

This activity contributes to the following badges:



Beaver Gardener Activity Badge



Cub Gardener Activity Badge



Cub Naturalist Activity Badge

The activity could also help towards:



Scout Naturalist Activity Badge

Thought about peer leadership?

Complete this activity as a Lodge, Six or Troop and each take on a particular vegetable to grow.

Beavers | Cubs | Scouts

Grow an edible garden

National Insect Week, 18-24 June Use small-scale planting projects to show your section what impact plants have on the world around them

Time 30-45 minutes (plus aftercare)

Equipment

- old clothes
- large, deep plant pots or upcycled planters (find ideas below or online)
- soil
- fruit and vegetable seeds such as carrots, squash, onions, strawberries, raspberries, etc
- labels

Instructions

1 Discuss your planting options with your section. Ideally you want to choose plants that are not only edible, but that also require insect pollination to survive (such as the examples listed above), as this will encourage bees and other insects to your edible garden.

2 Discuss what growing conditions these plants will need (eg direct sunlight or a sheltered spot) and where around your meeting place you can arrange your planters. You can find lots of advice online about growing conditions for specific plants.

3 Head outside to begin planting! Encourage your young people to wear protective



clothing or to dress in old clothes that can get dirty. Fill your planters with soil, first making sure they have drainage holes in the bottom. If you don't have access to deep pots, see what alternatives your section can think up, for instance, are there unwanted tyres that can be stacked, decorated and filled, or old pallets that can be fashioned into planters?

4 Once filled with soil, your section can follow the instructions on the back of the seed packet and sow the seeds accordingly before watering generously with rainwater after planting. You may want to position a container outside to collect rainwater for drier patches of weather. Everyone should label their plants so there's no confusion.

5 It's now up to your young people to care for and monitor these plants. They can either create a rota, where each young person takes their turn to be responsible for the whole crop, or they can each take care of their own plant. After the vegetables have started sprouting, the young people can monitor the plants' progress, as well as the types of insects that gravitate towards them. Is there anything living on their plant and if yes, what impact is it having on the plant?

6 Once the plants have reached full maturity, it's time for the harvest. As a section, you can pool all of your vegetables and cook up something together, or each take them home and share them with the family. It's also a great opportunity to discuss sustainability and organic farming practices. How easy were they to grow? What impact might pesticides have on the wildlife that lived on or around these plants?

Take it further

Find out what steps you would need to take in order to adopt a local piece of land and work with your young people to plan a larger-scale planting project?