FALL HARVESTS AND GARDEN PROJECTS

Our Rainbow Garden

Our garden is filled with color. First we collected vegetables and fruits of many colors. Then we matched pictures of them to our rainbow and everyone shared their favorite color and favorite tastes. We talked about other fruits and vegetables that we are not growing in our garden but could also be put on the food rainbow.

Filling our food rainbow

Getting Creative with Corn

To continue the rainbow theme, this Fall we harvested a species of corn called Rainbow Corn. The kids love playing with this at the sensory table and looking at the different colors so we decided to do an art project with it. After dipping the corn in paint, kids rolled it onto paper to make interesting patterns. We talked about what new colors came out from mixing the colors and how the corn looked different after being covered in paint.

Messy hands and big smiles!

Worm Bin Cleanout

The worms are an important part of our garden and we want to make sure we take good care of them. The kids helped us do some fall cleaning to get the worms ready to move indoors for the winter. We donned gloves, rolled up our sleeves, and collected the ooey-gooey worm castings, which were saved for fertilizer. Now the worms are safe and warm indoors where the kids will visit and feed them all winter.

Cleaning the worm bin to bring indoors
Going on a Leaf Hunt

Kids have been noticing that the foliage is changing colors. From green to bright orange, yellow, and red! We went on a leaf hunt around the playground, picking up leaves of different shapes, colors, and sizes. To help kids better understand the whys and hows of leaves changing color, we read a book called *I Am a Leaf* and looked at pictures illustrating how leaves make food for plants by turning sunlight and CO₂ into sugar. Although it’s a big word, we introduced chlorophyll and how the other colors “hide” behind this green pigment.

Painting Mini Pumpkins

It’s October, which means... pumpkin season! Last month we harvested some miniature pumpkins from our garden. The kids turned these into “pumpkin monsters” using paint, stickers, and of course, glitter. It got really messy but that didn’t discourage the kids one bit.

Finding Bug Friends

The Voyagers and Navigators teamed up for a bug hunt to discover the creepy-crawlies living in the garden. We found all sorts of cool critters, from centipedes to grubs, and an amazing, beautiful tomato hornworm caterpillar. We’ve studied its life cycle and we’re hoping to see it emerge from its cocoon as a huge hawk moth.

Written by the Environmental Education Team
Kale Party

Kale is one of our community’s favorite greens, so we threw a kale party with our prolific fall harvest. Some newly planted kale will grow all winter under cold frames. The mature harvest was packaged by the Voyagers and Navigators for parents, and made into kale chips and kale smoothies for snacks. Kids’ opinions on the smoothies were divided, but many kids and adults thought they tasted delicious!

We’re proud of how we packed our salad bags and signed our names on them.

Seed Pod Exploration and Plant Life Cycles

The kids learned about the life cycle of a plant and how seeds hold future baby plants and have their own protection and special features that help them travel to new growing spots. We went into the wild flower garden to collect seed pods, then dissected them and examined them with magnifiers. Some friends loved finding the fuzzy seeds that are carried on the wind, and others enjoyed scraping the spiky seeds that stick to clothes out of their pods.

Exploring seed pods, inside and out.

HARVEST TOTALS FOR THIS YEAR

It was an amazing year for cucumbers, zucchini kale, and peppers (not so great for carrots or tomatoes.) Our biggest harvests were:

- long green cucumbers: 57 lbs
- round lemon cucumbers: 31 lbs
- zucchini: 49 lbs
- melons: 27 lbs
- yellow squash: 19 lbs
- kale: 15 lbs
- grapes: 11 lbs
- peaches: 8 lbs

We also had great harvests of potatoes, apples, mouse melons, mixed baby greens and herbs. These totals are what we weighed. Much more was picked by our community to take home or eat on site. Cucumbers and berries are the kids’ favorites and they love most everything they try.

Written by the Environmental Education Team
COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS

On October 19, we combined a visit from a group of Symbiosis volunteers with a parent workday. Symbiosis volunteers helped with a large sand clean up, and set up space for an outdoor work table near our garden shed, while parents weeded several areas, cut up a large branch that had come down in a recent storm, and improved the flower bed near our sign.

As part of our community outreach, we are launching programs for middle school students from Kennedy and McDevitt schools in Waltham. The Waltham Group, a Brandeis volunteer organization, will be bringing their Afternoon Enrichment group and English Language Learners group to the garden, where they will build a raised bed and plant some winter kale. In the spring, we’ll have these groups back for more garden learning, planting and nature investigations.

UPCOMING EVENTS

We are excited to announce the Green Apple Day of Service coming to Lemberg on December 4th! To prepare, we’ve begun reading books about recycling in the classroom and designing new activities to teach kids, parents and staff about what belongs in the recycling bin and what does not. Lemberg wants to maximize our sustainability measures, so we will also be using a platform called ARC SKORU that will help us track data about water use, trash volume, and energy use to get a sense of how big Lemberg’s footprint is and what we can do to reduce it.

SAVE THE DATE:
Our next parent gardening day will be Saturday, Nov 23
Time TBD
Questions?
Email Beth: belowe@brandeis.edu
I found a worm!

Written by the Environmental Education Team