Grow On!

Newsletter for MG SPROUTS Families

Session One: Sunflower House

Dear _____:

Today I learned all about seeds! We read a book about making a sunflower house. The boy and his friends played in the house all summer long. But when the fall came, the sunflowers were so heavy with seeds that they fell over! So the boy and his friends had fun making faces in the sunflower seed heads and seeds ended up EVERYWHERE!

We learned a little bit about how to grow seeds, too! We made a seed tape so that we can plant seeds at home and give them enough room to grow.

Our Master Gardener leaders told us to bring home the seed tape to plant in our garden. I need to prepare a spot in the garden by pulling back any mulch so that I see the bare ground. Then, I lay the paper tape on the ground with the seeds on top. I sprinkle a little bit of earth around the edges of the paper tape and up to the seeds, and put some mulch (like pine straw) over the top. Then, I need to water the seeds gently. I need to lightly water every day to keep the seeds moist until they sprout.

I had so much fun making seed tapes and learning about sunflowers today, and I have a Where I Live and Play journal page to work on and bring back to the next SPROUTS session to share. Thanks for taking me to MG SPROUTS!

Love,

_____ (name)

I had a lot of fun today at MG SPROUTS! I am looking forward to coming to the next session

_____

I have some journal sheets to work on before then. I can look in our garden for ideas to draw and write about!

Sowing Seeds

A number of plants, particularly vegetables, annuals, and herbs, can be grown from seed. There are several advantages to propagating plants from seed. Seeds are relatively inexpensive, allowing the home gardener to get many plants for the price of a few transplants. Additionally, selection of transplants or plant materials available for sale can be limited to just a few varieties. Growing plants from seed allows the gardener many choices for the home garden.

The process of growing more plants from seed is known as sexual propagation. Seed or sexual propagation is dependent upon the genetic combination of male and female parts of the flower and is a result of pollination. Pollen from male anthers is combined with the egg in the female ovary, and seed is produced. Seeds described as “open pollinated” result from random pollination that occurs from wind or insect activity. They may appear to look like the parent plant, but they actually have minor differences that are referred to as “variability.”

Just like people, seeds produce plants that resemble the parent but are genetically different. Seeds referred to as “F1 hybrids” are the result of controlled, known crosses of plants that produce the same results each time. These hybrids often have characteristics that make them a unique or superior plant, such as increased vigor, disease resistance, flavor, flower color, or uniform growth. Hybrid seed may cost more than open-pollinated types. If you save the seeds of hybrid plants, the resulting plants may have some similarities to the hybrid parents, but appearance and growth is usually different. Therefore, if you desire the features of the hybrid plant, purchase and plant new seed each year.

Excerpted from UGA Extension Publication Starting Plants From Seed for the Home Gardener (B 1432) available at http://tinyurl.com/StartingSeedAtHome

MG SPROUTS

Horticulture Activities for Kids

MG SPROUTS Horticulture Activities for Kids. © UGA Extension

Some Easy-to-Grow Plants from Seed

- Sunflower (*Helianthus* sp.)
- Cosmos (*Cosmos bipinnatus*)
- Marigold (*Tagetes* sp.)
- Zinnia (*Zinnia elegans*)
- Gomphrena (*Gomphrena* sp.)
- Purple Hyacinth Bean Vine (*Lablab purpurea*)
- Moonflower Vine (*Ipomoea alba*)

Parents: Please return the Where I Live and Play: Seeds and Flowers journal sheet with your child at the next MG SPROUTS Session. Here are some ideas for journaling activities to use at home to help your child begin the process of inquiry. Scientific inquiry involves making observations, asking questions, sorting, comparing, counting, describing, making predictions and using all of these activities in building awareness of the world. Please bring completed journal sheets along to the next SPROUTS session for group activity sharing or to be placed in the My SPROUTS Journal binder.

What is UGA Extension?

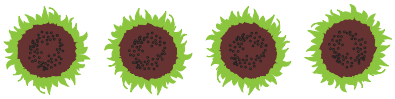
UGA Extension extends lifelong learning to the people of Georgia through unbiased, research-based education in agriculture, the environment, communities, youth and families.

UGA Extension helps Georgians become healthier, more productive, financially independent and environmentally responsible. Extension agents stay in touch with issues relevant to people in local communities through county Extension offices.

UGA Extension is a county, state and federal funded organization supported by specialists in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences and the College of Family and Consumer Sciences.

My SPROUTS Journal

More ideas...



What shape would you choose to sow your seeds if you could plant them any way you wanted?

What would your flower house look like?

Can you plant other flowers and seeds in your garden? What kinds would you choose?

What kinds of games can you play in the garden?

If your child enjoyed Sunflower House, may we suggest:

From Seed to Plant by Gail Gibbons.
ISBN-13: 978-0823410255

The University of Georgia, Fort Valley State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and counties of the state cooperating. UGA Extension offers educational programs, assistance and materials to all people without regard to race, color, national origin, age, gender or disability.

The University of Georgia is committed to principles of equal opportunity and affirmative action.