



## **Tips for the Conway School Garden Champions**

April, 2019

### **School Garden activities for April**

- Harvest strawberries
- Cool season vegetables need to be in by mid-month then start on warm season vegetables
- Let the soil warm up before planting tomatoes

### **Soil Temperature and Planting Dates**

Seeds of cool-season vegetables such as radish, lettuce, cabbage, carrot, etc., need at least a 45 degree F ground temperature to germinate. Tomatoes, beans, and marigolds need higher temperatures of more than 60 degrees F. Tomato plants can be transplanted at 55 degrees F, but growth will be slow. Use a rule of thumb of a night air temperature minimum of 55 degrees F. By then, the days are a lot warmer and the soil is warmer than the coolest night air. If you plant bean and marigold seeds when the soil is less than 60 degrees F, the seed will just sit. Some people wait until the temperature is 68 to 70 degrees F. Pepper and eggplant transplants should go in at this higher temperature.

### **Planting Strawberries**

New strawberry plantings should be set early in the growing season so that mother plants become established while the weather is still cool. The mother plants develop a strong root system during this cool period when soil temperatures are between 65 and 80 degrees F. The most appropriate planting time is mid- to late March in Arkansas. Space plants 18 to 24 inches apart. A lot of space will be needed.

Later in the season, runners and daughter plants develop. The earlier the mother plants are set, the sooner the first daughter plant will be formed and take root. These first daughter plants will be the largest daughter plants at the end of the growing season and will bear more berries per plant the following spring. When planting is done later, the

higher temperatures stress the mother plants resulting in reduced growth, weaker mother plants and delays in daughter plant formation. Fewer and smaller daughter plants produce fewer berries, resulting in a smaller crop.

Remove all flowers during the first year. New plants have limited energy reserves that need to go toward establishing the mother plants and making runners rather than making fruit. If fruit is allowed to develop the first year, the amount of fruit produced the second year is drastically reduced due to smaller, weaker daughter plants.

## School Garden Planting Chart

<u>April</u>	<u>May</u>
Asparagus (Perennial)	Edamame (65-90)
Sweet Corn (80-94)	Asparagus (Perennial)
Squash (Summer) (42-54)	Pumpkins (95-112)
Okra (55-58)	Tomatoes (55-105)
Peppers (65-75)	Squash (Summer) (42-54)
Cucumbers (51-68)	Southern Peas (55-70)
Sweet Potatoes (90-120)	Sweet Potatoes (90-120)
Eggplants (63-76)	Peppers (65-75)
Tomatoes (55-105)	Okra (55-58)
Beans (Snap, Lima) (48-71)	Eggplants (63-76)
Edamame (65-90)	Cucumbers (51-68)
Kohlrabi (50)	Watermelon (75-92)
Broccoli (50-75)	Cantaloupe (75-90)
Cabbage (60-82)	Beans (Snap, Lima) (48-71)
Collards (50-75)	Collards (50-75)
Swiss Chard (60)	Radish (24-30)
Lettuce (45-65)	
Radish (24-30)	
Beets (54-68)	
Watermelon (75-92)	
Cantaloupe (75-90)	
( ) = Days from planting to harvest	



## Locally Grown Calendar for Vegetables and Fruits

Knowing when fruits or vegetables will be in-season to harvest allows locally grown foods to be available to eat at their peak of freshness. This ensures you are getting not only the maximum amount of vitamins and minerals, but maximum taste as well. The following calendar shows when produce is available fresh in Arkansas.

<https://www.uaex.edu/publications/pdf/FCS812A.pdf>

## Growing a Knowing Nose

Overview: Students explore a variety of plant-derived aromatic substances, reflect on the memories and feelings they evoke, and describe them. Next, as they try to taste without using their sense of smell, they begin to grasp the importance of this remarkable adaptation. They also learn that scents provide plants with a way to communicate, aid in reproduction and seed dispersal, and protect themselves.

Grade Level/Range: 3rd- 5th Grade

Objective:

Students will learn that:

- Plants give off many different distinctive scents.
- People's sense of smell and sense of taste are connected.
- Many plant scents aid the plant in its survival.



Time: 1 hour

<https://kidsgardening.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Growing-a-Knowing-Nose.pdf>

**This gardening activity with detailed lesson plans can be found on the Kidsgardening website:**

Happy Spring Gardening!



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