

EDUCATOR NOTES:

Creating a food garden: [vision](#), [site assessment and mapping](#), [installing a no dig garden bed](#), [planting](#) and [harvesting](#).

Learning and Engagement Approach

This sequence is comprised of 5 different activities, including:

- vision: engaging young learners in developing a concept for their a food garden and allowing them to take ownership of the project
- site assessment and mapping: children identify suitable locations to install a food garden
- installing: children install a no-dig garden bed
- planting: the no-dig garden bed is planted with suitable food crops
- harvesting: value the harvest and the benefits of sharing it amongst the community.

This activity is designed to engage young learners aged from 7 – 13 years.

These activities are intended to:

- facilitate the development of a food garden, from concept to harvest
- increase awareness of food production
- implement the learning from the previous components of the activity sequence
- incorporate cross-curricular learning, including mathematics and design and technology.

Safety Considerations

- Check the weather before conducting any outdoors activity. If there is going to be extreme temperatures, storms or high wind, postpone the activity.
- Ensure that everyone is wearing closed shoes, hats, and sunscreen and has a water bottle handy.
- Keep any allergy plan information at hand and any associated allergy medication.
- Follow manual handling procedures, with particular regard to awkward or repetitive actions.
- Wet-down soil before moving it, to reduce the chance of inhaling airborne microorganisms.
- Wetting mulch and using masks when using and moving mulch will help reduce the risk of air borne particles.
- Using gloves during a gardening activity helps to protect from blisters and splinters
- Always wash-hands after conducting a gardening activity.
- Make sure you wash your hands before harvesting your crop and preparing your food for eating.

Materials and References

Resources for the vision activity

[Growing your own food](#) highlights the benefits of growing your own food in a school environment. (3 minutes 15)

Watch [Designing a school garden](#) from Gardening Australia for lots of inspiration (4 and ½ minutes.)

[Life lessons in a living classroom](#) from ABC Education demonstrates the benefits of a food garden in high school. (4 minutes)

Resources for the site assessment and mapping activity

Use [Google maps](#) in satellite mode to create and print a map for your area.

[Learn more about topographic mapping](#) from Geoscience Australia.

Resources on [how to start a kitchen garden](#) from Healthy Kids Association.

Resources for the installing a no-dig garden bed activity

Many of the materials for the no-dig garden bed can be sourced from your local hardware or garden supply store. These materials will be quite heavy, so consider whether your store can deliver them to your site.

Resources for the planting a food garden activity

It is best to plant seedlings into your no-dig garden, rather than seeds because seedlings give children a greater sense of fulfilment. Planting seedlings will also shorten the turnaround time from planting to harvesting. Seedlings can be grown on site or you can source donations from the community or try propagating from vegetable scraps.

Outdoor Classrooms: a hand book for school gardens. Authors: Carolyn Nuttall & Janet Millington is a valuable printed resource for school garden development and learning.

Resources for the harvesting a food garden activity

Use this harvesting vegetable [checklist](#) for ideas on how to determine if your vegetables are ready for harvest. Enjoying and sharing the harvest will help reduce food waste and encourage long term investment in the food garden.

Site Suggestions

When choosing a location for your no-dig garden bed, ensure that there is adequate access to water nearby. Your no-dig garden is best watered with a hose, so check that there is a tap within hose-reach of your proposed location.

Vegetables love sunny, sheltered positions. When you are scouting for your location, consider how the angle of the sun changes according to the seasons.

Educator Tips

Plant information

A great place to get information about plants in your area is your local garden centre, your local Landcare group or community garden.

Download the [Gardenate app](#) or use the [Gardenate website](#) to help determine the timing, spacing, and other compatible plants required for your climate zone.

Timing

It is best to conduct a planting activity in the cooler part of the day. This avoids putting stress on the plants when they are transplanted and it makes for a more comfortable activity for the participants too.

Aligning this Activity

- [Growing healthy plants using natural pesticides](#)
- [Making a large wicking bed](#)
- [Making a small wicking bed](#)
- [Planting a beneficial garden](#)

Extension Activities

Vision

Extension 1

Now you have your vision for creating your food garden, discuss how can you share your ideas and encourage others to help you. Design a poster or write a story for your newsletter or a social media post so others can be inspired to get involved. How and where would you like them to contact you? Can you set a date for a meeting to discuss the vision?

Extension 2

What skills do you already have to create a food garden? Are there other skills that you need from people in your community? Where can you find out more? Contact your local Landcare group by searching the [National Landcare Directory](#) or use the [Woolworths Junior Landcare Grants Map](#) to find a local grant recipient near you. We encourage you to strengthen your connection with the Landcare community. Starting a Junior Landcare group onsite to help organise and gather support for your food garden activities is a great beginning.

Site assessment and mapping

Extension 1

Printing out a location map can help you develop further plans, these can be used as a base for a garden design. Collect the maps, photos and drawings to display in an ideas folder or the class journal. These will also help develop ideas for writing an application for a Junior Landcare grant.

Installing a no-dig garden bed

Extension 1

What do you think are the advantages of creating a no dig garden? How is this approach different to digging up the ground to create a food garden?

Extension 2 Besides using cardboard as a weed barrier, what are other ways or resources you could use that you could control weeds when building a garden?

Planting

Extension 1

Now that you have planted out your food garden, design labels to create signage for the garden and the plants. What information will be important on your label? How can you decorate and make your signs attractive?

Extension 2

Are there some plants that you can eat without growing in soil? Can you design a method to growing edible sprouts?

Harvesting

Extension 1

How can you grow your food plants for next year? Discuss in groups the types of plants you have planted. How can you plan to collect the seed so you can plant these plants again next year? What steps will you need take? What else might you like to grow?

Extension 2

Explore some of the ways you can share your harvest with your community. How can this serve and help other people and build the Junior Landcare community?

Community Engagement

Use [The National Landcare Directory](#) to find a community environmental ‘care’ group near you. Many members of these groups have expertise in gardening.

Look to the [Junior Landcare Community Page](#) for organisations to contact to help support your food garden activities.

The [Australian City Farms and Community Gardens Network map](#) to find a City Farm or Community Garden near you to get some ideas.

Curriculum and Framework Links

SCIENCE

Year 2: [ACSSU030](#), [ACSHE035](#)

Year 3: [ACSSU044](#), [ACSIS054](#)

Year 4: [ACSHE062](#), [ACSIS064](#),

Year 5: [ACSHE083](#)

Year 6: [ACSSU094](#), [ACSHE100](#)

Year 7: [ACSHE120](#)

Year 8: [ACSHE135](#)

HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Year 2 : [ACHASSI042](#)

Year 3: [ACHASSI052](#), [ACHASSI059](#), [ACHASSI060](#)

Year 4: [ACHASSI080](#), [ACHASSK088](#), [ACHASSK090](#)

Year 5: [ACHASSI102](#), [ACHASSK120](#)

Year 6: [ACHASSI122](#), [ACHASSI130](#)

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGIES

Year 2: [ACTDEK003](#)

Year 3 & 4: [ACTDEP017](#)

Year 5 & 6: [ACTDEP019](#)

Year 7 & 8 [ACTDEK032](#)

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Year 2: [ACPPS018](#), [ACPPS022](#), [ACPPS023](#)

Year 3 & 4: [ACPPS036](#), [ACPPS040](#), [ACPPS041](#)

Year 5 & 6: [ACPPS054](#), [ACPPS059](#)

Year 7 & 8: [ACPPS073](#), [ACPPS078](#)

ETHICAL UNDERSTANDING

[Exploring values, rights and responsibilities](#)

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL CAPABILITY

[Social awareness](#)

CROSS CURRICULUM PRIORITY

[Sustainability](#)

MY TIME, OUR PLACE: FRAMEWORK FOR SCHOOL AGE CARE

[Outcome 2 and 4](#)