

Veggie Bytes

Summer Edition

May 2017– July 2017

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Wishing You the Best Summer!!!!

Summer Checklist for the school garden

- Clean out weeds & cover garden with black plastic

Or

- Plant watermelon, cantaloupe, sweet corn, southern peas, or other dense crops to shade out weeds
- Speak with school staff make sure water is kept on if you decide to garden through the summer
- Find volunteers to harvest summer produce so that it does not rot in the garden... Plus weeds will need to be pulled where stands are less dense

WINN PARISH CABBAGE PATCH

Students in the 3rd grade at Atlanta High School learned about vegetable gardening by growing their own head of cabbage. They accomplished this under the tutelage of Donny Moon, Extension Agent and Shannon Chevallier, Extension Assistant Nutrition Education. Cabbage transplants were supplied by Bonnie Plants. Each student was responsible for taking care of their cabbage plant. At harvest, each head of cabbage was weighed. The heaviest head weighed 9 pounds!

Story Continued on page 3.



What's Growing!

Remember... only plant the garden if you have intentions of caring for the plants throughout the summer.

May

Directly Place Seed into the Garden

Snap, lima, and butter beans, collards, okra, southern peas, pumpkins, winter squash, sweet corn, watermelons

Transplant into the Garden

Sweet potatoes, squash, cucumbers, peppers

June

Directly Place Seed into the Garden

Pumpkins, collards, okra, southern peas

Transplant into the Garden

Sweet potatoes and tomatoes, summer squash, winter squash, okra

July

Start Seeds for the Fall Garden

Broccoli, bell pepper, Brussel sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, and pumpkins

Directly Place Seed into the Garden

Collard greens, okra, and watermelons

Transplant into the Garden

Tomato transplants (heat set)

Energy Cycles & Chickens

Bains Elementary students in West Feliciana Parish enjoyed playing outside with friendly chickens. Pre-K through 4th grade students were studying cycles and energy. Andre Brock, County Agent, and Layne Langley, Area Nutrition Agent, used this opportunity to provide the example of how energy cycles can sometimes relate to the garden.

The sun's light provides energy to grow plants. Plants (like corn) produce food for animals. Chickens eat corn, and people eat chickens. Not only do people eat chickens or their eggs... but we can also use their litter (fancy word for feces) in the garden as fertilizer.



Winn Parish Cabbage Patch Continued...

Donny Moon helps students weigh their heads of cabbage. Students not only grew the cabbage but learned the health benefits of eating cabbage. For instance did you know that cabbage has many vitamins including manganese, iron and vitamins B1 and B2. Cabbage is also high in fiber, probiotics, and has antioxidant properties. Some studies have shown cabbage may lower blood pressure. Why not eat it right? Well students may say "I don't like the way it tastes"... So challenge them to eat it. And that exactly what Winn Parish



students did... After harvest, the students were introduced to different ways of cooking cabbage, including stir fry with chicken and pork and boiling cabbage. Students enjoyed sharing their creations with teachers and other students.

Why Discuss Cabbage now? It's a fall crop right?

Actually, cabbage seeds should be planted 5-6 weeks ahead of when you want to plant transplants into the garden. So, if you want to plant cabbage September 1st as an early crop, seeds should be planted at the end of July. Plus knowing early what vegetable crops you want to plant in the fall garden helps with preparation.

1. Order fall vegetable seed in June
2. If it has been over 3 years, have the school garden soil tested
3. Pull weeds and prep garden soil in August
4. Add fertilizer and any other amendments the soil test prompts. Cabbage are medium feeders. They will need a 1/2 lb. to 1lb of 13-13-13 per 10 feet of space in the garden as a preplant fertilizer. This means you'll incorporate the fertilizer into the soil and water it in and wait a week or two prior to planting.
5. Have insecticides that control worms on hand. Bt is organically labeled and a great for use in the school garden pending you have approval from your IPM coordinator.

Watermelon Slush Recipe

Ingredients

1/2 small watermelon, fresh

2 tsp sugar

1/4 cup water, cold (you may also use watermelon juice, if you have some)

Preparation

1. Slice the watermelon into 1-inch cubes and discard seeds.
2. Place watermelon cubes in a gallon-sized plastic bag and place in the freezer.
3. Allow cubes to freeze for about 2 hours.
4. Mix water and sugar together in a small cup until the sugar is completely dissolved.
5. Remove bag containing watermelon from the freezer.
6. Pour the water/sugar mixture into the bag, then reseal.
7. Mash the watermelon/water/sugar until it becomes a nice, smooth consistency.
8. Pour into small cups and serve!

*** Add Mint leaves or juice from a lime for a kick!



Kids DAILIES
Learning to read | Reading to learn

What comes next?



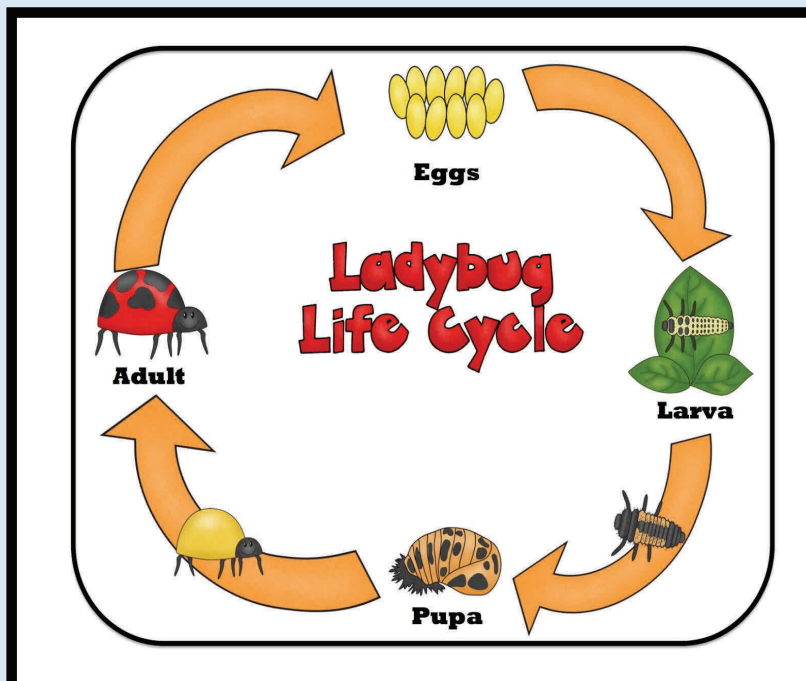
Did You Know ???

Ladybeetles often called Ladybugs are an insect you want to find in the school garden. We call these beneficial insects. Why beneficial? Ladybeetles love to eat aphids, white flies and mites, and other harmful insects.

Look for ladybeetles on the undersides of a leaves or near the new growth at the top of plants. Most pest insects like to hide in these areas and that's exactly where ladybeetles hunt them!



Ladybeetles do not always look like round hard insects with spots. Ladybeetles undergo complete metamorphosis, meaning in each stage of growth (Egg—Larvae—Pupa –Adult) the insect changes almost entirely in how it looks. If you see this small creature walking in your garden, do not worry. It is an immature ladybug.



Did you know...

Some stores even sell ladybeetles to farmers who need extra help with pest control! These little creatures are hard workers!

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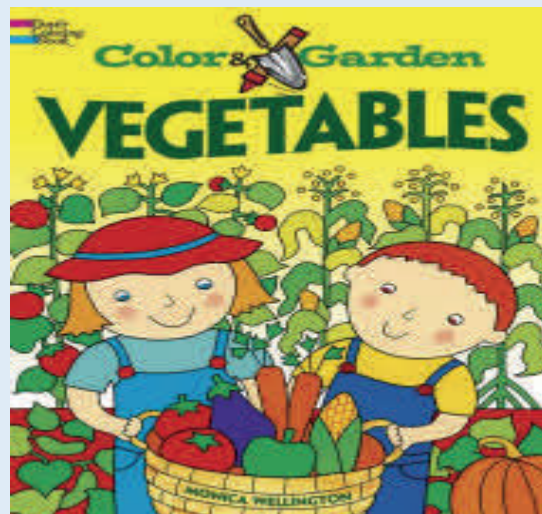
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Book Review!



Join Lucy and Sam in the garden and discover the fun way to eat right and stay healthy with homegrown vegetables. Color pictures of the young farmers as they plant, cultivate, pick, and prepare corn, tomatoes, zucchini, and other nutritious foods. You'll also count worms, protect the crop from hungry bugs, and learn gardening tips that you can use in your own backyard.

ISBN 9780486479590

Watermelon Growing Tips

Who doesn't love biting into a sweet, juicy watermelon on a hot summer day? When you are planning your summer garden, don't forget about watermelons. Watermelons grow on a vine so give them room to sprawl. They need full sun and plenty of space, about 3-4 feet between each planting. If planting seeds, make a shallow hole 1-2 inches deep and drop 4-5 seeds per hole. Water after planting. Plant seeds in May and June. Recommended varieties for Louisiana are: Jubilee, Crimson Sweet, and Sugar Baby. Pull weeds by hand as they come up. Harvest melons after they have developed a yellow belly or sound hollow when thumped.

