



NEWSLETTER

November/December 2005



Here is the Edible Gardens in Schools Autumn/Winter newsletter.

The recent frosts and snow will have finished off what remained of the summer crops and will have helped add some flavour to the root crops. In my own garden I am having problems with mice eating the roots of my winter plants such as Swiss chard, parsnips and swedes. I have bought a device called a Solar Moler which is solar powered and emits a high pitched sound into the soil every 30 seconds. It is supposed to deter moles and mice from the garden! So far it seems to be working, but there has recently been

a buzzard hanging out nearby and I'm sure it has something to do with the declining mouse population!

Are you looking for funding for your school garden? DfES Growing Schools, together with Wallace and Grommit have launched The Great Vegetable Challenge. They are asking primary schools to enter a competition to win £2,500 to help develop a vegetable garden. There are 2 categories – those who already have gardens which they want to develop further and those that are just beginning. See <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/growingschools/> for more details and an entry form. But be quick - There are only a few weeks to go!

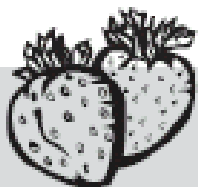


Schools we have worked with:

St John the Baptist Primary
Sandford Primary
Ugborough Primary
Landscape Primary

Diptford Primary
Ilsington Primary
Dartington Primary - Brimhay Nursery
Charleton Primary

Burlescombe Primary
Ladysmith Middle, Exeter
Highweek Primary
Yeo Valley Primary



SCHOOLS NEWS

Yeo Valley

Gardens were built at Yeo Valley Primary School in Barnstaple. Yeo Valley school is part of the Food for Thought programme (also a project of Devon Development Education, DDE). The programme links schools in Devon to schools in Uganda, to share information and experiences about sustainable farming and growing. All schools in Devon and Uganda who are part of the programme have vegetable gardens. Luckily, the building workshop coincided with a visit from Flugencia, a key farmer trainer from Uganda. Her role is to train the teachers and staff who work in the Ugandan school gardens. She was

visiting some of the schools involved in the Food for Thought Programme in Devon. Flugencia was invaluable in the workshop, impressing us all by carrying big bales of straw on her head! Rebekah East, the teacher involved in the programme will be going out to Uganda next year to visit Yeo Valley's link school. If you would like more information about the Food for Thought programme, please contact Sue Errington at DDE: 01392 438811.



Sandford School

Sandford Primary school, near Crediton have got the use of a fantastic allotment site right next to their school grounds. Edible Gardens in Schools helped them to build a 3 bin compost system and they have set up organic-waste collection and recycling bins in all the classrooms. They are composting all the fruit waste from break and mixing it with paper towels, paper and card from the classrooms.

Sandford Primary allotment site.

HALF TERM Tips



Plant Garlic

Traditionally, garlic is planted on the shortest day and harvested on the longest day. But generally, anytime in late autumn/early winter will be good for planting. It is possible to plant garlic that you buy from supermarkets, but you will not know what kind of garlic it is –



it might have been grown in a warmer climate and therefore not grow well in England. It may be weak or contain diseases and therefore also grow poorly. Buying special 'seed' garlic (which is actually bulbs, not seed)

from commercial growers ensures that the cloves you plant are selected from strong and disease free plants.

- Plant individual cloves about 1 inch below the surface of the soil
- Space about 4 inches apart, in rows about 12 inches apart.
- Make sure the growing tip of the garlic is pointing upwards

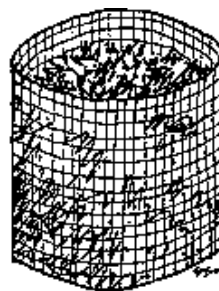


Plant out strawberry runners

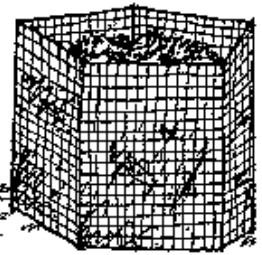
Strawberry plants will have sent out little baby plants on the end of long stalks called runners. If the new plants have grown some roots already, carefully dig them out of the soil and cut off the stalk from the main plant. These new plants can be replanted in another place, or into pots that can be planted out in the spring.

Collect Leaves for Leafmould

With the earlier windy weather and the cold days the trees have almost completely dropped their leaves. Rake them up and put them into a container to let them rot. You could use a big plastic bag with holes in to let the air in, or you could use a spare compost bin. Alternatively you could build a wire mesh container – using posts and some chicken wire – see right. Very easy! You could also put the leaves into the regular compost- but make sure they are mixed with plenty of green nitrogen rich materials, otherwise they wont rot as fast as other things in the compost heap.



Circular Bin



Five-Panel Bin



RECIPES

Swiss Chard are wonderful plants! They seem to go on producing forever and will keep on growing - if a bit more slowly - right through the winter. They are also full of many nutrients. If your garden has Swiss chard growing, try this recipe, it come from France and is apparently a favourite with children!



INGREDIENTS

1 bunch Swiss chard
3 tablespoons butter
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 tablespoons chopped fresh rosemary
1/3 cup raisins or golden raisins
2 tablespoons pine nuts
salt and freshly-ground black pepper, to taste

1. Remove the chard stems and the thick central vein from each leaf. Chop the leaves very coarsely.

2. Using a large, heavy-bottomed frying pan over medium high heat, melt the butter with the oil until sizzling. Add the chard and the rosemary, stirring well to coat the chard with the butter mixture. Cook, stirring constantly, for another minute until the chard has wilted to about half its original volume.

3. Add raisins and pine nuts, stirring to combine evenly, and continue cooking until any moisture has evaporated. The entire cooking process should take no more than about 3 minutes. Season with salt and pepper and serve immediately.

Edible Gardens in Schools is a project of Devon Development Education
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Many thanks to our supporters:



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