



# Harvesting in the Garden

## Goals

Students will review characteristics of mature produce and learn how to harvest different types of fruits vegetables. As a class, students will make harvesting calendars and apply their harvesting skills in the garden.

## Curriculum Alignment

Find a list of which Common Core State Standards and NC Essential Standards this lesson plan aligns with on the lesson plan page at [www.growing-minds.org](http://www.growing-minds.org).

## Materials

- Blank calendars
- Markers, crayons, or colored pencils
- Seed packets for seeds that you planted (or plan on planting) in your school garden
- Basket or container for harvesting

## Activities

### In-Class Discussion

Review with the class what foods they have growing in the garden. Ask students to identify characteristics of foods from the garden. Describe which plant traits allow us to recognize when the food is ready to be harvested.

Review color and size changes that occur during the growing process from each plant in the garden.

Discuss the difference between harvesting herbs, roots, fruits, and vegetables plants. Pass around seed packets to show students the different harvesting dates listed for each type of plant.

### Create Harvest Calendars

On the board, write down the date you planted your seeds. As a class, determine the number of days to harvest for each of the plants in your garden. Harvesting dates are often listed as “days to harvest” on a seed packet. Give each student the materials needed to assemble a calendar. Have each student record the date the seed was planted on their calendar. Based on each seed’s day to harvest, have them count out on their calendars when each plant is ready to be harvested. Have the students draw the mature fruit or vegetable on the harvest date.



### **Book to Read**

Pick, Pull, Snap!

by Lola M. Schaefer



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## Garden Exploration

Ask students what traits they see in the garden and have them explore whether the food is ready to be harvested or not. Encourage students to be gentle with each plant when picking or pulling. Demonstrate how to harvest from the garden and have students take turns picking fruits and vegetables. Place the garden produce in a basket or container and bring back inside the classroom. Produce could be used for a classroom taste test, classroom cooking class, or sent home with students. Be sure to follow food safety guidelines for your school or district.

## Read a Book

Read Pick, Pull, Snap! to the class. Throughout the story, before revealing the name of each fruit or vegetable, have the students guess what it is. Emphasize the methods of harvesting used in the book and connect it with the harvesting methods (pulling, picking, etc.) used in today's harvesting activity.

## Harvesting Tips

- Wash your hands before you harvest!
- Look carefully before you pick or cut any vegetable. Try not to harvest vegetables or fruits that are not mature. Harvest the fruit or vegetable at its peak condition.
- Think before you pick. Look at the vegetable or fruit you are harvesting and determine the best tool for taking the leaf or fruit from the plant. Do you need scissors, a harvesting tool, or your fingers?
- Leave a stem on most vegetables when you cut them. This will help keep them fresh longer.
- Harvest greens and lettuces in morning hours or in cool weather. Leaves will wilt if you harvest them in the hot afternoon sun.
- Handle the plants, leaves, and fruits gently and try not to tug on the plant as you harvest. Dunk vegetables into a cool water bath immediately after harvest to cool them right away and keep them fresh and crisp.
- Bring a basket or container to put your vegetables in when you harvest from the garden.