

## FRESH from the Garden

### Contest time!



Don't forget!

Sweet Potato Contest [entries](#) are due Friday, October 4.

Local schools can drop off entries in Kannapolis for sweet potato categories. Everyone can submit written entries online; many are suitable even if you didn't grow sweet

potatoes.



### Save the Date

The School Garden Summer Institute is on the move. The past two years, the SGSI was held right before school began. In 2020, the 2-day training workshop will be June 24-25.

Mark your calendar now; registration will open in the spring.



### Book a Professional Development



Most successful school gardens utilize a garden team. Many times at the School Garden Summer Institute, we heard the comment, "I wish my team / principal / STEM coach / etc. were here to hear this."

If you have an interested team and would like to host a school or regional PD, [connect with us](#) to plan a training in Spring 2020.

PHHI offers several workshops of varying time and intensity to support the development and effective implementation of school garden curriculum connections.



### In the Garden Now



## Plant

This is your last chance to get in a few more plants if you haven't done so already.

Though it is getting late, you can still plant radishes from seed and probably lettuce as well. You can also plant crops like kale and spinach from transplants and these have a long harvest season, possibly even into 2020. You can still plant broccoli and cauliflower, but at the threat of first frost, have season extenders ready.

If you plan to harvest ripe, red straw berries in April and May, now is the time to get straw berry plants established. The straw berry plants will not need much attention through fall and winter, but it's important for them to establish a healthy root system to support a burst of vegetative growth and fruit set in late winter, early spring.

This will be your last outdoor planting month of the year so don't delay if your beds are still empty.

## Harvest

If you planted any cool season crops in September, then you should be able to harvest most of them this month. Cool weather will encourage head formation of broccoli and cauliflower, so be ready to cut it when it is fully formed and definitely before the buds (head) turn yellow!

Have a plan for your harvest. Tasting is always at the top of our recommendation list because you may be surprised how many of your students have never tasted fresh, raw vegetables. Their parents may be surprised at their willingness to try the vegetables, but having grown it, they will be more likely to at least try it. You can offer a dressing, dip or hummus that might further delight their palate. If you don't have enough or a tasting isn't going to work for you, think of other ways to encourage learning; e.g., sort, measure, divide, weigh or even use your harvest for art.

## Maintenance

If you've had crops in the ground in September, there's no doubt you've needed to do a lot of irrigating. October may bring similar dry weather so be prepared to check your garden daily for water in the root zone and irrigate in the morning, if possible.

If you have season extenders be sure to have them ready this month as you never know for certain when the first frost will be, but it is likely to be in the latter part of this month or the beginning of November. Develop a system for who will manage when cloth will be pulled over and taken off. Remember that students often take great pride in their jobs when given specific responsibilities.

Caterpillars may be eating your crops this month. Set up a "search party" to find them; pick off, and discard.



## Resource Spotlight: Worms!

Vermicomposting was a topic covered at the School Garden Summer Institute in August. Ten attendees went home with a DIY worm bin and a starter population of worms. At PHH, we've got 2 worm bins that can be "checked out" for classroom use. Give it a try, risk free, for a couple months. Submit the [request form](#) to bring a worm bin to your classroom. Don't forget there are other resources that we gladly loan out as well (listed on the request form)!



Here are some extra wiggly resources:

- [Video: Worms Can Recycle Your Garbage](#)
- [Vermicomposting: A 5th Grade School Enrichment Curriculum](#)
- [Worm Composting in Your Classroom](#)
- ELA Lesson Plan: [Fact or Fiction: Learning About Worms Using Diary of a Worm](#)

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**Questions? Contact us!**

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