It has been just one short year...

since we planted the first fifteen sunflowers in the new Life Lab Garden Classroom. At the time the flowers looked very lonely, providing the only color within the hardscape as we prepared neighboring garden beds. Those sunflowers wouldn’t look so lonely today; they have been joined by wonderful sights, sounds, smells, tastes and textures as the garden has blossomed.

In the past year, thousands of visitors have learned, laughed, eaten and created in the Garden Classroom. Toddlers have collected eggs and educators have learned how to build compost piles. Over 1,500 school children visited during the spring field trip season and hundreds of family members celebrated our Grand Opening on June 1st. We kicked off the American Horticultural Society’s annual Youth Garden Symposium with a workshop for garden educators from around the nation. We hosted garden-based science workshops and weekend family events throughout the year. The Garden Classroom also provided learning opportunities for pre-service teachers, University students, Agroecology apprentices, visiting teachers, scientists, and farmers.

We have worked hard to create a site full of discovery. The observational beehive has been a great success. Watching the worker girls bring in pollen from nearby flowers and store honey is a great way to learn just how busy bees can be. Our pond and waterfalls provide habitat for many species of thirsty birds that visit our wildlife garden, along with snakes, squirrels, rabbits, frogs and many beneficial insects. The Rot Zone has billions of micro-inhabitants working around the clock in over ten types of composting bins turning greens and browns into soul food for the soil. Our happy hens have been a hit with just about every visitor and their eggs have created tasty meals for us to enjoy. Summer campers baked their own bread and this fall’s field trip classes will be grinding corn into flour and pressing tortillas in the Garden Kitchen. With all this and more to explore we installed a human sundial to keep everyone on “garden time.”

Of course we have planted more sunflowers this season and they are happily surrounded by other plants, from papyrus to pitcher plants and cantaloupe to cactus. Please come by anytime for a visit or sign up for an upcoming program and see what we have created in this exciting, short year.
Trash Diet

How to shed those unwanted garbage pounds...

Twenty-two Santa Cruz County public schools are on a trash diet. As participants in the Resource Conservation Program, a collaboration between Life Lab Science Program, Ecology Action and the Santa Cruz County Office of Education, these schools have been working hard to lose those unsightly garbage pounds. In the 2001-2002 school year, 597 tons were shed.

Since the program’s inception five years ago, participating schools have diverted 1679.5 tons of garbage from the landfill, saving their school districts $110,549.

What’s their secret? Establishing a strict regimen of reducing, reusing, recycling and composting. These schools are educating students and staff about the importance of conserving resources, while training them to be stewards of the environment. In addition, they’re doing what it takes to slim down the amount that they throw away.

Some examples include: using both sides of the paper, packing “no waste” lunches, stopping the delivery of junk mail, recycling printer ink cartridges, replacing disposable cardboard lunch trays with durable plastic trays, feeding left-over food scraps to the worms, and of course, diligently recycling paper and containers.

We are eager to weigh in again at the end of the 2002-2003 school year, watching the schools’ “waste size” continue to diminish.

A Healthy Snack Idea—Lunchbox Cucumber Chain
Cut a cucumber into 2” long cylinders. • Remove the core with a pairing knife.

Farm-to-Fork

Fall 2002 Field Trips

This fall local elementary school students will be learning to make the important connections between farms and the food on their dinner tables in the Garden Classroom, on the UCSC Farm. Students will harvest & sample the six plant parts, participate in apple investigations & tastings and grind grain corn into tasty tortillas. To learn more, please visit our new website at www.lifelab.org.

Highlights of the new Life Lab website include photos of the Garden Classroom and detailed descriptions of our professional development opportunities & educational resources.

What’s Cluckin’?

The Rot Zone in the Garden Classroom wouldn’t be complete without our six clucking hens. Chickens not only help us decrease our food waste, they also provide us with eggs and nitrogen-rich manure that helps speed up the decomposition process in our compost piles.

Visiting children and adults are dazzled by Marge, Sweetpea, Buttercup, Olive, Ernestine & Faylene’s beautiful and unusual feathers, musical clucking and friendly natures. Come visit our famous chickens and see what all the clucking is about!

A Healthy Snack Idea—Lunchbox Cucumber Chain
Cut a cucumber into 2” long cylinders. • Remove the core with a pairing knife.
**FIELDS-TO-MARKET-TO-YOU**  
**A GROCERY STORE EXPLORATION**

Sitting at the breakfast table, do you ever wonder what went into your package of cornflakes? Who grew the corn? What farming practices did they use? How many miles did it travel from field to market to you?

During Fields-to-Market-to-You—a grocery store exploration—4th and 5th grade students in Santa Cruz will learn to ask these important questions. Starting in October, a New Leaf Community Market educator will visit participating classes to explore the life cycle of a product—investigating food transportation, packaging, and processing. Classroom visits will be followed by a field trip to a local New Leaf Community Market where students will continue to investigate the many steps food goes through from the fields to the consumer and how our choices in the supermarket affect the environment, our community and our health.

Field-to-Market-to-You is part of a Central Coast community-based effort to integrate nutrition and food systems education with school gardens, school cafeterias, local farms and community markets. The program is a collaboration between Life Lab Science Program, New Leaf Community Markets, The Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems and Community Alliance with Family Farmers.

To learn more about this exciting new program please contact the Life Lab Science Program at (831) 459-2001.

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**EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES**

- **Getting Started**  
  A Guide for Creating School Gardens as Outdoor Classrooms

- **The Growing Classroom**  
  Garden-Based Science Activity Guide

- **Life Lab Science**  
  Grades K-5 Garden-Based Science Curricula

- **Popcorn • Maize**  
  Grades 1-5 and 6-8 Sustainable Agriculture Curricula

- **Create from Waste**  
  K-7 activity guide to community-based ecology & waste reduction

- **Away with Waste**  
  A teacher’s guide to starting a school waste reduction, recycling & composting program

- **Singing In Our Garden**  
  Banana Slug String Band C.D.

**WORKSHOPS**

- **Digging In**  
  Designing and creating effective school gardens

- **Cultivate, Germinate, Teach**  
  An Introduction to Garden-Based Science

- **Complete Garden Science**  
  An Introduction to K-5 Life Lab Science Curricula

**MBSP/LASERS INSTITUTES**

- **Summer School Academy**  
  Science Teaching for Academic Growth in English

- **Supporting Science for English Language Learners**

- **Pre-Intern Academy**  
  Professional development for teachers to promote literacy and language acquisition through standards-based science education.

Life Lab Science Program also offers customized workshops, consulting and coaching. Please contact us for more information.

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**THANKS TO OUR CURRENT LIFE LAB SUPPORTERS**

- The David and Lucile Packard Foundation • The Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund • UCSB Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems • Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors • Walter S. Johnson Foundation • The Gabilan Foundation • The Clarence E. Heller Charitable Foundation • The S. H. Cowell Foundation • California Science Project • The CPEC Eisenhower Professional Development State Grant Program • California Professional Development Institutes Program • True North Foundation • Chez Panisse Foundation • Earthbound Farms • New Leaf Community Markets
Cooking Fun in the Garden for Kids
Sunday, Sept. 8, 12–3 P.M. • Garden Classroom
Come learn about & taste the six plant parts, bake apples in our solar oven & a garden veggie pizza in our cob oven. Learn about the value of growing & eating healthy foods. For children ages 7–10. $5 members, $10 non-members. Workshop runs concurrently with the Friends of the UCSC Farm and Garden adult class, “Preparing the Winter Garden.”

Garden Coordinator Network Day
Tuesday, Sept. 24, 4–6 P.M. • Garden Classroom
An informal gathering of Santa Cruz school garden educators & volunteers to share resources and ideas for effective school garden management. Come visit the Garden Classroom to glean ideas for your garden. Soup, salad & bread provided. Bring seeds to swap & a dessert to share, if you wish. RSVP by September 20. FREE!

Herbs in the Garden
Saturday, Oct. 5, 10 A.M.–12 P.M. • Garden Classroom
Come harvest & create your own herbal tea, bake lemon verbena cookies and make lavender bouquets while you learn about cooking and healing herbs in the Garden Classroom. For children ages 7–10. $5 members, $10 non-members.

Cultivate, Germinate, Teach:
An Introduction to Garden-Based Science
October 10–11 • Garden Classroom, UCSC Farm
Learn basic gardening skills and garden-based activities for effective school gardens. In this two-day workshop connections to the California Science Standards will be highlighted. Participants will receive a copy of the Life Lab Growing Classroom. College credit available. Register by September 27. $300

Family Bird Day
Saturday, Feb. 1, 10 A.M.–12 P.M. • Garden Classroom
Come share the day with the birds! Families will participate in avian activities & take a bird walk on the farm. Dress warmly & bring your binoculars! $5 members, $10 nonmembers

6th Annual Monterey Bay Science Program/ LASERS Regional Conference
March 8, 2003 • Location T.B.A.
Over 40 sessions & dynamic keynote speaker focusing on garden-based science and language acquisition. For more information please contact Megan at (831) 459-5395.

Cultivate, Germinate, Teach:
An Introduction to Garden-Based Science
March 22–23 • Garden Classroom, UCSC Farm
Please see description above. Register by March 8.