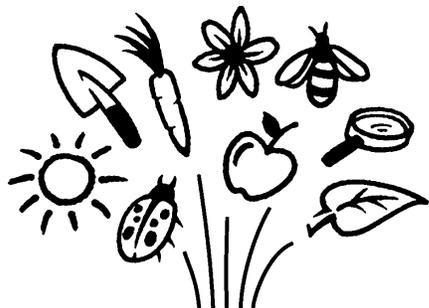


THE GARDEN TIMES

Winter 2003



**LIFE
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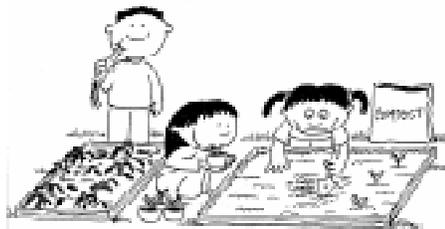
*Life Lab Science Program
is committed to
environmental stewardship
by promoting science and
garden-based education for
all learners.*



Monterey Bay Science
Project/LASERS

The Garden Classroom

Resource Conservation
Program



Teaching Nutrition Through a School Garden

All over the United States the media is abuzz with information on the bad dietary habits of Americans, our dependence on processed and fast food, our high levels of childhood and adult obesity and the diseases associated with being overweight. How can teachers combat these problems, using garden-based education? How can we do so without sacrificing precious classroom minutes dedicated to other subjects?

Research has shown that children who grow and harvest their own vegetables are more willing to taste and like them (Morris, Briggs & Zindenberg-Sherr, 2000). Just by engaging in a school garden project, children are being exposed to the *pleasure* of eating freshly picked produce. For many children, this may be the only really fresh food they consume. Educators can increase the likelihood that children will learn to like and choose these foods by involving students in preparing meals with fresh ingredients from the garden, and integrating lessons on nutrition into their classroom curriculum.

Nutrition activities can easily be incorporated into core subject areas. In science, for example, children can classify foods by their nutritional category, learn which parts of plants they eat, compare the color of vegetables when cooked "al dente" vs. overcooked, and make graphs of class food preferences. Harvesting and cooking food provides wonderful fodder for class creative writing projects, recipe books, plays and oral presentations. Young mathematicians can calculate how many calories they should consume, estimate how much lettuce they will need for a class salad, and learn to convert recipes. And what better way to excite children about other cultures and civilizations than by studying and preparing their meals with crops grown in the school garden?

Now there are new resources for educators to help bring nutrition from the garden to the classroom to the table. These include *Kids Cook Farm Fresh* and *Nutrition to Grow On* (CDE Press, Sacramento, CA). Life Lab will be developing a garden/nutrition activity guide in 2003-2004, with modules for lower and upper grades. The school garden offers many opportunities for helping to solve America's nutrition crisis, one tomato at a time!



**INSIDE... FARM-TO-SCHOOL • NEWS • MAKING THE CONSUMER
CONNECTION • FUN ACTIVITIES • EVENTS CALENDAR
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For more information go to:

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FARM - To - SCHOOL

Farm-to-School is an educational movement developing across the country that teaches kids about the cycles of life from seed to table. There are several components of a Farm-to-School program, including farm field trips, agricultural education, farmers' market salad bars, school gardens, composting and recycling, nutrition education and cooking classes. Successful programs might begin from any of these angles and can be instigated by a variety of different players. Farm-to-School relies on the participation of students, teachers, parents, and food service staff. Farmers are involved not only by providing food to the cafeterias, but also by opening their farms to children during field trips and serving as mentor, both in the classroom and in the school garden.

In starting a Farm to School Program, the first step is to find out what resources you already have. Do you have a school garden? Is there any fresh produce already in your school lunches? Where does your food come from? Do you have farmers in your community who are willing to make a commitment to this program?

Once you have done a bit of sleuthing, it will be easier to see which approach will work best for you. Start with what you have and build your program from there.

More information on Farm to School Programs can be found at:

The National Farm to School Program
www.foodsecurity.org/farm_to_school.html

Healthy Farms, Healthy Kids: Evaluating the Barriers and Opportunities for Farm-to School Programs, By Andrea Azuma and Andy Fisher, January, 2001. Available at: www.foodsecurity.org/pubs.html

Healthy Schools Campaign
www.healthyschoolscampaign.org/farm-to-school-resources.htm

Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF) - www.caff.org Call Serena Coltrane-Briscoe at (831) 429-5620

Life Lab Science Program offers farm field trips and Field to Market to You: A Grocery Store Exploration.

— *Serena Coltrane-Briscoe,*
CAFF



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THANK YOU CURRENT SUPPORTERS!

The David and Lucile Packard Foundation • The Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund • UCSC Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems • Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors • Walter S. Johnson 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 • New Leaf Community Markets • Chez Panisse Foundation • Roberta Jaffe and Dr. Steve Gliessman Reggie Knox • Nancy Cooper, CPA • Kaiser Permanente • Stocker Family Foundation • Central Coast Wilds • Greater Bay Bancorp Foundation • and our growing membership.

Making the Consumer Connection

Educating students about environmental consumerism, local agricultural history, and agricultural changes over time are a few of the goals of the Field-to-Market-to-You Program. A collaborative effort of New Leaf Community Market and Life Lab Science Program, the Field-to-Market-to-You program brings local schools to New Leaf Community Markets to teach students about how their consumer choices affect the food system, the environment, their bodies, and their community. The following is part of the Supermarket Scavenger Hunt adapted from our FTMTY Activity Guide. Try it out the next time you're at the grocery store. For more information on FTMTY visit www.lifelab.org or call (831) 459-2001.

Supermarket Scavenger Hunt

"Organic" means that food was grown without synthetic chemicals to kill weeds and pests, and it is not genetically modified. Find two food items with "Organic" on the label:

In the produce department find products that come from these 6 Plant Parts:

Root Stem Leaf Flower Fruit Seed

Find five types of packaging and write where the packaging will go after it's been used: landfill (trash) , compost, recycling plant, reusable:

Packaging:

It could go to:



STUDENT PROJECT Tea Time in the Garden

As the days grow shorter, the skies become cloudier, and temperature cool to their wintertime norms, we often think of the garden as going into hibernation. But, the garden can still offer us an abundance of materials.....we just have to be more creative! Making herbal tea bags is a great activity for cold fall days or any other time of the year. These make great little gifts. Arrange several of the tea bags in a small basket with some cookies for a great wintertime or holiday gift.

What you need

- Dried or fresh edible aromatic herbs from the garden such as: lemon verbena, chamomile (use the flower), different types of mints, lavender.
- Medium-sized, round coffee filters (with the 'ruffles' around the side)
- Piece a of string about 10 inches long for each tea bag
- 1-2 inch pieces of card stock, folded in half, for tea bag 'tags'
- Hole puncher
- Colored pencils
- Scissors



Procedure

Pick leaves from healthy plants. You will need about 1/8 cup of leaves per tea bag. Don't be afraid to mix different herbs. Place the leaves in the center of the flattened, round coffee filter. Gather the sides of the filter at the top and tie with one end of the string.

Cut pieces of card stock about 2x4 inches in size. Fold in half, and punch a hole near the top fold. Decorate the "tea bag tag" using colored pencils. Kids can get creative in naming their teas. Write instructions on the inside including "steeping the tea for 2-3 minutes". After decorating the tag, tie the other end of the string through the punched hole to the "tea bag tag".

Finally, boil some water, pour into a cup, and steep for 2-3 minutes. Enjoy a warm cup of tea indoors while you watch your winter garden change outdoors!

Life Lab Partners with Kaiser Permanente to Develop Garden/Nutrition Materials

Life Lab is pleased to announce a new collaboration with Kaiser Permanente to create a nutrition activity guide for teachers to be used in conjunction with school gardens. Through the project, Life Lab will develop the materials and test them with teachers in Kaiser Redwood City's service area. The activity guide will then be made available to educators nationwide through our website. If your school is in the Kaiser Redwood City service area (in California), and you are interested in participating in the field test, please call us at 831-459-2001, or contact us at education@lifelab.org.

Purchase Online at www.lifelab.org

- ✓ K-5 Garden-Based Science Curricula
- ✓ Garden Based Activity Guides, CD's, and Calendars
- ✓ School and Classroom Resource Conservation Materials
- ✓ Payment for Tours, Camp and Community Events
- ✓ Life Lab T-Shirts and Caps

2004 EVENTS

LLSP Regional Spring Conference March 20
Annual conference showcasing aspects of science teaching.

Chickens and Eggs in the Garden Classroom April 3

NEW Spring Break Gardening Day Camp April 5-9, 9:00 - 1:00, Children 7-11 are invited to join us on the farm for spring gardening, cooking, and crafts.

NEW After School Program at the Garden Classroom
(Tuesdays) April 13, 20, 27, May 4, 11 \$20 per class or whole series \$75 for LL Friends/\$85 general public. 3:30-5:00 Children 7-11 will be working alongside our garden staff, tending to our hens and bees, sowing seeds and cooking in our garden kitchen.

Science Exploration Field Trips Begin April 13, Tuesday - Friday, 10:00-1:00, 2nd - Middle School, \$125 per class, 30 child maximum. Reserve your space soon!

Growing Classroom Workshop for Educators April 30 - May 1, Life Lab Garden Classroom

3rd Annual Summer Fare in the Garden Classroom June 5

Wildlands & Watering Cans Summer Day Camp June 21-25; June 28 - July 2; July 12- 16, 9:00-3:00, 7-10 year olds

Millipedes and Microscopes Science Exploration Day Camp July 26-30, 9:00-3:00, 11-14 year olds

Benefit Dinner in the Garden Classroom July 31, Chef Lynn Sheehan from Sand Rock Farm will be preparing a seasonal farm feast benefiting Garden Classroom Programs.

R.S.V.P. for all workshops and classes by calling (831) 459-2001 or at www.lifelab.org

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This newsletter is sponsored by Nancy Cooper, CPA.

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