JULY IN THE GARDEN

Fruits and Veggies from Different Places

In the first week of July, John introduced us to a variety of fruits and vegetables grown in different climates and cultures around the world. Dragon fruits, pineapples, mangoes and papaya were the favorite fruits. Long beans and Chinese watercress were favorites among the veggies. We also tried okra and pennyworth leaf. It was really fun and active with so many questions and stories shared by kids about what they grow and eat at home.

Running Brook Camp - Scavenger Hunt

In the second week of July, we started our teen leadership collaboration with middle-school campers from Running Brook in Waltham. To introduce the teens to their Lemberg buddies, we did a scavenger hunt around the garden, and shared what everyone found. Then we read a book about the sun and solar energy before testing our home made solar oven to observe how we can use solar energy to cook food.

Observing Baby Bunnies

We had a special opportunity to observe bunnies this July, when we noticed a nest of baby bunnies in our garden bed. In a few days, the bunnies left their nest, but we enjoyed watching them while they were around. Many kids said how smart the mother bunny was to build a nest right next to a bed of carrots.
Running Brook Buddies - Scarecrows

Our middle school buddies helped us build scarecrows to protect our garden from birds and to decorate the garden. Everyone enjoyed drawing fun faces on our new friends and stuffing them with hay. We also decorated the scarecrows with leis, ribbons, and CDs to create movement and reflect light. Thank you to all the parents who donated items for this activity.

Harvesting Beans, Zucchini, Cucumbers

The beans are growing strong and producing a lot of fruit for us this year. So far we’ve harvested 3 lbs of green beans and we expect the plants to keep producing even more. We’ve been enjoying picking them daily and weighing them on the scale to keep track of our yearly harvest. The cucumbers and squash are also being harvested in large numbers.

Picking and Eating Raspberries

During the end of June and the beginning of July, we had a lot of raspberries ready to pick. Kids from all classes enjoy picking and eating them. Right now we are waiting for another batch of raspberries to ripen. The blackberries, grapes and peaches will be coming soon too, and we’ll have our first crop of apples this year!
Planting Kale

Kale is a tasty green which only takes 21 days to pick as baby greens and 50 days to grow to full size. Since it grows so quickly we have been planting and harvesting it all summer. It takes a lot of practice to plant the very tiny kale seeds, but many of the kids are now expert planters!

Picking mouse melons on the fence

Mouse Melons are Here!

This year, we planted mouse melons along the fence between the playground and the garden. Now they’re climbing all over the fence and the kids can pick and eat them during their outdoor play time. We all love them! They look like mini-watermelons and taste like cucumbers.

CCC building solar ovens

Creative Connections Campers at Lemberg

After reading a book full of fun facts about the sun and solar energy, Creative Connections campers built solar ovens from pizza boxes. A few days later, we used them to cook oatmeal with fresh berries and mini-pizzas with basil, oregano, peppers, and garlic and from our garden.
Compost Tea Fertilizer

At the end of July, we cleaned out the worm house, made compost tea from the castings and used it to fertilize the whole garden!

Wildflower Meadow Installation

With highschool students and college interns from *Meadowscaping for Biodiversity*, Creative Connections Campers planted native wildflowers to attract pollinators. We played games to learn about the process of pollination and what plants need to grow. Then we made delicious pesto zucchini noodles for snack.

GARDEN WORK DAYS

During our June gardening day, some of our intrepid parent volunteers tackled weedy areas in front of the center and next to the greenhouse, while others raked up sand and refilled the large sandbox in the preschool playground. We were delighted that former Hummingbird teacher, Hope, who is returning to Lemberg to be the Explorers head teacher, joined us to work on the playground.

Welcome back, Hope!

UPCOMING GARDENING DAY:

Saturday, August 17, 9:30 to 11:30 am
Weather permitting, earn parent hours helping with garden and playground projects.
Email Beth with questions or to RSVP: belowe@brandeis.edu
Children are welcome!