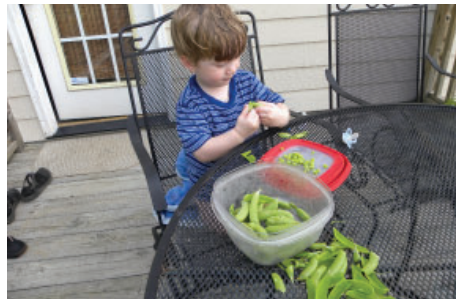


Fruit and Vegetable Gardening



Children love to help tend and plant.



Harvesting and tasting peas.



Large or small, edible gardens create a sense of wonder in children that can't be matched.

Fruit and vegetable gardening brings the wonder of seed to table experiences regardless of the size of your outdoor space. On a small patio or deck, use containers to grow edible fruits, vegetables, and herbs for the whole family to enjoy. With a larger space, try special garden beds and encourage children to grow and tend for themselves. Use fruiting trees or shrubs in place of traditional ornamental plants to maximize space.

Help children understand how wildlife helps us grow the food we need. One out of three bites of food on our plates is the result of pollination services of animals

such as, bees, that allows plants to produce fruits, nuts and seeds. Native plants will attract more pollinators to your food garden.

Remember, kids enjoy helping. Planting, weeding, watering, and harvesting are gardening tasks that provide hands-on play and learning opportunities. Cooking and eating together outdoors or indoors are the final, delicious steps. Remember, picky eaters are more likely to try veggies they helped grow.

See the resources section at the end of this guide for more information.

MATERIALS

- A sunny spot (most vegetables and fruits need at least 6 hours of sunlight each day)
- Quality garden soil
- Seeds, seedlings, or plants
- A water source

1. **Decide with your kids what kinds of fruits and vegetables to grow.**
2. **Find a sunny patch, and amend the soil as needed.**
3. **Plant, water, tend, cook, eat and enjoy the fruits of your labor.**