

What is the best way to harvest and store produce?

MY OWN FOOD CHAIN PROGRAM (K-2)

Harvesting the garden

(ILS 19A)

Overview

This curriculum explores the relationship between people and the food they eat. It aims to give children in grades K-2 a basic understanding of the flow of energy through the food chain, and the place of people in the food chain. If teachers complete the entire curriculum, their classes will explore food chains in nature, focusing on its individual links and looking at the flow of energy as a whole. Students will then look at the place of people in the food chain, and discover how people have appropriated nature's systems in agricultural practices – making the food chain our own. Classes will compare traditional and sustainable agricultural practices.

Sustainable Agriculture, for the purpose of this curriculum, shall be defined as "a system of food production, supported by consumers, where farming operations, practices and technologies work in harmony with the natural systems that sustain life on earth."

Suggested Grade Level

This curriculum is designed for kindergarten through second grade levels. The topics covered can be built upon in complexity throughout that age range.

Approximate Time

Dependant on the size of the garden; approximately 60 minutes.

Objectives

1. The students will harvest their garden and store the produce for use in their sale.

Activity Abstract

In this lesson, students will harvest the garden. They will store the vegetables until the alternative marketing lesson.

Background Information

Be sure to read all seed packets for the best instructions on harvesting each plant.

Materials

- Containers (baskets?) to carry vegetables in.
- Containers – Tupperware and/or ziplock bags – to store produce in
- Old towel
- Refrigerator space or coolers.

Procedure (Session 1)

1. Check the seed packet for harvest time. It is usually given in days from planting, but of course it will be approximate.
2. Inspect the vegetables for proper color and size. If they look ready, they probably are.
3. Teach the students the proper ways to harvest each food. For example, loosen the soil around a radish and pull it up by gently grabbing the whole bunch of leaves. With lettuce, pull off outer, large leaves at ground level. Leave the small middle ones and they'll grow more!
4. Instruct the students to pick carefully and avoid stepping on any plants or plant parts, and try not to bump the plants or walk out of the aisle.
5. Have students work in pairs or small groups to harvest the food and put it into the baskets.
6. Clean root vegetables by rubbing with an old towel. Shake any dirt off the lettuce. (They will need to be washed later.)
7. Put food in the fridge, in storage containers if needed (lettuce).