

“Garden Heroes: Grow Your Own Food!”

For Kids in Gr. 1-5. Limit of 12 kids per session, and parents are welcome with younger siblings. Different kids come each week. **Middle School Volunteers** are very helpful. Sign them up in advance.

Find a “Garden Angel” if you are inexperienced. Avid Gardeners are passionate and helpful!

There may be space you can use in your community, if there is no space to garden at your library.

Vermont Community Garden Network has a map of School and Community Gardens throughout the state. Spring Workshops available! Schedule at www.vcgn.org

Your school may be part of the **Vermont Farm to School Network**: www.vermontfarmtoschool.org

Container Gardening is another option. *Small-Space Vegetable Gardens* by Andrea Bellamy (\$19.95, 978-1-60469-547-2) is a great resource.

Free organic seeds available from **High Mowing Seeds** in Wolcott: www.highmowingseeds.com

Tender seedlings (tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, squashes) may be available from your local **high school biology dept.**

Essential Planting Tools: Rakes (leaf rake to clear debris, straight metal rake for evening the soil and creating rows), yard stick or tape measure to measure row placement, ruler to measure seed depth, hoe, dirt shovel, hand trowel for seedling placement, cultivator (short/long handle, to break up soil)

Prepare the soil as soon as it can be turned over. Mix in compost to enrich. Create wide rows for scattering seeds, leaving mulched paths in between (straw), so kids to know where it’s safe to walk.

Plant hardy Spring Vegetables in Late April–Early May. (Lettuce, Peas, Kale, Chard, Radishes, Spinach)

Plant tender Summer Vegetables in Late May, after last frost. (Tomatoes, Cucumbers, Peppers, Squashes, String Beans)

Weed early and often. (Weeding is always our first job with the kids every week.) A Compost Bin is helpful when weeding. Watering is critical during dry spells. Water deeply once a week. (Better than frequent shallow watering.) Ask for Volunteers to help water and weed.

Helpful Supplies for Garden Visits: Baskets to gather fresh produce, butterfly nets to catch insects for viewing, water jugs for hot days (or have kids bring their own water bottles), hoes and weeders.

Surround the garden plot with low wire fence, to help mark boundary for wandering pets. Marigolds around the border help deter pests.

Ask for donations of tomato cages, since the vines need to be tied to supports as they grow.

Winter Squashes would be wonderful to offer to schools for use in the fall. (Mine failed to fruit.)

StoryWalks available at Kellogg-Hubbard Library: <http://www.kellogghubbard.org/storywalk>
Reserve in advance. *Rah Rah Radishes* by April Pulley Sayre is a great title to promote the garden.

“Garden Heroes: Cook Your Own Food!”

For Kids entering Gr. 1-5, Limit of 12 kids per session. Parents are welcome with younger siblings.

Middle School Volunteers are helpful for tasks, and helping individual kids. We sign them up in advance. Enlist **Adult or High School volunteer(s)** for laborious rinsing/spinning and sharp knife work. Safety first!

We offer this cooking program in conjunction with the gardening program, 9:30am to Noon, for 10 weeks, after school is over. It's better when kids have worked in the garden and then get to eat the food they helped to grow! We allocate 1 hour to walk 3 blocks to the schoolyard garden, weed and harvest, and return with our veggies. Kids cool off and relax for a half hour in the library while we set up tables for the cooking program, with help from our volunteers. The cooking/eating takes 1 hour.

Essential Cooking Utensils: Sink for rinsing fresh produce, Salad spinner (push type), big electric griddle, electric hot plate and large pot for pasta and rice, plastic spatula, serving spoon & ladle, good knife, cutting boards, prep and serving bowls (plastic), dish towels, pot holder.

Paper plates & plastic cutlery – kids can cut soft vegetables by themselves

Food Staples: olive oil, vinegar, salt, pepper, sugar, flour, bread crumbs, garlic, dried herbs, then fresh

Cheese, butter and yogurt donations are available from **Cabot Creamery**: email them at CabotDonations@Cabotcheese.coop

Early Summer Recipes:

- Greens with fresh salad dressing. (Oil & lemon juice, or oil & vinegar, or with mashed strawberries in dressing)
- Fruit Yogurt Smoothies (sometimes with Kale)
- Massaged Kale Salad
- Sauteed Greens (Spinach, Kale, Chard)
- Fresh Peas or Pea Pods (raw, added to salad, or sautéed)
- Sausage and Kale Soup with Potatoes

Mid-Late Summer Recipes:

- Pasta with Zucchini and Spinach and Grated Cheese
- Zucchini Frittata
- Rice Pilaf with any Vegetables
- Pasta with Fresh Tomato Sauce and Any Sauteed Vegetable
- Raw Corn, Cucumber, and Tomato Salad
- Fresh Salsa

Parents have been so pleased to have their kids try new foods that they never ate before. Growing and preparing their own food creates positive attitudes toward fresh, healthy food. Have fun and experiment! Feel free to email me: mary@brownellibrary.org

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