

GROWING HEALTHY KIDS

A guide to gardening with kids



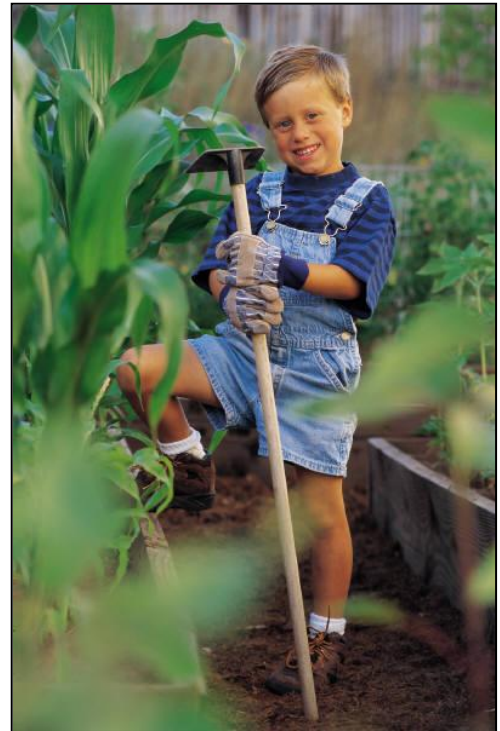
Starting a home garden is a great way to spend time with your kids while teaching them to grow and eat healthy foods. Kids of all ages will appreciate and enjoy the end products of their garden when they know that they were part of the process. And you will enjoy watching them learn and grow as much as they enjoy watching their garden grow!

WHICH BENEFITS ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

- Your kids will see the work and satisfaction that goes into growing and harvesting fruits and vegetables.
- You will save money at the grocery store.
- Gardening is good exercise and can reduce stress for both kids and adults.
- You will be helping the environment by reducing pollution.
- Families with home vegetable gardens eat more fruit and vegetables for improved nutrition

EASY CROPS FOR BEGINNER GARDENERS

1. HERBS
2. BEANS (BUSH, RUNNER, POLE)
3. CUCUMBERS
4. LETTUCE
5. PEAS
6. RADISHES
7. PUMPKINS
8. TOMATOES
9. SQUASH
10. STRAWBERRIES



GETTING STARTED!

Your garden can be as basic as growing herbs on a windowsill or as complex as a multi-crop outdoor plot. If you want to get your kids excited about gardening, it might be best to start small and allow them to be involved at all stages.

Here are some tips for getting kids excited and engaged:

- Buy them their own gardening gloves and tools that are just for them
- If planting in pots, let kids paint or decorate them
- Begin with only a few seed or plant varieties that grow quickly
- Give age appropriate tasks such as planting seeds, weeding, and watering
- Don't expect a perfect garden the first time and learn from mistakes

**THE BEST PART ABOUT GROWING YOUR OWN PRODUCE IS EATING IT-
HERE ARE SOME QUICK RECIPES THAT ARE KID-APPROVED!**

Fresh Homemade Salsa

2 medium jalapeno peppers
½ medium red onions
2 cloves garlic
1 T cider vinegar
2-3 ripe tomatoes
¼ cup fresh cilantro leaves

1. Rinse, remove seeds and mince jalapeno peppers
2. Rinse and peel onion and garlic
3. Dice onion and mince garlic
4. Rinse and dice tomatoes
5. Combine peppers, onion, garlic, cider vinegar, and tomatoes in a medium saucepan
6. Heat mixture for 15 minutes over medium heat, stirring occasionally. Chill and add chopped cilantro leaves before serving

Serving size: 1/3 cup yield: 6

Cucumber Tuna Boats

2 large cucumbers
1 lemon
2 green onions
1 (6 ounce) can tuna in water
1 (15 ½ ounce can white beans
2 T olive oil
½ tsp. salt
¼ tsp black pepper

1. Wash and cut cucumbers lengthwise. Scoop out seeds with a small spoon
2. Cut lemon in half and squeeze juice into a small bowl, discarding seeds
3. Rinse and chop green onions
4. Drain the tuna and beans. Rinse beans in a colander
5. Place beans in a medium bowl and mash with a fork
6. Add 2 Tbsp of the lemon juice, green onions, tuna, oil, salt, and peppers to beans
7. Fill each cucumber halves with the tuna mixture and serve.

Serving size: ½ cucumber & 6 oz filling yield: 4

Baked Banana with Strawberries

8 medium strawberries
1 medium banana
1 tsp. maple syrup
1 tsp. light brown sugar
1 Tbsp slivered almonds or chopped walnuts *(Optional)*

1. Preheat oven to 400°F
2. Rinse and remove leafy tops from strawberries. Cut strawberries in half.
3. Place a sheet of aluminum foil on baking sheet.
4. Peel banana and place in center of foil.
5. Make 4-5 cuts halfway through the banana creating “pockets” for the strawberries.
6. Stuff strawberry halves inside the “pockets” and around banana.
7. Drizzles berries and banana with maple syrup and sprinkle with brown sugar. Add nuts if using
8. Fold and seal the foil enclosing the banana.
9. Bake for 7-8 minutes or until fruit is heated through and soft. Sprinkle with additional brown sugar and cinnamon

Serving size: ½ banana yield: 2



Recipes provided with permission by:
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For more information about gardening visit the National Gardening
Association at:
www.garden.org
www.kidsgardening.org