New Beginnings Learning Garden

Made possible by the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida Health Literacy Grant Initiative

A statewide initiative managed by the Florida Literacy Coalition
These are our project based learning activities
Healthy Veggies
Families are introduced to vegetables that they had not only not tried but some they had not even heard of, increasing their knowledge and variety of vegetables that they will use in future cooking.
What next?
It takes a lot of Sweat and Water!
Everybody in the family helped in planting and maintaining the box gardens.
Fruit Trees
Look what we grew
Strawberries!!!

Can I pick it?

Yes, you can!
squash
Creating recipe books in a scrapbook style with the recipes that we have prepared

Fresh Tomato Salsa

INGREDIENTS
- 2-3 medium sized fresh tomatoes (from 1 lb to 1 1/2 lb), stems removed, finely diced
- 1/2 red onion, finely diced
- 1 jalapeño chili pepper (stems, ribs, seeds removed), finely diced
- 1 serrano chili pepper (stems, ribs, seeds removed), finely diced
- Juice of one lime
- 1/2 cup chopped cilantro
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Optional: oregano and or cumin to taste

METHOD
1. Start with chopping up 2 medium sized fresh tomatoes. Be very careful while handling these hot peppers. If you can, avoid touching them with your hands. Use a fork to cut up the chilies over a small plate, or use a paper towel to protect your hands. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and hot water after handling and avoid touching your eyes for several hours. Set aside some of the seeds from the peppers. If the salsa isn’t hot enough, you can add a few for heat.
2. Combine all of the ingredients in a medium sized bowl. Taste. If the chilies make the salsa too hot, add some more chopped tomato. If not hot enough, carefully add a few of the seeds from the chilies, or add some ground cumin.

Let sit for an hour for the flavors to combine.

Makes approximately 3-4 cups.
Serve with chips, tortillas, tacos, burritos, tamales, quesadillas, pinto or black beans.
Squash Casserole
Recipe courtesy Paula Deen

Prep Time: 25 min  Level: Easy  Serves: 6 servings
Inactive Prep Time:
Cook Time: 55 min

Ingredients
6 cups large diced yellow squash and zucchini
Vegetable oil
1 large onion, chopped
4 tablespoons butter
1/2 cup sour cream
1 teaspoon House seasoning, recipe follows
1 cup grated cheddar cheese
1 cup crushed butter crackers (recommended: Ritz)

Directions
Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

Sauté the squash in a little vegetable oil over medium-low heat until it has completely broken down, about 15 to 20 minutes. Line a colander with a clean tea towel. Place the cooked squash in the lined colander. Squeeze excess moisture from the squash. Set aside.

In a medium size skillet, sauté the onion in butter for 5 minutes. Remove from pan and mix all ingredients together except cracker crumbs. Pour mixture into a buttered casserole dish and top with cracker crumbs. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes.

House Seasoning:
1 cup salt
1/4 cup black pepper
1/4 cup garlic powder
Mix ingredients together and store in an airtight container for up to 5 months.

Yield: 1 1/2 cups
Marinated Garden Vegetable Salad

Broccoli - cut to bite size pieces
Cauliflower - cut to bite size pieces
Green Pepper – diced
Radishes – small whole or large halved
Snow Peas – whole
Red Onion – diced
Tomatoes – diced
Cucumbers – peeled & diced

All vegetables amounts are to your taste or the availability in your garden.

Mix all vegetables except tomatoes and cucumber with one bottle of Ken’s Light Options Olive Oil & Vinegar Dressing, let marinade overnight. Before serving add tomatoes and cucumbers and toss. Salt & Pepper to taste.
CHEESY BROCCOLI SOUP

Ingredients:

- ½ cup water
- 2-2 ½ cups chopped steamed broccoli
- 3 tablespoons flour
- ½ teaspoon onion powder or garlic powder
- 1/8 teaspoon black pepper
- 3 tablespoons margarine
- 2 cups milk
- 4 slices American cheese

Directions:

1. Heat water to boiling in 3-quart saucepan, add broccoli. Cover and cook 1-2 minutes.
2. Pour broccoli onto a dinner plate or cutting board; set aside.
3. In small bowl, combine flour, onion or garlic powder, and pepper.
4. Add margarine to saucepan and melt over medium heat. Add flour mixture and whisk until well mixed.
5. Gradually stir in milk, stirring constantly with whisk to keep sauce smooth. Cook over medium heat, stirring or whisking a few times, until thick and bubbly, about 4-5 minutes.
6. Add broccoli to sauce and turn heat to low. Add cheese slices. Cook and stir about 2 minutes or until cheese melts. Serve immediately. If desired, add hot sauce to taste. Serves 4-6 cup servings.

EGGPLANT and PASTA CASSEROLE

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. pasta
- ¾ cup olive oil
- 1 large eggplant peeled and diced
- 1 large onion diced
- 1-15 oz can diced tomatoes
- 1-15 oz can tomato sauce
- 1 cup Ricotta cheese
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil or 1 teaspoon dried basil
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper

Cook pasta according to directions. Drain. Place the olive oil in a large skillet or deep saucepan. Add onion and eggplant and cook over medium heat until slightly brown and cook through, (approx. 10 minutes). Add diced tomatoes and tomato sauce, basil and salt and pepper. Cook on medium heat for another 5 minutes. While eggplant mixture is cooking, mix the ricotta cheese into the cooked and drained pasta. Then, stir the eggplant mixture into the pasta with the ricotta. Sprinkle the shredded cheese on top and bake for 20 minutes until warmed through.

Serves 8
Zucchini Bread
Recipe courtesy Paula Deen

Prep Time: 10 min
Inactive Prep Time: –
Cook Time: 1 hr 0 min
Level: Easy
Serves: 2 slices

Ingredients
3 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
2 teaspoons baking soda
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
3 cups sugar
1 cup vegetable oil
4 eggs, beaten
1/2 cup water
2 cups grated zucchini
1 teaspoon lemon juice
1 cup chopped walnuts or pecans

Directions
Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In a large bowl, combine flour, salt, nutmeg, baking soda, cinnamon and sugar. In a separate bowl, combine oil, eggs, water, zucchini and lemon juice. Mix wet ingredients into dry, add nuts and fold in. Bake in 2 standard loaf pans, sprayed with nonstick spray, for 1 hour, or until a tester comes out clean. Alternatively, bake in 8 mini loaf pans for about 45 minutes.
Painting carrots
We invited Mr. Medearis’ 6th grade ESE class to help
Team Work
Warning, construction in progress
Education is the movement from darkness to light. ~ Allan Bloom
Garden Helpers
We invited Superintendent Valentine to have lunch that we prepared using our harvest.
Krista Busey and Superintendent Valentine
New Beginnings Learning Garden

There are good things growing at the New Beginnings program! My name is Susan Warner and I am the Program Manager and Instructor for Adult Education’s New Beginnings Family Literacy Program located on the campus of Bunnell Elementary School. New Beginnings is a family literacy program designed to empower families to grow toward independence together through education. Our program was chosen to be a Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida Heath Literacy Grant recipient and the vegetable garden just outside our door is part of what grew as a result of our participation.

I chose to apply for this grant to enhance the parenting education of our New Beginnings participants, and realizing the importance of obesity prevention in adults and children, we planted a garden as a hands-on project to emphasize healthy eating. Part of our program includes collaboration with a Family Nutrition Program Educator, Mrs. Krista Busey, who facilitates classes twice per month and focuses on nutrition and meals on a budget. With the grant we have been able to expand upon that and have created box gardens which are located right outside of the back door of our program. We planted and maintained those crops and once they were ready to harvest we prepared low cost nutritional meals with the vegetables that we harvested. The families were also given the materials and supplies to create their very own recipe books. The recipe books are prepared much like a scrapbook with a lot of thought and personal touches that they will be proud to share with others and actually use at home for future meals. In addition to our garden project, we utilized the Staying Healthy curriculum provided by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida, which was a great benefit to New Beginnings participants, as shared with an ESOL class as well. The families learned about calories, fiber, chronic diseases, and where to go for low cost medical care. Our project is continuing and we will begin to plant our next crop seeds very soon. This has been a very exciting project that all of the families enjoyed and learned from and we hope to keep it going for many more families in the future.

For more information about the New Beginnings Program, call 437-7533
SUCCESS !!!
Thank You Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida and the Florida Literacy Coalition.