



4-C Child and Adult Care Food Program GARDENING WITH CHILDREN

Summer-Fall 2009

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BENEFITS OF GARDENING

Having fresh nutritious foods at hand is just one of many reasons to have a garden. The process of planting, watching over, and harvesting a garden provides daily opportunities for young children to learn valuable lessons, enjoy physical activity, and reap the fruits and vegetables of their labor. Gardening is a great way to teach children where many foods come from and entices them to want to try new foods because they've helped plant and anxiously awaited the results of their efforts.

Children learn about science as they marvel at a seed sprouting, growing into a plant, flowering, and finally producing a vegetable they can try in many different ways. Gardening incorporates math as children count seeds and then plants, and compare various plants. It can involve music and art with songs, stories, and pictures of their garden activities. It teaches cooperation as children help to mulch, pull a few weeds, and help pick their bounty. Plus gardening is a great stress relieving activity for both adults and children.

Gardening is especially helpful in view of today's obesity epidemic, which is in large part due to eating too many processed, high-fat, high-sugar foods. Studies show that few children eat the variety of fruits and vegetables necessary for a healthy diet, and nutrient-dense fruits and vegetables are generally missing from children's diets. Young children need to be exposed to a wide variety of healthy foods to improve nutrient intake. Early childhood is a critical time in the development of

food preferences. Factors that influence food choices and the health of young children include food preferences, food availability, and adult modeling. Children must have repeated exposures to new foods, they must have variety in their diets in order to get all the nutrients they need, they need adequate physical activity, and providers and parents must model healthy eating behaviors. Gardening can help alleviate several of these problems, and save money on produce at the same time.

Finally, gardening is a wonderful way to involve families as they see what's growing each week. Keeping a newsletter on your garden and sending it home might entice parents to help plant and pick with you. Parents appreciate sharing recipes and vegetables as well as there are usually plenty to share. The season might end with a harvest lunch that all can enjoy. Most importantly, your garden encourages parents to try new foods with their children as well when they see their children enjoying them at daycare.



HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

If you are an experienced gardener, you have an idea of what size garden will work in your situation. If you are new to gardening, start small in just a couple of containers or a few square feet in the yard. Pick easy-to-grow plants. For example, grow a salad garden: a variety of leaf lettuces, some radishes (as they bloom in just a few days and children love to see quick results), a cherry tomato plant, and some fragrant herbs, like basil, dill, or parsley. Choose vegetables your children particularly like and throw in a new one or two.

Raised bed and container gardening is a great way to get started gardening, and is particularly well suited for

gardens where space may be limited. You can get a great harvest in containers and raised beds. In fact, yields are often superior in raised beds compared to standard in-ground gardens.

The key to good harvests with any gardening method is enough (not too much) fertility and water and plenty of direct sunlight. Containers will need to be watered more frequently than raised beds or in-ground gardens. For most vegetable crops a 3 to 5 gallon container is best. Clay, wood, plastic, cement, and metal are all suitable materials for growing plants. Window boxes and recycled plastic containers, like well-cleaned milk or detergent bottles with tops cut off, work especially well. Favorite container vegetables include beans, cucumbers, eggplant, peppers, summer squash, tomatoes, beets, broccoli, carrots, green onions, peas, radishes, and spinach. Be sure to select a container that is large enough to hold the plant and its root system. Shallow-rooted crops such as chard, green onions, radishes and spinach are easy to grown in almost any container. Carrots, beets, and other root crops work as long as the container is deep enough. Place containers where plants will get full sun for at least 6 hours a day. When using raised beds, you can plant fruits and vegetables closer together because you don't need to walk on the soil. Raised beds that are 2 to 3 feet wide make easy reaching across for weeding and harvesting.

Other possibilities if you lack space, sunshine, or other requirements of a successful garden are community gardening plots, school grounds, and community parks. Contact Wisconsin Park and Recreation Association at www.wproweb.org/index.asp to get help finding land to grow a garden.

If you have space in your yard, choose a site that receives at least 6 hours of sun each day. If the land has never been used for a garden, you'll need to rototill or dig up the area to a depth of 6 to 8 inches in the early spring. Even if space is limited do not crowd the plants. Some space-saving techniques are: Interplanting, or growing 2 or more vegetables in one area by planting slow and fast maturing crops among each other. You can also alternate rows of fast and slow maturing vegetables, such as a row of tomatoes (slow maturing) and lettuce (fast maturing).

Succession Planting: planting another crop once the other is harvested or finished. For example, when

spinach has been harvested, replant the space with beans or beets.

Wide Row Planting: scattering fruit and vegetable seeds over an 8 to 12 inch band rather than a single row. This works best for leafy vegetables, like spinach and lettuce.

Use Vertical Space: Using a trellis or fence to support pole beans, cucumbers, and squash is a great way to maximize a limited space. You can also cage or stake tomato plants.

Plant Bush Varieties: these plants take up less space in the garden than standard varieties. These are available as seeds, and are found in cucumbers, muskmelon, watermelon, and squash.

Square Foot Gardening: making squares of space for crops rather than planting in straight rows. Common arrangements involve marking off 1 foot by 1 foot areas of garden space. Plants are planted according to their space needs.

A method you can best begin in the fall is described in the book "Lasagna Gardening, A New Layering System for Bountiful Gardens – No Digging, No Tilling, No Weeding, No Kidding", by Patricia Lanza. This involves deciding where you want to put your garden, laying cardboard over the grass in the area you've chosen, then on top of the cardboard layer peat moss, animal manure, shredded leaves, compost, grass clippings, sawdust, small stalks from your yard, ashes from your fireplace, newspaper (black and white ink only), and any other organic matter you have. This will decompose and in the spring, make your rows and start planting without having to rototill or dig up the land.

Use child-sized tools so children can help. Young children do best with tools that fit easily into their hands. Get child-sized hoes, rakes, and shovels at a nursery or garden center. Try to find strong, genuine looking tools so that children feel like real gardeners. Or to save money use large kitchen spoons and spatulas, which work great in containers.

CARING FOR YOUR GARDEN



Thinning Seedlings. Once your seeds have begun to sprout and grow in the garden, pull out the extras to provide growing space for the remaining plants.

Weeding. Weeds compete with your plants for water, light, and nutrients. Weeds also encourage insects and diseases that attack

your garden plants. Mulch and cultivation can help keep weeds under control. Use organic materials such as grass clippings or weed-free straw to control weeds. Old newspapers combined with a top layer of grass clippings can be placed around and in between plants to provide an excellent barrier for weeds.

Watering. The best time to water is in the early morning or early afternoon. Watering between 10:00 am and 2:00 pm could burn the plants, unless it is a cloudy day.

Garden Fertilizer. Use 2 to 3 pounds per 100 square feet. It's best to get a soil test to determine the type and amount of fertilizer you need.

Adding Organic Matter. "Organic matter" provides nutrients for plants. Plants take food from the soil as they grow, so organic matter needs to be applied yearly. Some organic matter sources include well rotted manure, compost made from tree leaves, lawn clippings (without chemicals), and other organic residues. Some fruits and vegetables are "heavy feeders" (i.e. corn and tomatoes), and others are not (i.e. green peppers). It's best to incorporate organic matter in the fall or early spring as you prepare the garden soil.

Plant a Spring and a Fall Garden

Growing plants doesn't have to be confined to the warmer summer months; you can grow a fall garden right up until the first frost. Plants that do well in early September include broccoli (needs 6 to 8 weeks), lettuce (needs 4 to 6 weeks), radishes (need 2 to 8 weeks), spinach (needs 4 to 6 weeks), and kale (4 to 10 weeks). Even where it gets very cold it's possible to pick from a fall garden after the first snowfall. One advantage of a fall garden is fewer insects bug your plants (or you) this time of year.

Herb Gardening

Start your own herb garden with plants such as lavender, mint, lemon balm, and thyme, and make



remedies for stress, digestion, immunity and more. Herbs are among the most rewarding of garden projects, providing both aromatherapy and healing, as well as spicing up your

recipes. Grow some herbs to use in potpourri like mints, lemon balm, or rosemary. There are many craft ideas that call for herbs, from scented pillows to dried flower arrangements.

Perennial herbs include peppermint, lavender, yarrow, lemon balm, and thyme. It's best to start with nursery transplants as seeds take more than a year to yield a significant harvest. Annuals, including chamomile, can be started from seed or transplant. All herbs grow well in pots, so there's no garden or yard required. Herbs are among the easiest plants to grow. If you do grow them outside, few are bothered by insect pests and many can even stand a little neglect, which is helpful if you're new to gardening. Choose organic light potting soil. Most herbs thrive with full sun, daily watering, organic fertilizer, and adequate air circulation (don't crowd your plants). Beyond these basics each herb has a few preferences so find out about the ones you want to grow and enjoy their many benefits.



Starting a garden can feel like a major project. Fortunately, every community has expert gardeners. Whether they are family members or horticulture professionals, they can help get your garden off to a great start and make the process fun for you and the children. Try contacting your county horticulture agent at the UW Extension. State and county extension services have extensive web sites on gardening. Experienced Master Gardeners are trained volunteers who help novice gardeners succeed with local growing conditions. For a map of master gardener programs go to www.ahs.org/master_gardeners. Local garden club members are often committed to youth and school gardens. Check www.gardenclub.org to see if there is one in your area.

For more information on how to garden, the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services Nutrition and Physical Activity program and 5 A Day Program produced a garden toolkit in 2005 called "Got Dirt?" This toolkit can be viewed and downloaded at <http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/health/physicalactivity/gotdir.t.htm>.

If you don't have your own garden, or if you want to supplement what your garden grows, here are other ways to get the freshest produce:

- Harvest at a pick-your-own orchard or garden.
- Subscribe to Community Supported Agriculture. For a fee, you'll get a regular supply of fresh produce and often the opportunity to help harvest the produce. For information about CSAs and a list of participant farms in your area contact MACSAC, or Madison Area CSA Coalition, c/o Wisconsin Rural Development Center, 4915 Monona Dr., Suite 304, Monona, WI 53716, 608-226-0300, or www.macsac.org.
- Support your local farmers' market.
- Put an ad in a school, church or organization bulletin asking to share the costs and work of a garden for harvesting privileges.
- Ask gardening friends, relatives, and neighbors to call you if they expect overabundant harvest. Then you can pick what you need before it gets overgrown or aged.

Organic Gardening

Organic gardening is growing food without the use of chemical fertilizers or synthetic pesticides. Organic gardening uses nature as a guide. Natural materials like manure, compost, crop remains and naturally occurring rock deposits are used to enrich the soil. Planting the right plant varieties, rotating crops (even in a small area), and daily visits to the garden help to keep insects, weeds, and diseases from becoming a problem.

Organic gardening has many benefits:

- Since there is no use of synthetic chemicals, your food will be free of any potentially poisonous residues.
- You will use easily available raw materials to enrich the soil, and low cost, safe methods for controlling pests.
- You save energy and conserve natural resources by using natural materials rather than products made from nonrenewable resources like petroleum.
- You help protect the environment by recycling organic materials.
- You teach children to nurture the land.

Harvest Time

Going to the garden each time a vegetable is introduced brings an experience of wonder to children. They discover how their helping to care for the plants has helped create the food they are about to eat. Through

handling and exploring they learn about the different parts of the plants that are edible. They begin to gain an understanding of the seed-to-table concept: identification of the vegetable and its parts, recognition of the edible and inedible parts of the plant, investigation and examination of the vegetable, introduction to descriptive vocabulary, and taste of the vegetable. And there's nothing tastier than freshly picked, barely cooked young snap beans, or the sweetness of peas and corn rushed from garden to pot, and the amazing taste of homegrown tomatoes.

"The best solution to tedious harvesting chores", according to The Lazy Gardener, "is to have lots of kids! Corral them to shell the peas, cut the beans, and husk the corn." Or have a harvesting party, where having lots of hands helps.

If your garden produces more vegetables than you can use quickly, you can freeze or dry them for future use. Because of the chance of botulism, home canned foods are not creditable for the Food Program. Following are steps for freezing.

WHAT TO DO WITH ALL THAT FOOD?

Blanching Vegetables

Blanching is an important step. The enzymes which cause vegetables to lose color and flavor will continue ever after the



vegetables are frozen. Blanching stops these enzymes. Most vegetables are blanched in boiling water, but steam works well with a few. There are exceptions; some vegetables must be fully cooked and a few can be frozen raw and unbalanced.

Blanching in Boiling Water: Fill a large kettle with one gallon of water or more; bring water to a brisk boil. Blanch no more than 1 pound of vegetables per 1 gallon of water at a time. Use a basket, strainer, or cheesecloth to submerge vegetables in the boiling water. Cover the pot and boil for the specified time per vegetable, then remove quickly and submerge a large bowl or deep pot of water and ice to cool quickly and stop the cooking. When vegetables are thoroughly

chilled, remove, drain and pat dry. Keep chilled in the refrigerator if they will not be packed immediately.

Blanching in Steam: Use a large kettle with a rack. It should hold vegetables over about 1-2 inches of water. Bring the water to a boil, put vegetables in the basket in a single layer. Cover the kettle and keep the heat high for the specified amount of time for each vegetable. Remove to ice water immediately. Chill thoroughly, drain and pat dry. Keep chilled in the refrigerator if they will not be packed immediately.

Packing: You can pack chilled vegetables right in the containers, but dry packing will help to prevent clumping and make it easier to use small amounts from containers. Arrange blanched, chilled vegetables on a baking sheet or tray in a single layer. Freeze at -20 degrees Fahrenheit or as quickly as your freezer will allow. Once frozen, pack in freezer containers or bags.

Drying Foods: Food dehydration is the oldest form of food preservation. In the beginning people used a lot of salt to preserve foods, and they dried their food in the sun or on stove tops. Today we have the food dehydrator to help in the process of drying. Food dehydration is safe because water is removed from the food, thus mold and bacteria cannot grow on it, and therefore it will not spoil. There is however a loss of vitamin C in dried foods due to heat and air. It usually takes 6 to 16 hours a day to dry vegetables, and 12 to 48 hours to dry fruits. Blanching is necessary before drying, as it is before freezing, to stop enzyme action and enhance destruction of microorganisms.

GARDENING ACTIVITIES

Make a Scarecrow: You'll need 2 sticks, one longer than the other (broomsticks or old fence slats are perfect); old clothing; stuffing (hay is traditional, but lint from the dryer works well too).

The skeleton: Attach the shorter stick crosswise with nails or by tying.

Face and head: Stuff an old pillowcase and tie to the top of the broomstick. Sew on or have the children help paint 2 big button eyes, a nose and mouth.

The perfect outfit: anything goes, especially bold, brightly colored old clothing and hats.

Make May Baskets: Cut out a square piece of paper, roll the paper into a cone, then staple or glue the edges. Attach ribbon to the sides of the "basket". Gather flowers, wrap a wet paper towel around their stems, and wrap the paper towel with a recycled small plastic

baggy, attached loosely with a rubber band. Give as gifts to parents, grandparents, neighbors, and friends.

Garden Markers: Have children draw a picture or write



the name of what you've planted on a paint stirrer in waterproof paint for the plants in the garden outside. For indoor gardens, they can draw on paint stirrers or craft sticks.

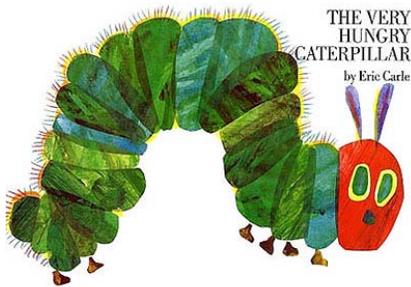
Pumpkins, Sunflowers, and Gourds: All have kid-pleasing powers and great potential for play and learning.

- Paint white pumpkins with acrylic paints.
- Carve your name or a picture in the rind of a growing pumpkin (while it's still on the vine). Watch how the name changes as the pumpkin grows.
- Grow a "playhouse" by planting tall sunflowers to create walls. Remember to leave a space for a door.
- Measure the stalk of the sunflower weekly. They grow so quickly that children enjoy measuring and observing the changes. Or use your camera to take pictures of sunflowers over time to show the stages of their growth.
- Shake or pick out ripe seeds from dried sunflowers. Then make crafts with them. For example, glue them onto coasters along with other seeds to make beautiful collages.
- Save sunflower seeds for birdfeeders. Spread peanut butter on pinecones. Roll the sticky pinecones in the sunflower seeds to cover it. Hang your pinecone outside and watch the birds enjoy.
- Gourds grow in amazing shapes that are great for play and art projects. Try planting a package of small ornamental mixed gourds. Carve names or designs into gourds (on the vine) just like pumpkins.
- Make a small hole in a dried gourd to make a birdfeeder or nesting spot.
- Make a musical instrument out of a dried gourd. Cut and string rubber bands across the opening for a unique string instrument.

Challenge Your Kids to a Weeding Contest: Have each child pick one type of weed and start pulling on the count of three. Then see who's collected the most when the allotted time is up (say 10 to 15 minutes).

Teach children about helpful bugs that aerate soil, pollinate crops, and eat pests. You can find an interactive garden at hgvtv.com/landscaping/good-bugs/index.html.

Composting: Shows children the magic of turning food garbage into super-healthy soil food. For detailed tips go to journeytoforever.org and click on composting.



Reading about Gardens: There are dozens of garden-related books for children from classics such as "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" by Eric Carle to brand new books like "Too Many Zucchini for Zachary Beany" by Tina Dozauer-Ray.

More Art Projects: Children can draw pictures of the plants, produce, and flowers as they grow. They can decorate fencing, wooden beds, and containers around plants, or create stepping-stone paths between plantings.

Field Trips: Expand children's gardening activities with trips to local farms, farmers' markets, community gardens, and flower beds in local parks.

Theme Gardens: Consider having a theme for your garden, such as a butterfly garden with attractive flowers and rocks for resting, or a pizza garden featuring tomatoes, garlic, basil, peppers, and onions, or a Thanksgiving garden celebrating the Pilgrims' first foods with corn, beans and squash.



RECIPES

Making these recipes with children will help to engage them in the harvest and will encourage them to try new foods that they helped make!

- Make **spinach leaf or lettuce leaf roll-ups** with cottage cheese, egg salad, held in place with a toothpick.
- Make **fruit smoothies** with orange juice, bananas, dry milk, and strawberries.
- Make **"cuke canoes"**: cut cucumbers in half, scoop out seeds, fill with peanut butter or cottage cheese. Top with raisins.
- Make **applesauce** with different kinds of apples. Chop 4 apples, boil in $\frac{1}{2}$ inch water. Add 3 Tbsp honey. Boil and stir. Sprinkle with cinnamon. Serves 6. (Leave apples unpeeled for more fiber).
- Make **"Stone Soup"** with a stone and different vegetables from your garden, such as potatoes, carrots, celery, green peppers. Cut vegetables, put in a pot with 6 cups of water and 2 cups tomato juice. Boil, then simmer for 30 minutes. Add 6 tsp bouillon, and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter. Simmer 30 minutes more.
- **Zucchini Muffins:** grate $\frac{1}{2}$ cup zucchini. Add 1 egg, 2 Tbsp oil, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup honey, $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp grated lemon peel. Add $\frac{3}{4}$ c flour, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp baking powder, $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt, $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp cinnamon. Put into muffin tin. Bake at 400 degrees for 20 minutes. Serves 6. (A small zucchini makes $\frac{1}{2}$ cup grated).
- **Make Delicious Dip:** mix 1 c cottage cheese, 2 Tbsp grated cheddar cheese. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp dill weed, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp Worcestershire sauce, $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt. Mix together, dip raw vegetables in and enjoy.
- **Fresh fruit salad:** Cut banana, apple, and tangerine sections. Mix together. Add 3 Tbsp plain yogurt, 1 tsp vanilla. Pour over fruit. Serves 6.
- **Quick kabobs:** Cut banana, apple, melon, and cheese cubes. Put on skewer. Dip in orange juice, then in coconut.

Cabbage Colcannon (5 servings)

2 pounds boiling potatoes (reserve some potato water for steaming cabbage and spinach)
½ cup onion, finely minced
½ to 1 cup milk
½ pound fresh cabbage, shredded
1 cup fresh spinach leaves, shredded
Salt and pepper to taste
Chopped fresh chives for garnish (optional)

Peel and boil potatoes and onions together until tender. Mash with milk to desired consistency, then set aside in large flameproof pot.

In ½ cup potato water, steam cabbage and spinach in a covered pot until very soft.

Chop finely and add top mashed potatoes and onions. Season with salt and pepper. Mix all ingredients well and serve topped with chives.



Sauteed Cabbage and Pasta (4 servings)

2 cups shredded bok choy (Chinese cabbage)
½-¾ cup red bell pepper, finely chopped
1 cup red onion, chopped
1 Tbsp olive oil
¼ cup vegetable broth
12 ounces spinach pasta (rotelle or ribbon noodles)
2 Tbsp freshly chopped parsley
Salt and pepper to taste
1 Tbsp red pepper flakes (optional)

Saute cabbage, red pepper, and onions in oil and broth until wilted. Remove from heat, cover at once, and set aside.

Prepare pasta according to directions on package, making sure not to overcook

Toss all ingredients together until well mixed. Red pepper flakes add more zest to the dish. Serve piping hot.



Cheddar and Chard Quesadillas (24 servings)

Large bunch Swiss chard, washed, with stems
2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
8 whole wheat tortillas or wraps
Optional: salsa, low fat sour cream, and/or guacamole

Heat oven to 400 degrees. Wash chard and remove stems. Cut chard into 1 to 2 inch pieces. In small amount of oil in a medium saucepan, cook chard pieces just until tender. Lightly coat baking sheets with nonstick cooking spray. Place 4 tortillas on baking sheets. Sprinkle shredded cheese evenly over the tortillas. Top cheese with a layer of Swiss chard. Cover the quesadillas with the remaining tortillas to create 4 quesadillas. Lightly mist the tops of the quesadillas with a bit more nonstick cooking spray. Bake in preheated oven for approximately 15 minutes. Allow quesadillas to cool. Cut each one into sixths. Serve with sour cream, salsa, and/or guacamole.

Bell Pepper Veggie Burgers (Yields 18 small patties)

22 ounces (1-1/2 15 ounce cans) canned black beans
1 cup Italian bread crumbs 1 large red bell pepper
2 eggs 2 tsp vegetable oil
¾ cup shredded cheddar cheese
8 small or 4 large whole wheat pita pockets

Heat oven to broil.* Spray baking sheet generously with nonstick cooking spray. Wash bell pepper and remove its stem and seeds. Cut pepper into small pieces. Place vegetable oil on skillet. Heat over medium heat and add pepper pieces. Saute pepper pieces until they are tender.

In a small bowl, lightly beat eggs with a fork or whisk. Drain canned beans, and rinse the beans with cool water. Place the beans in a large bowl and mash them well using a potato masher or large fork. Add and stir until evenly combined, peppers, bread crumbs, lightly beaten eggs, and cheese. Form the burger mixture into 18 small patties and place them on the baking sheet. Place in oven 4 to 6 inches below broiler flame. Broil the burgers for 5 minutes, flip them, and broil them an additional 5 to 6 minutes. Watch closely to prevent burning. When the burgers are done allow them to cool slightly before you place them in halved or quartered pita pockets. Serve with ketchup.

* Burgers can also be cooked on the stovetop in a skillet coated with a small amount of vegetable oil. Cook over medium high heat for 4 to 5 minutes on each side.

Butternut Squash Pancakes (Makes 18 pancakes)

- 1-1/2 cups cooked butternut squash
- 1 cup white whole-wheat flour*
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1 Tbsp canola oil
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 2 tsp brown sugar
- 1-1/4 cups milk
- 1 egg



*White whole-wheat flour is a lighter and milder type of whole wheat flour. It is made from hard white spring wheat.

Scoop cooked squash out of skin and measure out 1-1/2 cups. Combine squash, flour, cinnamon, brown sugar, salt, baking powder, canola oil, egg, and milk in the blender. Blend until well combined.

Lightly coat a griddle or large skillet with nonstick cooking spray. Pour the batter onto the griddle into silver dollar-sized pancakes. When the batter is fairly covered with bubbles, flip the pancakes. Cook until both sides are golden brown. Allow to cool slightly.

Carrot Oatmeal Cookies (Yields about 18 cookies)

- ½ cup sugar
- ½ cup canola or vegetable oil
- 2 cups (6 ounces) shredded carrots, about 3 medium to large carrots
- 2 cups white whole-wheat flour
- 1 cup rolled oats
- 2 large eggs
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1-1/2 tsp salt
- 1 tsp vanilla

Heat oven to 375 degrees. Spray baking sheets with nonstick cooking spray. Wash carrots and grate them using a food processor or hand grater.

In a medium bowl, use a fork to beat the oil and sugar together until they're well combined.

In a separate small bowl, beat the 2 eggs using a fork. Add the beaten eggs to the oil mixture. Add the grated carrots.

In a large bowl, combine flour, oats, cinnamon, baking powder, and salt. Stir until evenly combined. Create a large indentation in the middle of the dry ingredients. Slowly add the oil mixture to the well. Stir until evenly combined. Using a large dinner spoon, drop the batter onto a cookie sheet, leaving a 2 inch space between cookies. Bake for 15 to 18 minutes or until golden brown, and allow the cookies to cool before serving.

RESOURCES

- "Got Dirt?" – Wisconsin Dept of Health & Family Services, and Wisconsin Dept of Public Instruction
- "What's Right for Young Children II – Childcare Gardens – Wisconsin DPI
- "Early Sprouts – Cultivating Healthy Food Choices in Young Children" by Karrie Kalich, Dottie Bauer, and Deirdre McPartlin
- "Kids Garden" by Avery Hart & Paul Mantell
- "Kids Nature Book – 365 Indoor/Outdoor Activities & Experiences" by Susan Milord
- Madison Area Community Supported Agriculture Coalition (www.macsac.org)
- UW Extension Columbia County Better Kid Care
- Alice Henneman – University of Nebraska Extension
- "Tips for the Lazy Gardener" – Linda Tilgner
- "Lasagna Gardening – A New Layering System for Bountiful Gardens" – Patricia Lanzo
- Family Fun magazine
- Aggie-
horticulture.tamu.edu/extension/container/container.html
- "Kinder-Krunchies – Healthy Snack Recipes for Children"
- Nfsmi.org
- Kidsgardening.com

