



Linking Food, Plants, and People

An Interdisciplinary Curriculum for Elementary Educators

This curriculum emerged out of a collaboration between Wisconsin Homegrown Lunch, the University of Wisconsin Extension Nutrition Education Program, and Community Ground Works in Madison, WI. Educators from these three programs piloted these lessons with 2nd and 3rd graders at Mendota Elementary School from 2006 to 2008. Special thanks to educators Brent Kramer, Nathan Larson, and Libby Weiland for their creative energy as well as to Mendota's staff and students for their contributions and for the opportunity to bring integrated nutrition and environmental education into their classrooms.

Our food choices carry immense consequences for our health and the environment. Connecting students to the natural world though food represents an educational opportunity to address the dual problems of rising rates of diet related illnesses and environmental degradation. Therefore, one of the primary goals of these lessons is to teach students about the natural processes that produce our food. More specifically, these lessons focus on such themes as the nutrient cycle, decomposition, plant development, plant anatomy, and sustainable agriculture. For students, this has resulted in increased willingness to try new foods and joyfully connect to the natural world. By providing (and encouraging) positive food experiences we can show young people that a healthy diet is not about depriving yourself, it is about filling your mind and body with all the beauty and incredible flavor that nature provides.

The lessons are organized into four units, each with 5 lessons. While they are designed to build upon one another, any of the lessons can be presented individually as well.

All of the lessons are aligned with Wisconsin Model Academic Standards and integrate teaching of core subject areas such as Science, Math, Language Arts, and Social Studies.

All of the lessons are free to use or reproduce. We welcome your feedback and questions, along with stories about how these lessons have been used. Please contact: Community Ground Works' Education Director at (education@troygardens.org) and WHL's Education Coordinator at (whl@reapfoodgroup.org).

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Wisconsin Homegrown Lunch is a joint project of:



REAP Food Group:
www.reapfoodgroup.org

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