



LIFE LAB Science Program

Our Mission is to Inspire Learning and Conservation by Engaging Students and Educators in the Natural World.

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SEPTEMBER 15, 2007**

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THE GROWING CLASSROOM**

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**LIFE LAB 2007 EVENTS
CALENDAR**

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THE GARDEN TIMES



Watch learning come to life in the garden!

Summer 2007

EDIBLE LUNCH

Contributed by:

Life Lab Board Member, Barbara H. J. Gordon, PhD

When did school lunch programs begin? How are they funded? Here are a few answers and ideas about how you might help influence what your children eat.

A Brief History of School Lunch Programs: In the 1930s, the first School Lunch Program was federally funded and included commodity foods purchased from farmers by the federal government. In 1946, the program received permanent status through the Department of Agriculture to ensure healthy youth as a matter of national security. Partly due to the malnutrition in male teens who were not draft worthy during World War II, school children were fed a high caloric meal with 1/3 of the Minimum Daily Requirement of protein, calcium, iron, and Vitamins A and C. Initially, the program provided lunches for every child in need, at no cost to the family. Later, the federal government passed the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to help schools buy food.

from states to provide whose families pay.

During the years, educational established hunger in inhibits learning. School Break-funded by an initiative of President Kennedy. Since then,

has decreased, commodity products have become less available, and family income qualifications have been instituted. The price of a lunch meal the student paid was based on family income, number of people per family and the annual average wage per family in the US for that year. These changes had several effects: 1) Forms filled out in English had to be filed each school year revealing the family's income so a subsidy could be calculated for low-income families to receive free or reduced cost meals, and 2) A social stigma developed for those students whose meals were subsidized. For example, students were separated by pay classifications in lunch lines for ease of bookkeeping by the school staff and word spread among students about who was receiving subsidized lunch.



This assumed matching funds free meals for students could not afford to

following 20 tional research that morning school children ing. So in 1962, fast was federally tiative of President funding for these meals

More Recent Changes in School Lunch Programs: Now, the formula for pricing the meals includes both federal and state subsidies plus money raised by school personnel. These subsidies vary depending on the number of meals served, the incomes of families in the school district and the average family income in the particular state. The most recent update regarding reimbursements for school lunch is state Legislation (SB 20) proposed by Senator Torlakson. It calls for a six cent increase per lunch served. In addition, this increase is to be linked to the altered nutrition standards for the meals. The topic of nutrition standards has always been an important one. However, the general controversy has been associated with the foods served and their preparation, not the health standards set by the government.

continued on next page...

Fresh Fruit Crepes

Yield: 10 to 12 crepes, about 6 inches across

Time: 45 minutes, including 15 minutes to let batter sit

Materials: spoon, bowl, measuring cups, 6-inch nonstick skillet

Ingredients:

1 cup whole wheat flour

1 cup milk

2 eggs, lightly beaten

1/4 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon vanilla

butter

fresh seasonal fruit (strawberries, blackberries, peaches, kiwis)

whipped cream

Directions:

Whisk the milk into the flour slowly. Whisk in beaten eggs, salt, and vanilla. Let sit for 15-30 minutes to allow air bubbles to rise and pop.

In a skillet, melt 1/4 t. butter, medium heat. Coat the bottom with butter. Take the skillet off the heat and pour 1/4 cup batter in the middle. Coat the entire bottom in batter. Cook 1 to 2 minutes, until the crepe is no longer liquid on top. Turn the crepe over and cook for 30 seconds, then transfer it to a plate. Repeat with the remaining batter, adding another 1/4 t. butter to the pan after every 2 or 3 crepes.

Serve filled with sliced fresh fruit, about 3 T. in the center of each crepe. Fold the edges in from two sides to the center so they overlap. Transfer to a serving plate, and top with whipped cream.

Adapted from:
The Children's Kitchen Garden
by Georgeanne & Ethel Brennan

LUNCH CONTINUED...

So, What About Nutrition? In 1977, the United States Senate set dietary guidelines for adults for the first time in order to address chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease. In 1997, dietary guidelines were developed for children and school lunches were adjusted to them. However, because commodity foods are no longer available, and government funding has declined, school food service personnel cover the shortfall either by fundraising or inventing methods to save money on meal components.

A Few Creative Innovations in School Lunches in California: Some schools, districts and programs have used these new developments to create exciting, healthful changes for school lunch.

Project Food Lab, Pacific School, Davenport, CA: A unique lunch program, Project Food Lab is an extension of the science and nutrition curriculum of the Life Lab garden program. Since 1984, students in grades 4-6 plan and prepare daily student lunches.

Farm to School: A group of CA-based organizations and school districts led by Occidental College's Center for Food and Justice are working towards advancing and institutionalizing the Farm-to-school concept throughout the state.

The Edible School Yard: A program of Alice Waters and Martin Luther King Middle School in the Berkeley Unified School District, in which children learn about the connection between what they eat and where it comes from, fostering environmental stewardship and revolutionizing the school lunch program.

Life Lab Science Program: Here, we offer professional development for teachers that incorporate garden-based learning, science, environmental and nutrition curricula. Students learn the links between growing food, its preparation, and consumption.

Resources:

www.healthyschoollunches.org

www.ecoliteracy.org

www.lunchlessons.org

www.angrymoms.org

www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Lunch/default.htm

www.edibleschoolyard.org

www.farmtoschool.org/ca

www.pacific.santacruz.k12.ca.us

FOOD WHAT?!

The Santa Cruz Youth Farm, commonly known as "Food, What?!", is a new Life Lab youth empowerment program using food, through sustainable agriculture and health, as a vehicle for bringing about personal growth and transformation. We work with teenage youth to grow, cook, eat and distribute healthy, sustainably raised food. These acts empower youth to realize their full potential, to enjoy life, and serve as a base for skill and leadership development.

***We believe youth will be empowered through food.***

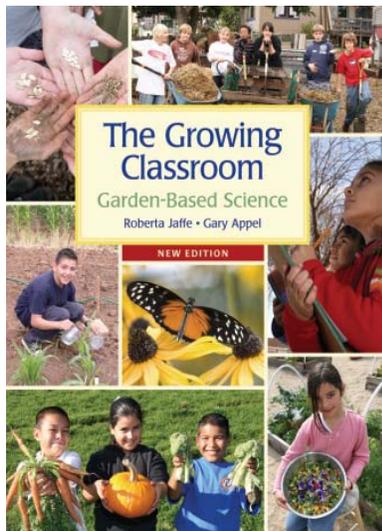
Doron Comechero, a previous CASFS Farm apprentice, serves as the Program Coordinator of Food, What?! He joins the family of Life Lab with much experience as a community organizer and outreach coordinator for NYC's community gardening program, GreenThumb, and a facilitator of a national youth empowerment movement grounded in sustainable agriculture, Rooted in Community.

Life Lab is currently seeking funding for this ground-breaking new program.

☀️ SAVE THE DATE! SEPTEMBER 15, 2007

LIFE LAB'S ANNUAL BENEFIT EVENT: A TASTE OF THE HARVEST

Join us as Life Lab Science Program celebrates its 28th year with A Taste of the Harvest, our Annual Benefit Event. Friends and supporters will come together in the Garden Classroom to commemorate and help sustain our educational programs. Come sample the bounty of our harvest and celebrate another year!



ANNOUNCING THE NEW EDITION OF *THE GROWING CLASSROOM!*

Revised to meet current California science standards and educator needs, this award winning teachers' guide contains instructions for setting up a garden-based science program and outdoor classroom activities. Topics include: working with students in the garden, growing, nutrients, garden ecology, climate, nutrition, gardening tips, and food choices.

www.lifelabstore.org/activity.html

"For their development as fully human beings, children need the natural world. They need to exercise the full use of their senses, get their hands dirty, and their feet wet. Gardening not only develops the senses, but also helps children think more clearly, observe more closely, and work more cooperatively. *The Growing Classroom* is a wonderful tool to help make all of that happen."

— Richard Louv, author of *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*

WELCOME!

NEW ADDITIONS TO LIFE LAB:

WHITNEY COHEN & STEWART JENKINS

Whitney joins us as our new Education Coordinator, and Stewart as the Monterey Bay Science Program Coordinator. Both come to us with many years of teaching experience and life adventures. We are so excited to have them join our staff!



Life Lab would like to thank Erika Perloff and Robbie Jaffe for their many years of hard work and dedication. They will both be giving their time and service to other areas of life. Erika, our long-time Education Director, is hoping to spend more time creating amazing art and having wild adventures with her two teenagers. Robbie, an original founder and board member, plans to continue working with CAN, Community Agroecology Network, and growing and producing organic dry farmed wine. All the best!

Hear Us, Hear Us

From *The Growing Classroom:*
Garden-Based Science



Description:

Students graph their favorite food preferences and present their graphs to the school food service representative.

Objective:

To use graphing as a means of presenting food preferences.

Materials:

- * Large Sheets of Newsprint
- * Markers

Action:

1. Have students make five graphs labeled Fruit, Vegetables, Beverages, Grains, and Meat/Meat Alternatives.
2. Have students take nominations for seven favorite healthful foods in each category and list nominations on the bottom of each graph. Guide the students to make healthy choices.
3. Have them record on each graph the number of students who prefer each food listed.
4. Send the results to the food service representative, accompanied by a class letter explaining the project.

Wrap Up:

Which food was the class favorite in each category? Name a whole grain, fruit or vegetable that you like that is not on the graph. Which was the overall favorite food in the class? If you were the school services director, how would you use this information?

Digging deeper:

Invite the school or district food services director to class to talk about how the information could be used.

Workshops:

Discovering the Garden in Early Childhood Education - August 24. Learn how to incorporate garden activities into a pre-school program or into family life.

Free School Garden Workshop - September 19. Join teachers for an afternoon learning ways to enhance your school garden. Location and theme TBD. 3:45-5:30. This workshop is sponsored by the California Department of Education's Garden Based Learning Regional Training Center.

Growing Classroom Workshop - September 27-28. Learn to guide children in a garden setting, connecting to academic standards, program management and basic gardening and composting instruction.

California School Garden Network's Creating and Sustaining Your School Garden Workshop - November 3rd. Spend a day with your school garden team learning school gardening skills.

Fieldtrips:

Farm to Fork Fall Field Trips for 2nd - Middle School. Begin in September *Fall 2007 is full. Call 459-4035 to be on our waiting list. Book for Fall 2008 starting in September 2007. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 10:00-1:00.

Seeds of Wonder Field Trips for Pre-school - Kinder. Begin in September, Wednesdays, 9:00 and 11:00

Events:

A Taste of the Harvest: Life Lab's Annual Benefit - September 15. A seasonal tasting benefiting the Garden Classroom Programs. Enjoy hors d'oeuvres, wine, and a silent auction in the beautiful Garden Classroom.

Harvest Festival - October 6. Don't miss the UCSC Farm's annual celebration. Great music, food, apple tasting, an apple pie bake-off, hay rides, garden talks, kids' events, tours, displays by local farmers, and an all around good time. 11:00-5:00, \$5, kids 12 and under free.

School Garden Bus Tour - Sunday, October 14. This tour is offered as part of the California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom's Annual Conference.

For more information, please see - www.lifelab.org



Need Ideas for your California Instructional School Garden Program Grant Funds?

In the fall, schools across California that applied for the grant are slated to receive their funding to be used for materials and professional development for school gardens. Life Lab's new edition of the Growing Classroom is an ideal resource to support garden-based learning. Our workshop offerings are a great way to get your school staff teaching in the garden. Don't have a garden? Have Life Lab help design your educational garden space. Call us 831-459-2001.

Thank You To Our Supporters!

California Association of Nurseries and Garden Centers
California Department of Education
California School Garden Network
California Science Project
Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems
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