



THIS WEEK IN THE GARDEN @ PRESCHOOL



Second Week of June

Get Local @ School Product of the Month = Summer Squash

What's Growing?



It's off to the races for many types of veggies in Western North Carolina. Green beans, peas, beets, cucumbers, turnips and radishes are all maturing. Zucchini also become prolific, often coming in at a faster pace than can be used. Try harvesting the blossoms for stuffing, fried fritters, or as a soup garnish, to decrease the vines' production. Look for healthy flowers with slender stems and cut, leaving 1" of stem. Rinse in a bowl of cool water, gently shake dry and use within 24 hours.

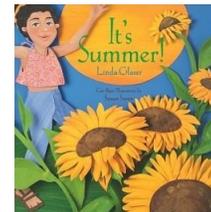
Visit the Growing Minds website for more ways to tie Farm to School in with curriculum:
www.growing-minds.org

Activities

- ◆ Make summer herb pops! Have children find edible leaves and herbs in the garden; including mint, basil and lavender; rinse them thoroughly. Alternately, provide a few sprigs of rinsed, herbs for the project. Have children place the sprigs in Dixie cups. Freeze the cups—when frozen, pop out the herb pops and place in pitchers of water for an original refreshing drink.
- ◆ Zucchini squash can grow very large very quickly. Track the growth of a few gourds to prepare the activity, then collect several squash of different sizes. Have children hold, lift and guess the different weights of the zucchini; as they guess correctly, display them by weight, from lightest to heaviest. Using small and large squashes, ask children how many days they think it took to grow from a zucchini of a smaller size to a zucchini of a larger size.

Farm to School Book of the Week

It's Summer!
By Linda Glaser



A child's eye view of summertime's effects on everything around us: weather, animals and plants. It's Summer also offers a list of fun seasonal activities like gathering seeds and gazing at the night sky.

Encourage students to get active with these Farm to School energizers!

Get Local Recipe:

Zucchini Stir-Fry

Serves 20 children

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 medium yellow onion
- 1 medium yellow squash
- 3 medium zucchini
- 1 red bell pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon basil
- 1/4 teaspoon oregano

Steps

1. Peel the onion. Cut into thin slices.
2. Slice the yellow squash into thin round pieces.
3. Slice the zucchini into thin round pieces.
4. Chop the red pepper into small pieces.
5. Heat the oil in a frying pan.
6. Cook over medium heat, stirring quickly for 1 minute.
7. Add the spices and stir a few times.
8. Add remaining veggies and cook for 3-5 minutes until tender.



Energizers!

Build and plant a runner bean teepee and enjoy watching the structure grow this season! Equipment: An adult, 8 to 12 six-foot long scrap wooden dowels, 1" X 1" stakes or bamboo poles; thick jute twine. Plot out a circle about five feet in diameter. Have kids stand in a circle, spacing the poles evenly around the circle, leaving about a 2 foot space between two of the poles for a future doorway. Lean the poles in so that they touch and overlap slightly at the top, forming a teepee. While children hold and secure the bottoms of the poles in place, an adult secures the top of the teepee by lashing the jute around the top of the gathered poles. Each child sows a few seeds around the circle edge, and seeds are watered thoroughly. Celebrate the construction by playing Duck, Duck, Goose around it!