Learning in the Garden - Growing Food and More!

While learning about where food comes from and how it grows, our classrooms have also been busy learning new academic skills that transfer from garden to classroom and back again!

- **Yellow** Door has been working hard on problem-solving. Everything from bunnies in the garden to sunflowers growing crooked. After trial and error, they worked together to pile dirt at the base of their sunflower and help it grow upright again.

- **Blue** Door toddlers worked on scooping and pouring in the garden in addition to using a tape measure and exploring measurement. The infants continue to stroll up to the garden and engage in sensory exploration.

- **Red** Door started by counting and sorting a variety of seeds. After the seeds were then all mixed up, they read "The Surprise Garden" by Zoe Hall and planted their mixed up seeds to create their own "surprise garden."

- **Green** Door took geometric shapes to the garden to match garden things to specific shapes. The next day, using recall, the students recreated their garden sightings using the shapes. This also led to a classroom discussion about parts of a plant.

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**In the People's Garden...**

- Our garden partner, Jim Elder with the USDA, has been busy hosting weekly lessons with all the classrooms in the People's Garden. Enjoy this update from him:
  - The children have been very interested in learning about the ecosystem that exists below the soil's surface. They have been able to dig up and identify many different types of bugs, however their favorites were the earthworms, roly polys(pillbugs), and the centipedes.

- The classes have been harvesting the radishes that we planted in April; so far we have been able to donate 30 pounds to the Food Pantry.

- To date, the CDL children have helped plant the list provided to the right --->

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**You're Invited: Families Gathering in the Garden**

Join us in the Learning Garden to explore with your child/ren, see what's growing, and enjoy a fresh garden snack.

Come and go as you please.
Fridays in June from 3-5pm.

**Grocery List**

- Bok Choy
- Cabbage
- Spaghetti Squash
- Broccoli
- Onions
- Kale
- Scallop Squash
- Sunflowers
- Green Beans
- Noodle Beans
- Scarlett Runner Beans
- Tomatoes
- Banana Peppers
- Swiss Chard
- Peas
- Nasturtium
- Zinnias
- Bachelor Butons
About the grant:

The Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services’ named the MU CDL as one of six pilot programs in the state. The goal of this program is to strengthen the connection between young children and healthy, local foods. Strategies include:

- Garden-based preschool curriculum
- Taste tests
- Field trips to farms or markets
- Local purchasing of in-season fruits and vegetables
- New menu items
- Staff training
- Family activities

As a pilot site, the CDL has created specific goals and objectives to intertwine with our existing garden and food programs. We've been able to create a garden-themed library and increase parent communication regarding our garden efforts with our new whiteboards. Next up includes cooking lessons in the classrooms! Each season will include a focus on specific fruits and vegetables. CDL activities that will highlight these focus fruits and vegetables may include taste testing, integration of the seasonal produce into our school menu, special classroom projects, and family events. Watch for updates in the monthly garden newsletter!

Spring fresh fruit and vegetable focus:

- Strawberries
- Broccoli
- Lettuce

A new recipe: Parmesan Roasted Broccoli

Ingredients
- 2 1/2 oz broccoli florets
- 3 Tbsp olive oil
- 3 tsp minced garlic
- pinch of salt (to taste)
- 1/4 c. Parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. Drizzle a little olive oil on a large baking sheet, then use a paper towel to evenly distribute the oil. In a large bowl, add broccoli, olive oil, garlic, and salt to taste. Toss broccoli with a spoon until it's completely coated. Pour broccoli on the prepared baking sheet, spreading out into an even layer. Scoop out any garlic & oil left in the bowl and sprinkle it over the broccoli. Bake for 10-12 minutes, or until broccoli is cooked through. Sprinkle broccoli with Parmesan cheese.