



Grow Local



School Garden Activity Guide



A publication of Sustainable Food Center

GROW.SHARE.PREPARE.



SFC's Grow Local Program

School Garden Activity Guide



SUSTAINABLE FOOD CENTER

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• May 2015 •

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Introduction

About Sustainable Food Center

Sustainable Food Center is an independent non-profit organization in Austin, Texas. Our mission is to cultivate a healthy community by strengthening the local food system and improving access to nutritious, affordable food. SFC’s Grow Local gardening program, one of SFC’s three programs, offers Central Texas residents knowledge and resources necessary to grow their own food. For over 30 years, Grow Local has been helping local residents start and sustain school gardens by connecting parents, teachers, and community members with the resources and education they need in order to plan, fund, build, sustain, and advocate on behalf of school gardens, and we want to share what we have learned through this guide. The School Garden Activity Guide is one of the educational resources Grow Local provides school gardeners.

Using the School Garden in the Classroom

School gardens provide an excellent context for teaching a variety of subjects. Educators can take advantage of school gardens as teaching tools and can incorporate gardening and healthy food into countless classrooms and educational topics. SFC has developed these activities for a wide range of grade levels to support the efforts of teachers who are integrating gardening, healthy food, and food systems lessons into their classrooms.

How to Use This Guide

The lessons here are divided into three areas: **Gardening**, **Food Systems**, and **Cooking**. These lessons are primarily for upper elementary and middle school grades, with some high school lessons, and they are adaptable for different grade levels with additional extensions. They are designed to be taught in any order, as the opportunity arises. Many of the gardening lessons are designed with a school or classroom garden in mind. However, we offer guidance on how to teach the lesson even without access to a school garden. The activities are geared towards learning different aspects of gardening in relation to a wide variety of classroom subjects. Lessons about the food system help students understand components of the food system and aim to help students understand food sources as they are purchasing foods. The lessons on cooking focus on how our food choices relates to both physical health and the health of our communities. These lessons include recipes that can be prepared with different types of kitchen equipment. For example, in a lesson where students prepare a snack for a visiting guest, we include several recipes that can be prepared without a stove or a heat source. Likewise, the recipes can be modified to reflect tastes and available ingredients. We hope teachers will supplement these lessons with their own skills, recipes, and ideas.

Additional Resources

Also included in this Appendix is a template for planning your own lessons and a guide for setting up garden journals, as well as additional relevant documents, websites, and charts to support you in teaching the most relevant, engaging lessons possible.

Thank You!

This activity guide was created with the expertise of past and current Grow Local staff, after school leaders, and volunteers. We are especially grateful for the energy, enthusiasm, and experience of Billy Smith. Thank you to all who were involved in the creation of these useful and engaging activities!

GARDENING ACTIVITIES



VICTORY GARDENS

Intended Age: Grades 5-8 | Time: 45-90 Minutes

Summary

Students will understand the history of Victory Gardens and plan their own garden or garden propaganda.

Essential questions

What's the relationship between gardening and war? What is a victory garden? Why might the government encourage people to garden in wartime?

Preparation notes

Review the websites listed under Resources (p.5) to familiarize yourself with Victory Gardens. Consider creating your own propaganda poster as a model.

Key words and concepts

- ◆ Victory Garden
- ◆ Propaganda
- ◆ Homefront

Materials

- ◆ Victory Garden Poster Examples (The websites included under Resources are also great sources for more poster examples)
- ◆ Blank paper
- ◆ Art supplies (crayons, markers, colored pencils)
- ◆ Seed packets (option 1)



VICTORY GARDENS (cont.)

Intended Age: Grades 5-8 | Time: 45-90 Minutes

Procedure

1. Ask students to share and discuss what they already know about WWII
2. Ask students if they know what the term “homefront” means, and introduce the concept that people who were not in the military, especially women, were still important in the war effort.
3. Encourage students to list different ways that they think people got involved in the U.S. to help the war effort overseas during WWII.
4. Talk about and show examples of posters and radio commercials encouraging women to plant victory gardens at their homes and in parks and other public spaces. Ask students why they think the U.S. government wanted people to start gardens.
5. Introduce the concept of Victory Gardens by discussing food shortages and rationing. Victory gardens helped people to become self sufficient; they saved money; and they freed up resources to be sent to the troops.

Option 1: Planning a garden

1. Distribute seed packets and blank paper.
2. Model where to find information on the packet about how much space each plant needs.
3. Ask students to plan their own Victory Garden using the paper
4. Ask students to consider: how large a garden would they need? Which vegetables are they planting? How much space does each plant need?

Option 2: Students draw their own posters encouraging people to plant Victory Gardens

1. Distribute blank paper and art supplies

Allow students 10-15 minutes (or longer) to draw their pictures.



VICTORY GARDENS (cont.)

Intended Age: Grades 5-8 | Time: 45-90 Minutes

Once students have finished, go around the room and encourage everyone to share either what they planted in their garden or the slogan and/or picture they created to encourage Victory Gardens.

After the activity is over, ask students if they would enjoy planting their own Victory Gardens. Why might people keep gardening even without propaganda?

Ask if any of the students already have gardens, and encourage them to share some of the things they grow in their gardens. Visit your school garden if you have one!

Extension

Canning and pickling; ask students what they would do if their Victory Garden had more produce than they could eat. Possible ideas: donate it, cook it, pickle it, can it.

Make refrigerator pickles with vegetables, jars, and brine.

Resource:

<http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/ted-allen/refrigerator-pickles-cauliflower-carrots-cukes-you-name-it-recipe.html>

Resources

Examples of Victory Garden/Food Propaganda Posters:

<http://www.zazzle.com/victory+garden+posters>

<http://www.nh.gov/nhsl/ww2/sacrifice.htm>

Modern Victory Garden Propaganda Posters:

<http://victorygardenoftomorrow.com/posters.html>

<http://www.eatlocalchallenge.com/2008/08/community-canni.html>