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SP719-G Quick Bites Let's Grow Together

The University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service

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UT Extension

Tennessee Nutrition and Consumer Education Program

SP719-G

Quick Bites

Revised September 2009

Let's Grow Together

Growing vegetables in containers is a good way to teach your child where food comes from. Encourage him or her to take an active role in the planting and watering process. This will provide your children with a sense of ownership of the plants, and they will actually want to eat their vegetables. Have fun growing together!

Supplies

- Container at least 6 inches deep – Be creative!
- Potting soil mix from a garden center.
- Vegetable seeds or transplants – Look for compact varieties.
- Sunny porch or window sill.

Seeds / Days to Harvest

- Radishes / 30-40 days
- Bush green beans / 55
- Lettuce & greens / 45-60
- Squash & cucumber / 50-70
- Baby carrots / 70
- Basil / 45-60

Transplants

- Cherry tomatoes / 70-90
- Peppers / 60-90
- Eggplant / 80
- Onions / 30-60

Container Garden Tips

- Plant large seeds (like beans) 1 inch deep and small seeds (like radishes) 1/4 inch deep.
- Water regularly, but let the soil surface dry after watering. Use your finger to check for moisture. Avoid water on leaves.
- Vegetables like it sunny. During the winter, south-facing windows provide the most light.
- Make holes in the bottom of the container for proper drainage.
- Feed the plant regularly with a liquid nutrient solution (available at most garden centers).
- Use a tray or container lid to catch water under the pot.
- Put plants outside if the weather permits.
- Read the seed packet for more growing tips.

Activity Ideas

Have your child measure the plant's height on a weekly or daily basis, and show him or her how to chart the growth on graph paper.

Additional instructions at http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/extension/container/container.html

Kids in the Kitchen

This is an easy recipe for you and your child to make together. Supervision and assistance from an adult are necessary for a successful learning experience. Talking with your child throughout the experience will enhance learning as well as strengthen communication skills.

Green Bean Stir-fry

1 pound fresh green beans with stems removed
1 small onion
1 tablespoon canola or olive oil
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar*
Salt & pepper to taste

Add green beans and 1 tsp salt to boiling water, and cook until bright green and tender (3-5 min). Rinse beans with cold water and drain. Slice onion into thin strips and cook in skillet with butter over low heat until onions starts to brown (10-15 min). Add vinegar or lemon juice and cook an additional minute. Add beans and cook over medium heat until beans are warm. Add salt & pepper to taste.

*Can substitute apple cider vinegar or lemon juice for balsamic vinegar.

Talk as you work

Do you think green beans are good for you?
What are your favorite vegetables?
Can you find a green bean seed?
Where do you think pinto beans come from?
Why do your eyes water when a raw onion is cut?
Do you like onions better raw or cooked?

Reflections after you eat the stir-fry

Did you like the green bean stir-fry?
What was the hardest part of making it?
What other vegetables would be good in stir-fry?
Do you think we could grow a green bean plant?
How about other kinds of beans?
Do you think dry beans from the grocery store would grow? Should we plant some and find out?
What do you plant to grow an onion?

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