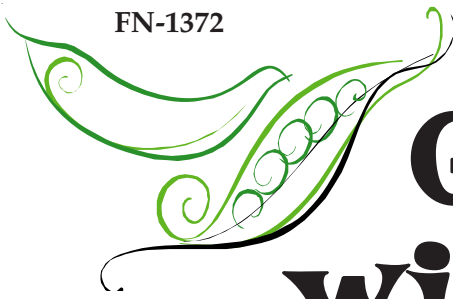


Gardening with Children



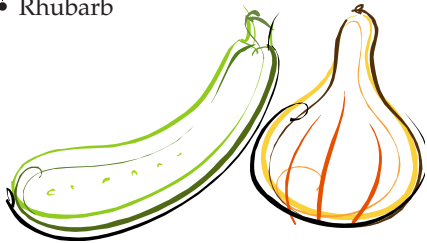
How do children benefit from gardening?

- Caring
- Growing
- Nutrition
- Physical activity
- Exploration
- Relationships
- Cooperation

Get your child interested by helping you design the garden, and plant, water and harvest the fruits of their labor. Children enjoy opportunities to learn through hands-on activities and stories.

Some plants that grow well in North Dakota

- Vegetables
- Sugar Snap Peas
- Potatoes
- Spinach
- Cucumbers
- Green Beans
- Raspberries
- Grapes
- Rhubarb
- Squash
- Tomatoes
- Onions
- Carrots
- Beets
- Fruits
- Strawberries
- Melons



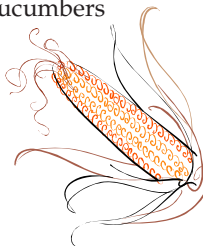
Basic garden preparation steps

1. Test soil fertility (contact county Extension office for information). Till soil if needed.
2. Select seeds or transplants. Some plants are annuals, biennials or perennials. Knowing what season they are grown and harvested in affects the short- and long-term plan for the garden.
3. Determine planting layout in garden. Different layouts are suitable for different plants. Some examples are: furrow, square foot or hill planting. Also, some plants require trellises or cages to support growth.

When to plant

Most plants are best planted in May.

- The first 2½ weeks in May are best for leafy greens (such as lettuce, chard, cauliflower) and beets, carrots and potatoes.
- The last weeks in May are best for beans, squash, melons, cucumbers and tomatoes.
- Consult the seed packet, garden center or plant nursery for additional planting information on specific plants



Tools to get children started

- Child-sized gloves
- Child-sized trowel
- Child-sized rake
- Child-sized watering can
- Soil and fertilizer as needed
- Plants or seeds
- Pots (optional)
- Long-sleeved shirt, pants and closed-toe shoes

Books for learning

Books will excite and educate children about gardening.

The Carrot Seed by Ruth Krauss
Growing Vegetable Soup by Lois Ehlert
Grow a Pumpkin Pie! by Jane E. Gerver

Consider what works for your family

Community Garden – If you don't have a personal garden area on your property, you may be able to enjoy a garden plot in a community garden.

Containers – Using containers or pots may be a good option if you have limited space or access to community gardens.

Compost – If you have a garden on your property, building and maintaining a compost pile or box is a great way to use organic materials to enrich your plant soil. A compost requires soil and raw organic matter, such as leaves, grass clippings, and vegetable and fruit peelings. Alternate soil and raw organic layers and cover with more soil. Make sure the compost is moist so materials can break down. Turn on a regular basis and apply the compost to the garden plot to enrich the soil. Compost is ready for use in your garden when it's no longer hot and is free of odor.

Useful terms

Annual – planted and harvested in one season (spinach, tomatoes, peas)

Perennial – grow back each season without planting for several years (asparagus, rhubarb)

Transplants – young plants for purchase that have started growing in a plant nursery or garden center

Furrow – most common method of planting; plants are in a straight row

Square foot – planting method of dividing the garden into 4-foot by 4-foot squares and planting one variety within the square

Hill – method of planting in a circle, not raised; good for large vegetables, vine vegetables or fruit

NDSU
Extension Service

North Dakota State University
 Fargo, North Dakota 58105

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What to do with all the fruits and vegetables you grow



Garden Chili

- ½ pound of lean hamburger
- 1 cup chopped onion
- ½ cup potatoes, cut into small cubes
- 1 15-ounce can dark kidney beans
- 1½ cups of diced tomatoes, blanch to remove skins
- 15-ounce can or about 2 cups tomato sauce
- ½ cup chopped green peppers
- 1 cup of water
- 1 Tbsp chili powder
- 1 Tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- ½ tsp cumin, ground
- ½ tsp black pepper

Brown hamburger and onion in saucepan over medium heat. Blanch fresh tomatoes by removing stems and scoring bottom of tomato; boil one minute, immediately place in cold water, remove skins. Add remaining ingredients, bring to a boil; reduce heat and simmer for 30 minutes.

Makes eight servings: 170 calories, 22 grams (g) carbohydrate, 3 g fat, 1 g saturated fat, 14 g protein, 6 g fiber, 460 milligrams sodium



Children enjoy eating their freshly grown fruit and vegetables. All garden produce should be washed with plenty of cold water before you eat it. You can store washed and drained produce in airtight containers in the refrigerator to keep them fresh and ready to eat for healthful snacks.

Tomatoes, onions, potatoes and winter squash should not be stored in the refrigerator; instead they should be stored in a cool, dark place.

Methods of Preserving Your Produce

Can fruits and vegetables in sterilized jars with proper canning equipment. Canned produce should be used within one year and stored in a dark, dry place between 50 F and 70 F for best quality.

Dehydrate fruits and vegetables in a dehydrator and store them in a cool, dark, dry place. Fruit can be stored for about six months at 80 F or one year at 60 F. Vegetables can be stored only half as long as fruits.

Freeze fruits and vegetables the same day as harvesting them. Blanch vegetables (boil vegetables, followed immediately by cooling them in ice water) before freezing for best quality. Boiling time varies by vegetable type. Produce freezer life varies. Produce can last eight to 12 months at 0 F.



Additional information

A variety of detailed information on preparation, planting, maintaining and harvesting your garden, along with preserving and storing produce, can be found at your **local NDSU Extension Service office** or by visiting www.ag.ndsu.edu.

References for Gardening with Children

www.ag.ndsu.edu/horticulture/fruit-veg.html

www.ext.nodak.edu/extnews/askext/vegetabl/1132.htm

www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/plantsci/hortcrop/h1185.pdf

www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/plantsci/hortcrop/h1185w.htm (garden prep steps)

www.ext.nodak.edu/extnews/askext/mainlist.htm (preserving produce)

www.ext.nodak.edu/extnews/askext/vegetabl/115.htm (compost information)

www.uga.edu/nchfp/publications/uga/uga_dry_fruit.pdf

www.uga.edu/nchfp/index.html

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