

## FRESH from the Garden

### A message from Amy & Doug

Spring harvest is here! Make sure you plan what you will do with your harvest. Tastings are an obvious option. The students have been patiently awaiting the fruits of their labor; make sure they have the opportunity to sample their crops. We've included a yummy hands-on recipe for kale below, or check the [website](#) for more recipes.

Another great use of your harvest is addressing measurement and data standards. You can predict, measure, weigh, count, order, sort, and graph your harvest. Designate a place to log your data and track your harvest from year to year. This can help with planning next year's garden or incite a little competition to see if next year's class can increase crop yield. For some great harvest information, including how-to videos, check out resources from

[Big Green](#). You can even submit your harvest data for a chance to win a kitchen kit.

Carver Elementary School will be using some of their harvest in a spring farmers market as part of an economics unit for 2nd grade. Students will be pricing their produce and flowers based on the cost of the seeds and care required to get them started.

[Registration](#) is now open for the [PHHI School Garden Summer Institute](#), August 15-16. Participation is free but space is limited, so register now! We will have two full days of speakers and workshops, including site visits to Barbee Farms and Pitts School Road Elementary's school garden in Concord. Check out the schedule and find more information on the [STEM website](#).

Look at this great kohlrabi and cauliflower that's growing at Irvin Elementary!



# In the Garden Now



## Plant

Now is the time to plant summer crops if you are planning a summer garden. Summer crops might include tomatoes, squash, peppers, cucumbers, beans, melons, eggplant, corn, okra, and more.

If the garden won't be used over the summer, following harvest of your spring crops, we suggest planting a cover crop, such as buckwheat (simply broadcast seed over your prepared bed) or cover your beds with tarps. Cover crops help to build the soil by replenishing nutrients, and buckwheat is an excellent pollinator for honey bees.



## Harvest

Harvesting should be in full swing. Lettuce and broccoli are very prone to bolting (preparing to produce seeds). Don't forget to taste what you harvest, ideally before they bolt (the flavor becomes bitter once they do).

If some of your crops do bolt, all is not lost. Continue to observe flowering and seed production, harvesting when the seeds have dried. You can plant the seeds you collect next fall; store them in a paper coin envelope in the refrigerator. Not many people get to see where lettuce seeds come from!



## Maintenance

As temperatures increase, so do garden pests. One natural control method for cutworms is diatomaceous earth. If you aren't familiar with diatoms, they are one of nature's most interesting microscopic organisms. In addition to being a natural pesticide, they may be responsible for the grit in your toothpaste. I see a mini-lesson on shapes in nature! Learn more [here](#).

Check the moisture level of your beds twice daily and water as needed.

Remember that morning is the best time to water.



# Lesson Planning

LESSON PLAN		Harvest Math
<b>Overview</b>	Students will explore math concepts using harvested vegetables.	<b>Grade Level:</b> K-5 <b>Subject Area:</b> Math <b>Time Frame:</b> 1-2 class periods
<b>Engage &amp; Explore</b>	When it is time to harvest a crop, take students out to the garden and show them the proper way to harvest. Be sure to wash hands before and after visiting the garden! Make it clear which crops are to be harvested and which need a little more time to grow. Allow the students to harvest the crops. Wash the harvested produce thoroughly.	<b>Materials:</b> Buckets for harvesting Sharp knives or other non-standard unit (K-1) Rulers (2-5) Diatom fossils to harvest (optional and -wholes work well for this lesson)
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Kindergarten</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Count the number of each type of crop harvested, identify whether one crop is "more than, less than, or equal to" another crop</li><li>Compare a measurable attribute of the crop (example: carrot length)</li><li>Classify the different crops and count each</li></ul>	<b>Standards:</b> K.CC.5, K.CC.8 K.MD.2, K.MD.3 1.MD.1, 1.MD.2, 1.MD.4 1.GA.1 2.GA.1, 2.GA.3 2.MD.1, 2.MD.2, 2.MD.4 3.GA.1, 3.GA.3, 3.NF.1 3.MD.2, 3.MD.4 4.GA.2, 4.NF.1, 4.NF.2 5.MD.1

## Harvest Math

Measurement, fractions, graphing, and conversions! The garden harvest offers so many options for a hands-on math lesson.

Harvest Math will give you lots of ideas matched to state standards by grade level.

[Download Lesson Plan](#)



# Growing Healthy Bodies

## Massaged Kale Salad

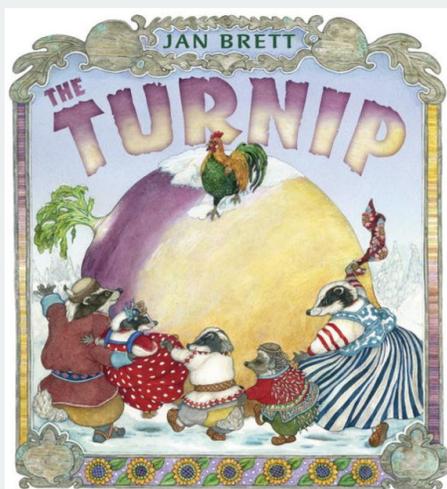
Instead of hiding your kale in a smoothie, try highlighting this superfood with a simple massaged kale salad.

Massaging the kale leaves breaks down the tough cellulose structure, making the leaves silky and tender. Offer a topping bar to let each child customize their salad. Our favorite topping is roasted sunflower seeds.

[Get the Recipe](#)



## Book Review



### *The Turnip* by Jan Brett

Jan Brett brings an original twist to a classic Russian folktale, Tolstoy's *The Enormous Turnip*.

The badger family struggles to pull up a giant turnip, but with the help of their animal friends and a cocky rooster, they are finally able to harvest the turnip. Now, mother badger will make turnip pancakes for everyone!

This is a great book to use for predicting and problem solving.

Check out Pinterest and Teachers Pay Teachers for some great lesson ideas. [Here's](#) one we recommend.



## Q&A

**Q:** I have heard about using cover crops. What are they, and what is the benefit to using them?

**A:** Cover crops can be used to prevent soil erosion, enrich the soil, and may serve to attract pollinators.

For school gardens, the main benefits will be enriching the soil and preventing weed growth during the summer.

In the fall, a few weeks before planting,

**Q:** Are there any crops I can plant now and harvest in the fall?

**A:** North Carolina is the number one state in sweet potato production. We produce 50% of the nation's sweet potatoes, mostly in the sandy soils of Eastern NC. Sweet potatoes can be planted in late May to early June and can be dug in the fall before the first frost (but you probably wouldn't wait that late if you want to plant a fall garden!).

hoe up your cover crop - but don't compost it! Work it into the existing soil where it will decompose, adding nutrients and organic matter back into the soil ecosystem.

[Read more](#) from NC State Extension about summer cover crops for North Carolina.



Sweet potatoes come in white, purple, and orange varieties, and are commercially grown from slips. [Here](#) is a great link to all things sweet potato, including [how to grow sweet potatoes from sprouts](#). Be sure to check out [Sweet! Potatoes in the Classroom](#) for resources including lesson plan downloads and recipes.



**Questions? Contact us!**

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