



SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

EATING FOOD FROM YOUR OWN BACKYARD

Eating food that you have grown in your own backyard is a very environmentally sustainable action. Instead of your food traveling long distances from the field to your dinner plate, it has been grown just metres away! Now that's what we call low "food miles"!

Although you probably will not grow all of the food that you eat, by adding some homegrown vegetables, herbs or fruits to other locally-grown and seasonal foods, you have yourself a very LOCAL, environmentally-friendly and nutritious meal!

LASAGNA GARDENING

Lasagna gardening is a really easy way to build a new garden, and is great for locations with poor soil quality (such as clayey or rocky soils). It involves the layering of organic materials such as compost, animal manure, soil, peat moss, leaves, grass clippings, etc. until you have built a garden that is deep enough (at least 15 cm). Here is how you build this type of garden:

1. Choose the location of your new garden. The location should be sunny and have access to water.
2. Begin by placing cardboard or newspaper (at least 5 sheets thick) directly onto the ground. This layer will kill the grass and cover any rocks, as well as inhibit weed growth.
3. Cover the newspaper with layers of organic material such as compost, animal manure, soil, peat moss, leaves, grass clippings, seaweed, etc. (just compost will work fine too) until the desired thickness is reached.
4. Finish with a top layer of mulch (e.g. wood chips, straw).
5. Water until the garden is the consistency of a damp sponge.
6. Move the mulch aside to plant your seeds or seedlings.
7. Remember that you will need a deeper garden (30 cm or more) if you are planting root crops in the first year as the newspaper layer is unlikely to decompose during the first year. By the second season, the newspaper layer will have rotted away.

RHUBARB

Rhubarb is in-season from early spring to early summer and is one of the great early season foods. Rhubarb is native to Northern Asia, where it was used primarily for medicinal purposes. The English were the first to begin using rhubarb in cooking, making it into pies and stewing it for custards. Rhubarb was introduced to North America in the early 1800's when pioneers brought cuttings over to plant in their gardens.

It is often considered a fruit due to its common use in dessert recipes, although it is actually a vegetable. It is a good source of vitamin C and iron.

*Rhubarb leaves are toxic and therefore should not be consumed by humans or fed to animals.

Easy Stewed Rhubarb

Servings: 3 cups

6 cups chopped rhubarb

1 cup granulated sugar

2 Tbsp. water

1. In large saucepan, combine all ingredients.
2. Cook over medium heat, stirring, until sugar is dissolved. Reduce heat to medium low.
3. Simmer, uncovered and stirring occasionally for about 15 minutes or until slightly thickened and rhubarb is in threads.
4. Let cool. Can be refrigerated up to 5 days.

Rhubarb Frozen Yogurt

2 cups stewed rhubarb (refer to "Easy Stewed Rhubarb" recipe above)

1/2 cup plain low fat yogurt

3 Tbsp. granulated sugar

2 Tbsp. orange juice

1. In food processor puree stewed rhubarb until smooth.
2. Blend in yogurt, sugar and orange juice.
3. Cover and freeze in shallow metal pan for 3 to 4 hrs or until almost firm.
4. Break up mixture and process in food processor in batches until smooth.
5. Freeze in airtight container for 1 hour or until firm.