

2nd Grade Planting Instructions

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Planter Garden Master Job Description

- Educate children on the life cycle of plants (seed, seedling, flower, vegetable/fruit, to seed again)
- Educate children on what plants need to grow (water, sun, air, soil)
- Teach students how to plant seeds, care for seedlings (water, thinning plants, pull weeds from root)
- Teach students how to wash/prepare produce to take home, give to teacher or for the produce stand to sell
- Label bed with type and variety of produce being grown (use masking tape on garden sign)
- Planter GMs are responsible for all aspects of bed maintenance
- Work with Lead GM to have students taste test vegetables grown
- Children will rotate about 2-3 times during the school year

Planting Notes & Growing Notes

Step 1: Seed Potatoes

Potatoes are planted from seed potatoes, potato tubers that have sprouting buds on them. Potatoes from the grocery store do not produce well.

Step 2: Prep Potatoes for Planting

About a week before planting, place the seed potatoes in a warm spot, between 60 and 70 degrees Fahrenheit. When the sprouts that form are about 1/4" to 1/2" long, the potatoes are almost ready to plant. A few days before planting, cut large seed potatoes into chunks about 2" wide. Each piece should have at least two buds. After cutting the seed potatoes, let them sit at room temperature for two or three days to callus.

Step 3: Prepare the Site & Plant the Potatoes

Dig holes 3" to 4" deep in hills 12" apart. Place the seed potatoes in the holes cut side down with the eyes pointing up. Cover the seed potatoes with soil. Water well.

Step 4: Hill the Potatoes

When potato plants are 3" tall (takes about five weeks after planting), the potatoes should be "hilled." To hill potatoes, simply pile soil up around the stems. This forces new potatoes to grow above the seed potatoes planted earlier. Hill again when plants grow 4-6" tall. When hilling, it is okay to leave a few of the upper leaves exposed or cover the entire plant. Hill frequently enough so that new tubers are never exposed to direct sun. Green potatoes are poisonous! You will need to hill between classroom garden visits.

Step 5: Harvest the Potatoes

On average, potatoes mature in about 70 or 100-plus days. One clue that the potatoes are almost ready to harvest is that the leaves will yellow and the foliage will die back. It's best to leave them in the ground for two or three weeks after this point so that their skins toughen up; however (given our tight schedule, you may not be able to wait for the plants to die back). Use your hands to carefully dig them up.

Step 6: Eat or Store the Potatoes

Brush off dirt, wash and enjoy potatoes immediately. To store potatoes for later use, place them in a dry spot to cure for another two weeks. After curing, sort through the potatoes and discard any that are soft or shriveled. Place the rest in a cool, dry spot, where they should last for several months.

Harvesting and Taste Testing

- 2nd, 3rd, 4th grades – We encourage you to have children harvest and sample vegetables they have grown during garden time. Have them wash any leftover produce for the Thursday produce sale. They may be left on the covered workbenches near the red barn. Jennifer Whyte will contact you if she'd like to harvest some produce from your beds. We also encourage you to have children give harvested produce to their teachers.
- Work with the LEAD GM to teach what you learn from Whole Foods Cooking demos

2st Grade Planting Timeline

WHEN	WHO	WHAT
January	GMs Students	PREP potatoes for planting 1 week before planting (see planting steps above) PREP BED FOR POTATO PLANTING before children come out- PLANT STARTS
February	Students GMs	WEED AND MULCH; Hill Potatoes SPRINKLE SNAIL BAIT only if you see snails
March	Students GMs	THIN, HARVEST, WEED, MULCH; Hill potatoes SPRINKLE SNAIL BAIT only if you see snails
April	Students GMs	THIN, HARVEST, WEED, MULCH SPRINKLE SNAIL BAIT only if you see snails
May	Students/GMs	REMOVE ALL PLANTS AND WEEDS BY THE ROOT FROM YOUR BED COVER BED WITH A LAYER OF NEWSPAPER AND STRAW – put bed sleep for the summer REMOVE CLASS SIGN AND STORE IN SHED FOR SUMMER