

Examples of Circular Systems

- Compost and reuse materials
- Save seeds and share them
- Reduce waste and buy less
- Save veggie scraps for stock
- Eat locally grown food
- Repurpose garden stuff
- Create closed loops like rain water catchment systems
- Intergenerational learning
- Waste reduction

Learning Hub Resources

Explore these Grow Eat Learn resources, great for demonstrating **circular systems** during youth activities in the garden.

- [The Dirt on Soil](#)
- [Two-Pallet Compost Bin Design](#)
- [Garden Infrastructure Design Library](#)
- [Reducing Waste in School Healthy Eating Programs](#)
- [Farm to School Snack Classroom Resources](#)



Gardening and Climate Action

Water Care

Promoting rainwater collection, conservation, mulching, and learning about local water system connects students to weather, climate patterns, and caring for plants.

Examples of Water Care

- Collect and reuse rainwater
- Mulch to keep soil moist
- Water wisely and conserve
- Learn about local water ways
- Plant dry-loving plants in sunny, drier spots and water-loving plants where the soil stays wetter.
- Grow with hydroponics

Learning Hub Resources

Explore these Grow Eat Learn resources, great for demonstrating **water care** during youth activities in the garden.

- [Winter Sowing](#)
- [The Dirt on Soil](#)
- [Garden Infrastructure Design Library](#)
- [Getting Started with Hydroponics](#)
- [Starting Seeds Indoors](#)



Gardening and Climate Action

Soil Care

Composting, mulching, and no-till gardening support soil health and reduce erosion while creating biodiverse ecosystems. Building soil with compost and amendments helps create nutritious, living soil and helps reduce carbon in the air.

Examples of Soil Stewardship

- Compost waste
- Mulch garden beds and reduce erosion
- Avoid tilling to protect life
- Nurture soil life
- Build living soil
- Rotate crops

Learning Hub Resources

Explore these Grow Eat Learn resources, great for demonstrating **soil care** during youth activities in the garden.

- [Putting the Garden to Bed](#)
- [The Dirt on Soil](#)
- [Critters in the Garden](#)
- [Two-Pallet Compost Bin Design](#)
- [Garden Infrastructure Design Library](#)

Find examples of each climate action theme in the image below:



Click to view [Our Theory of Change](#).