



Food Safety in the Garden

Resource Sheet

Sampling and preparing the produce grown in the garden is a great way to get students interested in healthy eating and truly show the complete cycle of seed to table. Whenever food is being consumed and/or served food safety should be considered. Below are best practices for using produce from the garden.

In the Garden

- All gardens in the DUG network are on municipal water and so it is safe and drinkable (potable). If you are not in a DUG garden, make sure your garden water is potable.
- Animals can be a source of bacteria, parasites and viruses. Limit their exposure to the garden as much as possible. This includes keeping cats, dogs and other pets out of the garden.
- Avoid raw manure and limit composted manure to trusted sources.

Harvesting

- Always make sure to use proper hand washing techniques prior to harvest (wash hands for 20 seconds using warm water and soap, rinse and dry with a disposable paper towel).
- Everyone who is harvesting should be in good health. Anyone showing signs or symptoms of illness should not participate.
- Use clean, food-grade containers for harvest. Food-grade containers are made from materials designed specifically to safely hold food.
- Wash the containers with warm soapy water. To sanitize, spray with a solution of 1 teaspoon bleach per quart of water, allow to stand for several minutes, rinse and air dry.

Preparing/Cooking

- Always wash your hands for 20 seconds with warm water and soap. Rinse and dry with a disposable paper towel.
- Remove all visible debris from the produce.
- Rinse produce with cool water immediately prior to using. If saving the produce, do not wash until immediately prior to being consumed.
- Wash your cutting surfaces and knives. Avoid cross-contamination by keeping the work area clean and washing hands often.
- Dispose of any leftover produce that has been cut, sliced or peeled.
- Any produce that is harvested but not prepared should be stored in the refrigerator at 40°F or less.

More resources

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Education/For_Kids_&_Teens/

<http://www.ladybug.uconn.edu/food/documents/ritraining-fivestepstofood.pdf>

<http://growingsafergardens.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/foodsafetywebcurriculum-10-24-12.pdf>

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