

# PROJECT PUMPKIN (GR 3-5)

## Program Overview

This curriculum explores the relationship between people and the food they eat. By growing pumpkins in a garden plot, the curriculum takes teachers and students through six features of sustainable agriculture that separate it from conventional farming. If the entire curriculum is completed, students will gain an understanding of sustainability and people's place in the food chain.

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."

The following table shows activities in their recommended order. Many activities are seasonal; some can be done at any time. The order can be altered, but some activities are designed to follow others in the series, so please read through them before changing the order.

Activity #	Activity Title	Brief Activity Overview
1	Nutrient Management 1	A game that will teach students depletion of the soil nutrients produces fewer crops and how replenishment of nutrients will restore production
2	Nutrient Management 2	An experiment to test the effects of nitrogen-fixing legumes
3	Soil: Its Components	General components of soil and a hands-on activity to qualitatively determine the rate of water flow through the various soil types.
	Soil Conservation: Erosion	Hands-on exploration of soil erosion by water and ways to conserve soil.
4	Soil Conservation: Compost and Worms	Play a game to learn about composting and make a worm bin.
5	Plan the Garden	Plan the pumpkin patch.
6	Planting in the Greenhouse	Plant seeds in coolness of spring in greenhouse to get an early start on garden plants.
7	Integrated Pest Management	An introduction to IPM through the creation of animated harmful and beneficial insects.
8	Planting the Garden	Plant the pumpkin patch.
9	Summer Day Care	Care for the patch when school's out during the summer.
10	Harvest the Garden	Harvest the garden and store the produce.
11	Alternative Marketing	Learn about current transportation food system and benefits of buying locally produced food.
12	Sustainable Farming Practices	A general overview of sustainable farming practices and methods used to have farming gentler on the environment. Includes a board game.

Activities in red cover the sustainable agriculture learning outcomes.