Lesson One: Harvesting Your Edible Garden
For September or beginning of school year

It’s time to harvest summer crops. How do you know when crops are at their peak for flavor and texture? What is the best way to harvest them and keep their flavor? “Harvesting Your Edible Garden” is based on lessons from GROWING IN THE GARDEN, LOCAL FOODS AND HEALTHY LIVING, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach. Students have a chance to harvest vegetables grown over the summer, calculate crop yield and market value.

Content objectives: Describe how most foods start in the soil and then go through several steps before we eat it; Understand the implications of how little soil is left to grow food for a growing population; Identify ways to have access to healthy foods; Understand characteristics of carrots and conduct an experiment.

Life Skill objectives: Healthy living, Critical thinking, Communication, Citizenship, Leadership, Decision making, Problem solving, Cooperation

Core and STEM concepts and skills:
Science
Math
Language Arts
Social Studies

Science as inquiry, Earth and space, Life science
Operations and algebraic thinking, Geometry, Measurement, Data
Speaking, Listening, Writing, Viewing
Behavioral sciences, Economics,

Healthy snack: Skinny Greens, Harvest Soup, Veggie-fetti, Summer Garden Salsa, Veggie Vehicles

Additional and supporting resources: More recipes can be found at https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W362-E.pdf

Documenting the results of school gardens can be done in a variety of ways. Here is one example: https://extension.umd.edu/sites/default/files/_docs/OurHealthyHarvest.pdf
LESSON PLANS FOR 2012-13 SCHOOL YEAR, GRADE 5 or 6

August/September: Harvest

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NOTES: The bolded items in the following lists can be found in the www.peoplesgarden.wsu.edu Educational Toolkit, Grade 3, August/September: Harvest. The Core standards for this lesson are identified in the Educational Toolkit, Alignment chart found in the Introduction. Master gardeners, local vegetable growers, garden and nutrition experts – including students’ family members, and other classroom partners and volunteers are good resources to help to deliver this harvest lesson.
BEFORE THE LESSON
Do you have garden produce to harvest? If so, great! All of the following items will help you harvest, clean, store and prepare the garden produce according to university experts.

If your garden has been sleeping through the summer, we recommend that you take a field trip or bring in garden produce from a local farmer’s market, produce stand, or grocery store. Do item 1, skip 2 and 3, and continue through the rest of the items starting with item 4.

1. **Grade 5 or 6, August/September: Harvest**  
   This document contains all the curriculum items and resources you need for this lesson. All lesson downloads are located on the [www.peoplesgarden.wsu.edu](http://www.peoplesgarden.wsu.edu) Educational Toolkit.

   **Harvesting and Storing Vegetables**, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach  
   **Food Safety Tips for School Gardens** (page 3), United States Department of Agriculture  
   Please read and use these resources as guides to tell you when and how to harvest the crops from your school garden. If the students and their families have a garden or would like to start a garden, you may copy these resources to send home with the students.

3. **Student Garden Journals**  
   Garden Journals provide students the opportunity to reflect and record events in the garden.

4. **Harvest Sampling Ideas and Recipes**  
   Select a recipe based on what you have harvested in the garden or brought in from a local farmer’s market, produce stand, or grocery store. Be sure to have the students help to wash the garden produce and prepare it. You may want to host a Harvest Party and invite parents and garden helpers to taste some of the crops from your garden.

THE LESSONS
1. **Harvesting Your Edible Garden** is a *lesson that you design* based on the steps provided and what you are harvesting. If there are no crops to harvest, the lesson steps tell you to use garden produce that has been purchased or contributed to the project from a local farmer’s market, produce stand, or grocery store.

2. **Harvest Sampling Ideas and Recipes** provides more lesson components to incorporate into your lesson plans as well as a guide to taste testing ideas and recipes that apply to fall crops. You can choose the ideas or recipes that best suit your situation.

AFTER THE LESSON
You may want to host a “Harvest Party” and invite other classrooms, foodservice staff, families, organizations, etc. to see the gardens and taste a bit of the results. This is a good way to grow support for your program.
Harvesting is one of the nicest chores of the season. If you follow a few important, but easy tips, you will get the most of your crops. Some crops (e.g. carrots) only provide one harvest, while other crops (e.g. lettuce) can provide multiple harvests. If possible, harvest early in the morning, after the dew dries, but before the heat of the day.

**LEAFY GREENS – Lettuce & the Brassica Family**
*(including Spinach, Kale, Chard, Collards, Asian Greens, Mustards)*

To harvest at peak flavor and freshness, harvest young greens when they are just a few inches long. At this stage all greens are tender and delicious eaten raw in a salad. These are called “baby greens”. Pick the largest, outside, leaves first while leaving the smaller and younger inside leaves for harvesting in a week or two. If possible, eat your greens the same day you pick them. Larger leaves, 6-12” long, are less tender and are best for cooking. Remember that greens cook down; plan about 6 cups of greens for 4 usual servings. Always wash garden greens carefully before eating or cooking to remove dirt and small insects.

**Tip:** Snip (with scissors or skilled fingers) the greens about ½-1” above the base of the plant to encourage new growth. Harvesting this way will allow you to get 3-5 cuttings of lettuce and spinach and even more from kale, chard and other hardier greens.

**Note on Lettuce:** If you planted head lettuce and prefer to harvest an entire head, wait until the entire lettuce plant is about softball - melon size and looks like the shape of head lettuce, as you know it. Don’t wait too long though - Growing head lettuce rather than harvesting baby greens often allows more time for pests and diseases to attack the crop.

**LEGUMES – Peas, Snow Peas, Beans**

Harvest peas with 2 hands, holding the vine with one hand while snipping the entire pod off the vine with your other hand. Harvest when fully mature, about 2” long for peas and 4” long for beans, depending on the variety planted. Harvesting encourages new growth, so be sure to pick off over-ripe pods you may have missed earlier on. Continue to harvest from the same vines as the legume ripens.

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**Simple Greens Recipe**

- Wash and dry greens and cut larger leaves into pieces about 3 inches long.
- Heat a bit of olive oil in pan with a clove of chopped garlic or a few tablespoons of chopped onion. Cook 2-3 minutes.
- Add greens and a dash of water. You may keep the greens plain or drizzle with a dash of soy sauce or balsamic vinegar.
- Cook 3-4 minutes until softened.
- Remove from heat, place into bowl. Sprinkle with slivered almonds, sunflowers seeds and dried cranberries, or chives chopped chives from your garden.
- Serve cold or warm.

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Peas and young beans can be eaten raw, added to salads, or lightly steamed or sautéed.

**CUCUMBERS & SQUASH (CUCURBIT FAMILY)**

Harvest cucumbers as they ripen to the desired size. For pickling, fruits should be 4 to 5 inches long, for eating fresh; most varieties grow to 7-8 inches long. Cucumbers will develop a bitter taste if they are allowed to over-ripen. (Note: Some varieties such as European or Dutch cucumbers can grow much longer. This is another reason why clear labeling of the plants in the ground is useful.)

To ensure cucumber vines continue to produce heavily all season long, it’s best to harvest daily to prevent them from becoming overgrown.

Even though huge zucchini squash are impressive, they will be more flavorful if they are picked when they are smaller.

**Tip:** Use a sharp knife or pair of scissors when harvesting, and leave a short length of stem on each fruit.

**ROOTS – Carrot, Beets, Radish, Potato**

It can be difficult to determine if root crops are full grown and ready to harvest because they grow underneath the soil. You may recall, most seed packets will tell you how many “Days to Harvest”. This is the number of days it takes from planting to harvesting. If you can keep track of when you planted the seeds (maybe you wrote it down in the garden journal or it’s listed on the label that next to the plant in the ground), you’ll know about when they are ready. That said visual clues are always helpful. Roots start to lift themselves up out of the ground a bit as they develop. You’ll see radishes, beets and carrots creep a bit (< 1/4 inch) above the soil giving you a clue about how wide they are getting.

**Tip:** Radishes and beets are easy to pull out of the ground whole. Carrots often break off, leaving half of that sweet orange snack for the worms. To harvest them whole, use a digging fork to loosen the soil around the root and pull it out at the base of the greens. For radishes and beets, grab the plant right at the base of the stem, loosen the root a bit by rocking it back and forth, and then pull. If the whole thing does not come up, gently use a digging fork as you would for carrots.

For potatoes, you can start gently digging for new potatoes once the plants start to bloom. Wash and cook new potatoes immediately, as they do not store well at all. If you are planning to harvest potatoes to store for a while, wait until the tops of the plants start to yellow and die back. Then gently dig around the perimeter of the plant and dig up the tubers. If you are

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planning on storing them, don't wash them! Let them sit out in a cool place for a few days to cure, then gently rub off any dirt, and store in a cool, dark place.

**FRUITS – Strawberries, Tomatoes, Peppers, Eggplant**

Similar to cucurbits, fruits like to be harvested when ripe and harvesting regularly encourages new production. Use a scissors or be very careful to snip eggplant and peppers from the stem without damaging the fruit. Leaving a small stem on the harvested fruit will help keep it ripe and ensure you don’t bruise it when harvested. Carefully pick tomatoes from the plant. For strawberries, grasp the stem just above the berry between the forefinger and the thumbnail and pull with a slight twisting motion. Carefully place the fruit into your containers.

**HERBS – Basil, parsley, mint, cilantro, oregano, rosemary, tarragon, sage, chives, lavender, thyme & more.**

Herbs are grown for their leaves, flower, roots or seed. Most commonly, culinary herbs are grown for their leaves and should be harvested before they flower. Flowering can cause the foliage to develop a bitter flavor. For example, while chives are quite attractive in bloom – and their flowers are edible and delicious – the stems tend to become tough and woody after bloom. Some general guidelines for harvesting herbs:

- **Begin harvesting the herb when the plant has steadily been producing new growth.** Harvesting generates the plant to continue to produce. Just be sure to leave enough leaves so the plant can continue to photosynthesize. Don’t be afraid to harvest. Up to 75% of the current season's growth can be harvested at one time!
- **Harvest herbs before flowering, otherwise, leaf production declines because the plant will put its energy towards flowering and producing seed to reproduce. Tip: Pick off flowers buds as you notice them develop.**
- **‘Annual’ herbs (basil, cilantro, chives) will have to be planted each year. They have soft stems and can be harvested until frost. Perennial herbs (rosemary, lavender) have somewhat woody stems and can be clipped until about one month before the frost date.**
“Healthy Gardens, Healthy Youth”
People’s Garden School Pilot Project

The Extension Partnership including:
Washington State University Extension
Cornell University Cooperative Extension
Iowa State University Extension and Outreach
University of Arkansas Extension

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## GENERAL INFORMATION

### HARVESTING AND STORING VEGETABLES

(Adapted from ISU Extension Publication, PM 731 Harvesting and Storing Vegetables)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>CROP HARVEST GUIDE</th>
<th>HARVEST TIMES</th>
<th>OPTIMUM STORAGE CONDITIONS, °F</th>
<th>APPROX. STORAGE PERIOD</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SNAP BEANS (bush or pole)</td>
<td>Harvest the pods when they are almost full-sized but before the seeds begin to bulge. Hand pick with small stem attached to the pod. Do not break pod.</td>
<td>Cool Refrigerate: 40 - 45°</td>
<td>7 – 10 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEETS</td>
<td>Pull or dig beets when roots are 1 to 1½ inches in diameter. Cut tops to ½ inch above root.</td>
<td>One time harvest. Clean garden area after all beets are harvested.</td>
<td>Cold Refrigerate: 32 - 40°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BROCCOLI</td>
<td>Cut when flower heads are blue-green and about 6 to 7 inches across but before small yellow flower buds start to open. The stems below the flower head and small leaves are also very nutritious.</td>
<td>Tender side shoots, 1 to 3 inches across, will develop after the central head is removed. After those are harvested, remove the plants from the garden.</td>
<td>Cool Refrigerate: 32 - 40°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CABBAGE</td>
<td>Cut when heads become large and solid. Don’t delay because heads are prone to cracking when they get large.</td>
<td>One time harvest. Clean garden area after harvest.</td>
<td>Cold Refrigerate: 32 - 40°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CANTALOUPE (Muskmelon)</td>
<td>The skin between the netting turns from green to orangish-yellow. The fruit will separate easily from the stem.</td>
<td>One plant can produce 2 to 5 fruit, not all at once. Check often once they start to mature.</td>
<td>Cool Refrigerate: 40 - 45°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARROTS</td>
<td>Dig when roots are ¼ inch or more across. Be careful so that you don’t break the roots when digging. Remove tops to ½ inch above the root.</td>
<td>One time harvest. Clean garden area after harvest.</td>
<td>Cold Refrigerate: 32 - 40°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CROP HARVEST GUIDE</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CUCUMBERS</strong></td>
<td>Check plants often once they start bearing. Keep fruit harvested for continuous production.</td>
<td>Moderate Refrigerate: 45 - 55°</td>
<td>1 to 2 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pick slicing cucumbers when they are 6 inches long and while they are still bright green and firm. Cut fruit from the vine with pruning shears. Leave about ½ inch of stem attached to the fruit.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Eggplant</strong></td>
<td>Check plants often once they start bearing. Keep fruit harvested for continuous production.</td>
<td>Moderate Refrigerate: 45 - 55°</td>
<td>1 week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvest anytime after the fruits are 2 inches across until they are 4 to 6 inches in diameter (depends on the variety). Light thumb pressure will leave a dent at the proper harvest stage. Cut from plant with pruning shears. Leave about 1 inch of stem on the fruit.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Garlic</strong></td>
<td>One time harvest. Clean garden area after harvest.</td>
<td>Cold Refrigerate: 32 - 40°</td>
<td>Up to 6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pull in mid-summer when bottom leaves begin to dry. Cure the bulbs in a warm ventilated area in single layers for 10 days. Remove the tops about 1 inch above the bulb.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Kohlrabi</strong></td>
<td>One time harvest. Clean garden area after harvest.</td>
<td>Cold Refrigerate: 32 - 40°</td>
<td>Up to 2 months</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pull plants when stems are swollen to 2 to 3 inches in diameter. Remove leaves and roots.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Lettuce</strong></td>
<td>Cut and it will come back for one or two more harvests, then remove spent plants.</td>
<td>Cold Refrigerate: 32 - 40°</td>
<td>1 to 2 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaf lettuce should be cut when the leaves are 4 to 6 inches long. Cut about 1 ½ inches above the ground for re-growth to occur.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Onions (green)</strong></td>
<td>One time harvest. Clean garden area after harvest.</td>
<td>Cold Refrigerate: 32 - 40°</td>
<td>2 to 3 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any standard onion can be used as a green onion and harvested young. Harvest when 6 to 8 inches tall.</td>
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### GENERAL INFORMATION CONTINUED

**HARVESTING AND STORING VEGETABLES. CONTINUED**

(Adapted from ISU Extension Publication, PM 731 Harvesting and Storing Vegetables)

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ONIONS (dry)</strong></td>
<td>One time harvest. Clean garden area after harvest.</td>
<td>Cold (after curing) Refrigerate: 32 - 40°</td>
<td>3 months (use before they sprout)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvest when the tops fall over and begin to dry. Pull with tops on and dry them in a protected place for 3 to 4 days. Cut tops to 1 inch above the bulb and store in shady area in mesh bags or single layers for further curing until stems tighten up and outer scales are dry.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PEAS</strong></td>
<td>Check plants often once they start producing seed pods. Keep pods harvested for extended production.</td>
<td>Cold Refrigerate: 32 - 40°</td>
<td>1 to 2 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pick peas with edible pods such as snow peas when pods are just filled, but before the seeds become hard and starchy. Store peas in the pod. Harvest snap peas when the pods are beginning to plump and while the pods are still glossy and smooth.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PEPPERS</strong></td>
<td>Check plants often once they start bearing. Keep fruit harvested for continuous production.</td>
<td>Moderate Refrigerate: 45 - 55°</td>
<td>2 to 3 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvest when the pepper is large, firm, and crisp. Fully ripe peppers are slightly sweeter and may be red, orange, yellow or other colors.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>POTATOES</strong></td>
<td>One time harvest. Cure potatoes in a cool shady location for two weeks. Clean garden area after harvest.</td>
<td>Cool Refrigerate: 40 - 45°</td>
<td>New potatoes only store for a few weeks. Large, cured potatoes can be stored in a dark location for 3 or more months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New (small) potatoes can be dug in early summer when the vines are lush and green. Large potatoes are dug as soon as the plants die. Be careful not to cut the potatoes when digging by placing the fork at least 8 inches from the stem of the plant.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RADISHES</strong></td>
<td>One time harvest. Clean garden area after harvest.</td>
<td>Cold Refrigerate: 32 - 40°</td>
<td>3 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pull when the roots are 1 to 1½ inches in diameter, remove tops about ½ inch above the root.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPINACH</td>
<td>Cut and it will come back for one or two more harvests, then remove spent plants</td>
<td>Cold Refrigerate: 32 - 40°</td>
<td>1 to 2 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvest when leaves are 2 to 6 inches long. Cut about 1½ inches above the ground for re-growth to occur.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUMMER SQUASH (Zucchini)</td>
<td>Check plants often once they start bearing. Keep fruit harvested for continuous production.</td>
<td>Cool Refrigerate: 40 - 45°</td>
<td>1 to 2 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cut squash from plant when they are 6 to 12 inches long. The rind is very tender and scrapes easily. Scallop type ('Patty Pan') are harvested when 3 to 5 inches in diameter. Leave ½ inch stem on the fruit.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWEET CORN</td>
<td>Check frequently when they reach maturity. Harvest all at once or within a few days.</td>
<td>Cold Refrigerate: 32 - 40°</td>
<td>1 week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvest by grasping the ear at its base and then twisting downward. It is ready as soon as the silks are brown and dry at the ear tip.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWEET POTATOES</td>
<td>Harvest all at once. Cure for 1 week in a warm, shady location.</td>
<td>Moderate Refrigerate: 45 - 55°</td>
<td>3 or more months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvest in late fall, just before frost, by digging with a garden fork. Be careful not to stab a tuberous root.</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOMATOES</td>
<td>Check plants often once they start bearing.</td>
<td>Cool room 55 - 65°</td>
<td>4 to 7 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pick any time from pink to fully red stage. Pick and remove stem from the fruit.</td>
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<tr>
<td>WATERMELON</td>
<td>Check plants often once they start bearing.</td>
<td>Moderate to cool room 45 - 65°</td>
<td>2 to 3 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvest when fruits are full sized, rind is dull in appearance, and the bottom part touching the ground turns from greenish white to creamy yellow. Leave 2-inch long stem attached to fruit.</td>
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Growing and Harvesting Produce

A school garden provides an opportunity for children and volunteers to learn about how to handle food safely. The following are some food safety tips to follow when growing and harvesting produce.

- Ensure that all persons, including staff, students, and volunteers receive basic food and gardening safety training instructions according to local health regulations. The following topics are recommended:
  - Handwashing and personal hygiene
  - Cleaning and sanitizing garden equipment and containers used to hold produce
  - Handling produce during harvest, washing, and transportation
  - Glove use
- Ensure that volunteers are covered by the school district insurance policy in the event of accident or injury.
- Require signed permission slips for all student gardeners. Permission slips should list potential hazards of working in a school garden and identify any allergies the child may have.
- Do not allow anyone to work in the garden while sick, or until 24 hours after symptoms, such as vomiting or diarrhea, have subsided.
- Ensure that all harvesters wash hands thoroughly in warm, soapy water for at least 10 to 15 seconds, and then rinse with potable water. Ensure that all open cuts or wounds on hands, arms, or legs are properly covered prior to participating in the harvest.
- Require harvesters to wear closed-toed shoes to prevent cuts, stings, or other injuries.
- Consider using single-use disposable gloves when harvesting, or handling, fresh produce as an extra precaution.
- Harvest the garden regularly and remove any rotten produce.
Food Safety Tips for School Gardens, continued

- Use cleaned and sanitized food grade containers, such as plastic bins or buckets, to hold harvested produce. Do not use garbage bags, garbage cans, and any container that originally held chemicals. These types of containers are made from materials that are not intended for food use.
- Clean harvesting tools, such as knives, scissors, etc., with soap and potable water immediately before and after each gardening session.

Using School Garden Produce in your School Meal Program

- Check with your local health department to ensure that local regulations permit food from gardens to be served as part of school meals.
- If the harvest from the school garden will be used in the school meals program, the school garden coordinator should work cooperatively with the school nutrition director to plan and implement the garden.
- Discuss food safety practices in the garden with school garden coordinators. Consider asking gardeners to document their practices. Use the information in this document as a guide to identify appropriate practices.
- Accept produce harvested from school gardens only when school nutrition staff is present to receive it. All produce dropped off or left when staff is not present should not be used in the school meal programs.
- See Best Practices: Handling Fresh Produce in Schools for guidelines on receiving, storage, preparation, and service of fresh produce in schools.
- Reject produce that does not meet school nutrition program standards.
- Receive and inspect produce harvested from school gardens according to the same procedures used to inspect produce from the district’s distributors.
- Do not use any produce that has been noticeably contaminated by animals or insects.
- Refrigerate garden produce immediately, unless the particular item is normally held at room temperature.
- Store, prepare, and serve school garden produce separately from other sources of produce to maintain traceability.
- Document service of school garden produce on the menu management/food production record. See Ensuring Traceability of Fresh Produce for more information.
- Ensure that liability for a potential foodborne illness caused by produce grown in school gardens is covered by your school district.
Harvesting and Storing Vegetables chart
- Rulers or dibbles to measure crops
- Student Garden Record and pencils or markers from the Do section
- Paper bags or containers for harvested garden produce and pencils or markers
- Scale and pint and quart size containers to weigh and measure harvested garden produce
- Harvest Rules sign

**Harvesting**

*Teacher’s Notes:* When you are finished harvesting the garden, you can calculate the value of the garden harvest. Take a list of your crops to the farmer’s market or the grocery store and write down the cost per pound or amount of the same fresh vegetables or fruits that you harvested in your garden.

The activities in this section are flexible depending on the harvesting that needs to be done and the food sampling ideas and recipes you choose to do. You may have other sampling ideas or recipes you would like to do. Maybe you want to invite parents and others to your harvest celebration and serve some of your garden goodies. You can use these ideas and recipes throughout your garden and nutrition program.

Another task you will need to do after harvest is to work with the students to put your garden to bed. The information in Unit 8, What do you do after the harvest?, General Information and advice from Master Gardeners or experienced gardeners will help you to do that. For now, celebrate the harvest!

**Apply**

**Expand**

Elaborate in a New Way

20 to 40 minutes or longer depending on the harvest and what you choose to eat, possibly on another day or a few days
POTENTIAL VALUE OF YOUR GARDEN CROPS

If we sold the crops we harvested in our garden, how much money do you think we would make?

Write the name of each of the crops you harvested in a place where everyone can see it and record a few guesses or take an average of all the guesses and write it down after each crop.

Create a chart similar to the one below and display it where everyone can read and work with it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CROP</th>
<th>YIELD</th>
<th>MARKET VALUE</th>
<th>GROSS PROFIT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Examples:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tomatoes</td>
<td>12 pounds</td>
<td>$2.50/lb</td>
<td>$30.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>cucumbers</td>
<td>22 cucumbers</td>
<td>.75 each</td>
<td>$16.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$46.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Refer to the examples in the chart and help the students to complete it. Hopefully you have read the Teacher’s Notes at the beginning of this section and are prepared for the market values or each crop.

Crop column: Have the students work together to name and list all the crops they planted.
Yield column: Have the students add up the total yield for each crop from their individual or the group’s Garden Records and record the totals.
Market value: Write down the farmer’s market or grocery store costs per pound or amount.
Gross profit: Have the students multiply the yield times the market value and record the amount for each crop.
TOTAL: Add the figures in the last column and record the gross profit of your entire garden harvest at the bottom.

Explain that the gross profit does not take into account the amount of money it took to buy the seeds, transplants, and any garden supplies and equipment.

How do you feel about the value of our garden crops?
Talk about surprises, possible things you harvested and forgot to record,

If we took our crops to a local farmer’s market and sold them, which crops would have made the least and most amount of money?
Use the chart to determine the answers.

How can you use this chart and our Garden Records to plan for next year’s garden?
Garden records help gardeners determine what and how much they want to plant the next year. Discuss yields, crop failures, challenges to growing the crop, what you want to do with next year’s crops, if you will have more or less space, if you want to try something new, etc. Write notes and save them until you plan the next garden.

SAMPLING IDEAS AND RECIPES FOR A HARVEST CELEBRATION

Select the sampling ideas and recipes that best suit your situation. This is a great time to host a harvest celebration and invite families and others to enjoy these recipes with you. Share your experiences with your garden, including the findings from your Garden Record and the math activities. Tell your guests about any future plans and how they might get involved.
Continue to use the Harvest Rules to prepare food. The students should help to wash and prepare the food. They can use plastic knives and plastic plates.

1. **Garden Fresh!**
   Sample the garden produce in its raw form as soon after it has been picked and washed as possible. That is when it is at its peak of flavor and texture. The students can wash it, if necessary – cut or slice it using plastic knives and plates, and taste it.

2. **Revealing Taste Tests**
   *In his book, All New Square Foot Gardening Cookbook, Mel Bartholomew (the founder of the square foot gardening method) offers these great taste comparison tests for kids.*

   **Taste Test for Green Beans and Snow Peas**
   - Have the students rinse off and eat one of the green beans or snow peas right after they picked it in the garden. Ask the students to describe the taste and texture.
   - Have them put a green bean or snow pea on their clean desk or counter and in an hour, wash it and eat it. Ask the students to describe the taste and texture and compare it to the one they ate right after they picked it.
   - Put enough green beans or peas in the refrigerator for a day or two before having the students wash and eat them. Ask the students to describe the taste and texture and compare it to the other two they ate.
   - Discuss which one tasted the best and possible reasons why. Fruits and vegetables start deteriorating right after they are picked. They may lose some of their flavoring and texture. You will also get a variation of flavor and texture depending on the degree of maturity of each green bean or snow pea. Most vegetables taste the sweetest and have their best texture when they are at just the right stage between unripe and too ripe.
   - Encourage the students to do this taste test with their families.

   **Taste Test for Broccoli, Cauliflower and Other Crispy Vegetables**
   Do a blind taste test with the students tasting a fresh bite of a crispy vegetable straight from their garden and another bite from the same vegetable bought at the grocery store. Ask the students which bite is crisper and tastes more like the “outdoors”, and which would they rather eat? After the discussion, reveal which vegetable was from the garden and which one was from the store.

   **Taste Test for Different Varieties of the Same Vegetable**
   Do a taste test with different types of lettuce, peppers, tomatoes, and so on to see which one you like the best. Record the information for reference when you plan your next garden.

3. **Skinny Greens**
   You can eat as many salad greens as you want without threatening your waistline or your weight. It is the choice of toppings and salad dressings that could make one bowl of green salad exceed 30 calories. No fears, the two salad dressing recipes below contain ingredients that come from gardens (and bees that help the garden produce food) and they are really low in calories.

   Cut the lettuces, spinach and other leafy greens from the garden and wash them in a strainer under running water. Drain the leaves. Tear them into smaller pieces, if necessary. Put them in a bowl with a lid. Add other garden vegetables such as slices or
chopped pieces of radishes, green onions, zucchini, broccoli, carrots, or cauliflower. Put the lid on and shake lightly to toss the ingredients. Take off the lid and add sliced tomatoes or cucumbers as desired. Top with a dressing of your choice or the students can make one of the following recipes.

__________________________  Balsamic Vinaigrette  ____________________________

In a clean quart-sized jar with a lid, add the following ingredients:
1/2 cup fresh basil leaves
1/3 cup balsamic vinegar
1/3 cup finely chopped shallots (green onions)
1/4 cup water
2 tablespoons honey
1 tablespoon olive oil
1/4 teaspoon black pepper

Put the lid on the jar and shake the dressing until all ingredients are blended.

_From myrecipes.com and Cooking Light_

__________________________  Low-Calorie French  ____________________________

In a clean quart-sized jar with a lid, add the following ingredients:
1/2 cup tomato juice
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 tablespoon finely chopped onion
1 tablespoon finely chopped green bell pepper
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper

Put the lid on the jar and shake the dressing until all ingredients are blended.

_From CDKitchen.com_

4. Harvest Soup

_Harvest Soup can connect your garden harvest to the story Stone Soup by Marcia Brown. Everybody works together to make soup that is “fit for a king”. So, why not invite parents or other people to try this soup and celebrate the harvest!_

__________________________  Harvest Soup  ____________________________

_Makes enough for 20 to 30 people_

_Supplies:_
Stone Soup by Marcia Brown
2 medium-sized clean and sanitized hard rocks
2 camp stoves, stove burners, or electric skillets (3 quart) AND 2 3-quart pots
Measuring cups AND Measuring spoons
Knives (could be plastic) AND cutting boards OR Mechanical choppers
Several bowls (for raw ingredients after it is chopped)
Large stirring spoon AND Ladle
Soup bowls or hot beverage cups AND spoons
Paper towels AND Cleaning supplies
Washing stations for hands AND for washing vegetables and fruits
Ingredients:
Soup stock: 8 cups water
6 chicken, beef or vegetable bouillon cubes
Vegetables from your garden or that are or can be locally grown
Suggested options:
1 large onion
3 medium carrots
3 medium tomatoes
1 medium green pepper
2 ears corn
1 medium zucchini
1 large potato
12 green beans
2 handfuls peas, shelled
1 head broccoli
4 or less small head cabbage
3 okra
Herbs from your garden or that are or can be locally grown
Choose two or three plus salt and pepper:
½ cup parsley
2 teaspoons oregano
1 tablespoon basil
2 teaspoons rosemary
2 teaspoons marjoram
1 bay leaf
2 teaspoons thyme
Pasta option: 1 heaping cup small macaroni or shell noodles

Directions:
1. Before harvesting the garden, have the students take turns reading aloud and showing the pictures in the book *Stone Soup* by Marcia Brown.
2. Have the students role play the parts of the soldiers from the book by washing their hands and setting up the pots on the burners. Have them take turns adding 4 cups of water and 1 clean hard rock to each pot. Turn the burners on. Assign three students per pot to check back to see when the water starts to boil and add 3 bouillon cubes to each pot.
3. Have the students role play the parts of the villagers from the book by harvesting the garden crops, washing the crops and their hands, and carefully cutting the vegetables into smaller bite-size pieces for the soup. Demonstrate how the knife blade always goes down and away from you and toward the cutting board and how to keep fingers away from the part you are cutting. You can use plastic knives or appropriate food choppers. Tear or crush the herbs into tiny pieces. You may have to bring in additional locally grown vegetables to add to the soup.
4. Put hard, crispy vegetables in first, stir, and cook (simmer) for 10 minutes.
5. Add softer vegetables, herbs, and pasta, stir, and cook (simmer) another 10 minutes.
6. Ladle into small bowls or hot beverage cups, add a spoon, serve, and eat.

ENJOY!
5. **Veggie-fetti**

*This salad is colorful and healthy confetti from the garden. The ingredients are flexible - use the fresh produce you harvested in your garden or got from a local farmer’s market, garden produce stand, or grocery store. This will serve six or thirty-six people depending on the size of servings and the amount of produce added to the salad. Have fun, practice food safety, be creative and enjoy every last bite.*

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**Veggie-fetti**

2 to 4 medium zucchini (peeling is optional, cut lengthwise into fourths, cut out the seeds, use a mandoline or the slicer on a grater to make little confetti strands the size of ribbons)
1 to 2 medium cucumbers (peel then prepare the same as the zucchini)
1 to 2 medium sweet onions (cut into slices and then mince or cut into small pieces)
1 to 2 sweet peppers (cut the stem out, cut lengthwise into fourths, cut out the seeds, and cut into this slices)
2 to 4 medium carrots (grated)
Several cherry or grape tomatoes (leave whole)
1 cup of fresh basil (tear into small pieces)
Spinach or tomato rotini or tortellini noodles, optional (cook, cool, add right before serving)
Italian or Balsamic Vinaigrette dressing

Prepare and combine all the ingredients. Mix thoroughly. Let it set in a cooler for at least 15 minutes to combine the flavors.

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6. **Harvest Pizza**

*This is a sure way to get everyone to eat fruits and vegetables. You may want to make individual veggie pizzas using crackers, bagel bites, or even thick cut round slices of yellow zucchini or another summer squash that has been oiled, seasoned, grilled or broiled. For individual fruit pizzas you can use sugar cookies, graham crackers, or even zucchini or banana bread slices. We like to use the tube pizza crust or sugar cookie dough and form it into the state of Iowa, the vegetables or fruits we put on the pizza represent what can be grown and harvested in Iowa.*

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**Vegetable Pizza**

Pizza crust (tube or mix, prepare and cool)
1 tub softened cream cheese, flavored or unflavored (spread on crust)
Fresh locally grown vegetables such as different colors of pepper pieces, cucumber slices, zucchini or summer squash pieces, shredded carrots or carrot medallions, finely chopped green onions, diced tomatoes that are well drained (add last), etc. (wash, drain, prepare and spread on crust)
Dill weed or other crushed herbs (sprinkle over top)
Ham or bacon bits (optional, sprinkle over top)
Shredded cheese of your choice, finely shredded and sprinkled over the pizza

You may want to chill the pizza for 20 minutes for the flavors to blend.
**Fruit Pizza**

Sugar cookie crust (tube or mix, prepare and cool)
1 tub of whipped topping (or mix tub with 3 oz. cream cheese, spread on crust)
Fresh locally grown fruits such as different colors and kinds of berries, thin apple slices, pieces of cantaloupe, grapes cut in half, pear slices (added last), raisins or craisins, cherries, peach pieces (added last), etc. (wash, drain, prepare, and spread on crust.
Cinnamon (sprinkle lightly over top)
Sliced almonds (optional, sprinkle over top)

You may want to chill the pizza for 20 minutes for the flavors to blend.

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7. **Summer Garden Salsa**

*This has been a favorite recipe for thousands of youth participating in Iowa State University Extension and Outreach’s Growing in the Garden program. All but the last three ingredients can easily be grown in a summer garden. Tomatillos are fun to grow and have been easy to purchase at the grocery store. They add a fun flavor to the recipe and are unique because they look like a little green tomato growing inside a husk. However, if you can’t find them, you can simply leave them out of the recipe.*

**Summer Garden Salsa**

- 4 to 6 medium tomatoes (seeded and coarsely chopped)
- 1 small fresh jalapeno chile (seeded and minced (optional)
- 1 clove garlic (minced)
- ¼ cup finely chopped onions
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped cilantro
- 2 tomatillos (husks removed, finely chopped)
- Juice from 1 small lime
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

In a large bowl, combine all of the ingredients. Stir together until well blended. Cover and chill for 30 minutes or more before serving. Keeps up to 4 days in the refrigerator. Makes about 2 cups.

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8. **Veggie Vehicles**

One of our garden educators remembered that someone sponsored a contest where her son and his classmates designed mobile cars out of vegetables. You could do the same! The students could use vegetables and vegetable pieces and toothpicks to assemble their vehicles. Have a car or vehicle rally so they can show off their designs.

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9. **Sharing Ideas and Recipes**

Maybe the youth and adult gardeners and partners at your site have some great sampling or recipe ideas they would like to share. Or, you can search for fun recipes on the Internet. Offer them the opportunity and cook up something new! Then share the ideas and recipes with other gardeners through the internet, in the newspaper, or through one-on-one communications via email, phone, or letters.
10. Share the Harvest
   Do you have extra garden vegetables and fruits? Send them home with the young gardeners. It is very helpful to also send washing and storing information and serving tips. Explore other ways to share your garden harvest such as food pantries, summer meal programs, senior centers, other families, etc. The students can come up with the ideas and then check to make sure those places will accept garden produce.

RESOURCES FOR GARDEN CROP INFORMATION AND RECIPES

Harvest of the Month from the Network for a Healthy California
http://www.harvestofthemonth.cdph.ca.gov,
click on the “Download Monthly Elements” icon and find a crop that you want to learn about and eat

Garden Mosaics: Connecting youth and elders to investigate the mosaics of plants, people, and cultures in gardens, from the American Community Gardening Association
http://communitygardennews.org/gardenmosaics/ or enter gardenmosaics.org,
click on Science Pages, English or Spanish Version, and find a crop in the Plants list that you would like to learn about and eat

Got Veggies? from the Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity Program, Wisconsin Department of Health Services
www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/health/physicalactivity/pdf_files/ or search for Got Veggies, go to the Cooking and Eating in the Garden pages

Contact your local extension service or the state extension service at your land grant university. In Iowa, go to
www.extension.iastate.edu.
Grades 5 or 6 August/September: Harvest

Harvesting Your Healthy Garden

You will be custom designing your own harvest lesson titled “Harvesting Your Healthy Garden”. Please follow the following steps.

HARVESTING

If you are harvesting your own garden, please follow these steps.

1. Find the crops you are harvesting in the School Garden Harvesting Guide and the Harvesting and Storing Vegetables chart. Read when and how to harvest the crops and find the supplies you will need. If you have the original seed packets or plant labels, they may provide harvest information such as, “Harvest the peppers after they have turned from yellow to red.” Clean paper bags make good collection tools because the students can write on the outside of the bag – the name of the crop, the harvest date, and the yield (how many or how much it weighed). You can use the bag again for the next harvest.

2. With the students, please review the following Harvest Rules adapted from the United States Department of Agriculture’s Food Safety Tips for School Gardens. You may want to post these rules where everyone can see them each time they work with food from the garden.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Harvest Rules</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R espect yourself and others by not working in the garden or preparing food if you are sick or until 24 hours after the symptoms have stopped.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U se soap and clean water to wash your hands for at least 10 to 15 seconds before and after gardening and handling food. Make sure all wounds are covered. Consider using disposable gloves, especially if they fit your hands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L essen the risk of injury by wearing closed-toed shoes and consider wearing something to protect your skin from the sun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E xamine the harvesting tools, storage containers, and cooking supplies for cleanliness. Wash them with clean, warm, soapy water before and after usage. Do not use containers that previously held chemicals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S ecure the safety and quantity of your food supply by harvesting the garden regularly and removing any produce that is rotten or has been contaminated by insects or animals.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Copy the Garden Record, one per student, or project it on an interactive board, screen or large flip chart. If the students have already been keeping a garden journal or record, please continue to use the original one and especially refer to it for planting information. The original ones could be available from the 4th grade teacher who worked with the garden program last year. Review the information that they will need to record when they harvest the garden. Discuss how the information will be collected. Will they count numbers of harvested produce per plant or crop or will they weigh the produce? Will they individually write information on their paper collection bags when they are out in the garden or will they bring all the produce to one spot and count or weigh it with help from the rest of the group?

4. Go to the garden as a group and look at each of the crops to discuss whether they are ready to be harvested. Read the instructions on how to harvest the crop and have one student demonstrate to the rest of the class. After looking at the entire garden, organize how you would like to harvest the mature crops so that everyone gets a chance to harvest something. Produce tastes so good straight from the garden. You may want to wash and eat a small sample of some of the crops you harvest. Save enough to make one of the recipes.

5. Be sure to record the harvest information on the Garden Record.

If you do not have your own garden and have purchased produce from local farmer’s markets, produce stands, or grocery stores, please explore harvesting this way.

Copy the Garden Record, one per student, or project it on an interactive board, screen or large flip chart. Show one sample of each of the crops from the local market. Have the students write down the name of the crops on the Garden Record. Talk about where the crop was grown, if anyone has grown the crop or eaten it before. Discuss and predict how many tomatoes, peppers, potatoes, beans, etc. might come from one plant and how many plants they might like to grow in a 4’ x 8’ garden. Record the predictions on the Garden Record. You may want to refer to the School Garden Harvesting Guide and the Harvesting and Storing Vegetables chart for additional information.

PREPARING AND EATING FOOD FROM THE GARDEN

Use the garden produce the students have harvested or that has been purchased or donated from a local farmer’s market, produce stand, or grocery store.

1. Decide how you would like to use the garden produce. Would you like to prepare and eat it yourselves? Or, would you like to host a Harvest Party with family members? Using the Harvest Recipes as a guide, what recipes would you like to prepare and how much food will you need? If you are having a Harvest Party, make plans for the party and design clever invitations.
2. Referring to the **Harvest Recipes**, select at least one recipe that includes the garden produce you harvested or purchased and that the students would like to make and eat. Make sure you have the right supplies for the recipes. Review and follow the food safety rules listed in Harvest Rules found in number 2 of the first section of this lesson. Demonstrate how the students will wash the produce and prepare it for the recipe. Show how to safely peel, cut or slice produce with the knife or grater blade going down towards the cutting board and with your fingers out of the way. School foodservice staff would be good leaders for this activity.

3. Organize the students so everyone has a task, make sure everyone is following the Harvest Rules, and make the recipes according to the directions.

**REVIEW**
This section of the lesson is to be completed after the harvest, food preparation and eating is done.

1. Use the information on your Garden Record and do some of the math activities found on page 2 of the Garden Record.

2. Discuss what the students learned, what they liked and didn’t like, what they want to do next as a result of their new experiences. Be sure to talk about and record what the students would like to grow in their next garden. You may also want to talk about where and how they can get involved in helping their families and others in the community have access to these tasty and healthy local foods. Participating in farmer’s markets, community gardens, food pantries, family or neighborhood gardens, cooking classes, community meals are examples of these opportunities.
# Student Garden Record

Year: ____________

Teacher: ___________________________  Grade: ____________

Date(s) garden was planted: _________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crop</th>
<th>Amount planted (feet of row, square feet, number of plants, or number of seed packages)</th>
<th>Approximate amount harvested and date?</th>
<th>How was it used? Check the appropriate answer(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Example: radishes | 10 feet of row or 2 square feet or one 2.5 gram packet                                    | 32 radishes on May 20 27 radishes on May 25 | □ Donated to the soup, kitchen/community  
□ Used classrooms for snacks  
□ Ate as a snack in the garden  
□ Shared with school cafeteria  
□ Sent home with children  
□ Sold for profit |
| Example: lettuce | 16 feet of row or 4 square feet or one 1 gram packet                                      | 2 pounds on May 16 1 pound on May 25    | □ Donated to the soup, kitchen/community  
□ Used classrooms for snacks  
□ Ate as a snack in the garden  
□ Shared with school cafeteria  
□ Sent home with children  
□ Sold for profit  
□ Donated to the soup, kitchen/community  
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|                  |                                                                                          |                                        | □ Donated to the soup, kitchen/community  
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□ Sent home with children  
□ Sold for profit |
Harvest Math

There are a lot of things you can do with the data you collect from your garden. It makes great applicable math problems. Below are a few examples.

1. How many days did it take radishes, onions, tomatoes, etc. to grow until they were ready for harvest (from the time they were planted until the first ripe/mature one was ready)? Use a calendar to help you count. Was that the same as was given on the seed package? Make a chart to see how close your crops were to the estimated of days. Why do you think yours were earlier or later? (Possible reasons: weather – warmer or colder; planting depth – too deep; too much or too little water; lack of adequate light, etc.)

2. If your garden is a 4 ft. x 8 ft. raised bed, it contains 32 square feet. Using your garden plan, determine how much space each crop took and turn that into a pie chart. See example below:

Tomatoes – 12 sq. feet (12/32 = 3/8 = 38%)
Radishes – 8 sq. feet (8/32 = ¼ = 25%)
Lettuce – 8 sq. feet (8/32 = ¼ = 25%)
Cucumbers – 4 sq. feet (4/32 = 1/8 = 12%)

3. Calculate potential value of the crop. Example: If you harvested 12 pounds of tomatoes and the price at the market is $2.50 per pound, what is the value of your tomato crop? $30. Make a chart using the data and determine what crops would be the most valuable.

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