

**Second Week of March**  
**Get Local @ School Product of the Month = Greens**

## What's Growing?



Pick up a handful of spring soil from your garden, and you'll find that it's moist and cool. Add amendments like compost or Nature's Helper and the garden soil will be ready for planting. In raised beds, you can gently mix amendments into the soil by turning it with a shovel or pitch fork. Consider using a tiller to work amendments into rows or new ground. Involve students in preparing the soil for planting and include lessons on plant needs and soil composition.

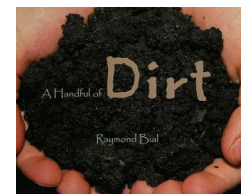
## Activities

Visit the Growing Minds website for more ways to connect Farm to School with curriculum:  
[www.growing-minds.org](http://www.growing-minds.org)

- ◆ Take students to the garden and fill several jars halfway with soil. Add water nearly to the top of the jars. Put the lids on tightly. Shake the jars vigorously for a half a minute. Let the jars stand until the dirt and water settle. Observe the layers in the jars. How many layers are there? Which layer is made of the biggest particles? Which is made of the smallest? Can the students guess why?
- ◆ Using a thermometer, record the temperature of the soil in the garden. Measure the temperature at 1 inch deep, 2 inches deep, and 6 inches deep. What difference do the students note? Why do they think the temperature changes with depth?

## Farm to School Book of the Week

A Handful of Dirt  
*Raymond Bial*



Soil is everywhere, and everything comes from soil! A Handful of Dirt gives

students an in-depth look at how soil is formed, what it's made of, and why it is important to all life—from microorganisms to worms to rabbits. Learn about the different jobs of microscopic creatures in the soil and discover hidden activity that's always happening just below our feet.

## Journal Topics

Encourage students to write on one of the following topics:

- ◆ If you were a bug in the garden soil what would you look like? Draw yourself and write a story about your adventures in the soil: What's your bug name? What do you eat? What other animals or plants do you meet in the garden?
- ◆ Write a recipe for compost. What would you put into your compost pile? What color would it be? What would it smell like? What would you do with your compost?

## Get Local recipe: Spinach Orzo Salad

1 16 oz package uncooked orzo pasta (or other pasta)  
1 lb local spinach, chopped or torn  
1/2 lb crumbled feta cheese or Parmesan cheese  
1 small red onion, chopped  
1/2 teaspoon fresh or dried basil  
1/4 teaspoon pepper  
1/2 cup olive oil  
1/2 cup balsamic vinegar

## Steps

1. Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Add orzo and cook for 8-10 min. Drain and rinse with cold water.
2. Transfer to a bowl and stir in spinach, feta, onion, basil and pepper.
3. Toss with olive oil and balsamic vinegar. Serve cold. *Enough for 20 students to taste.*

