

farmstead: in the garden

A child's garden can be an outdoor classroom. Introduce your kids to science when you talk about fertilizers, and nature when you look for bugs. Practice reading skills with seed catalogs and packets. Of course, you can simply enjoy teaching your children about raising healthy foods and beautiful flowers, too.

Either way, you're passing on valuable life skills and producing a lasting harvest: a new generation of gardeners.



Getting Started

■ Show your kids how to test the soil with a kit or send a sample to your county Extension agent. Add amendments as needed.

■ Let your kids help choose a garden site by watching the sun and considering the site's proximity to water. Watch the soil after a rainfall and talk about good drainage.

■ Use raised beds, which are easier for kids to reach across. Concrete blocks are inexpensive and easy to arrange for beds less than 2 feet tall.

■ Help them decide what to plant, but if they're only interested in radishes and roses, that's OK. This is about learning, having fun, and revving up their enthusiasm.

Kid-Friendly Garden Designs

■ A round "pizza garden," with pie-shaped sections for tomatoes, peppers, onions, basil and oregano.

■ A salad bowl garden, with many different kinds of lettuces, peppers, tomatoes and edible flowers like nasturtiums.

■ A playhouse garden: Train beans to grow on bamboo poles arranged in a tepee shape, or grow sunflowers in a large square, to form living walls. Want a roof? Grow morning glories up the sunflower stalks and let them weave together overhead. With either structure, leave a "door" so kids can enter.

■ A touch-and-sniff garden: Invite kids to "please touch" with textured or fragrant plants like lamb's ear and woolly thyme, as well as chocolate, orange and other mints.

■ A fun, potted garden: Let kids plant in colorful metal buckets or sand buckets with holes punched in them for drainage. Plants can sprout from the beds of toy dump trucks and tractors, wheelbarrows, and even in outgrown cowboy or rain boots. **FL**

COMING THIS SPRING: We'll offer Part Two of "Grow A Gardener" with tips on how to help your little ones raise popular plants.

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For information on starting seeds, see go.myFarmLife.com/gardenkids.

Recipes for *Busy* Times

DON'T FEEL LIKE COOKING? The answer is a meal-in-one turkey salad ready to eat from the fridge. This apple muffin recipe makes a big batch, too; freeze some without the glaze for later. —Deborah Garrison Lowery

Layered Turkey Cornbread Salad

- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 cup sour cream
- ¼ cup sweet pickle relish
- 4 cups crumbled cornbread
- ½ cup chopped purple onion
- 1 cup chopped tomato
- 1 cup frozen green peas
- 1½ cups chopped, cooked turkey
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 8 slices cooked and crumbled bacon

Combine mayonnaise, sour cream and relish.

In a 4-quart container, layer half of each: cornbread, onion, tomato, peas, turkey, cheese and half of mayonnaise mixture. Repeat layers. Sprinkle bacon on top. Cover and chill 2 hours. *Yield: 8 servings.*

Apple Muffins With Maple Glaze

- 2 cups self-rising flour
- ½ cup sugar
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 cup milk
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 cup grated, unpeeled apple
- ¼ cup chopped pecans
- 5 tablespoons powdered sugar
- 2 tablespoons whipping cream
- 1 teaspoon pure maple syrup
- ⅛ teaspoon ground cinnamon

Combine flour, sugar, ½ teaspoon cinnamon and nutmeg in a large bowl; make a well in center of mixture. Combine milk, oil and eggs; pour milk mixture into flour mixture, stirring just until ingredients are moist. Fold in apple and pecans. Spoon mixture into lightly greased muffin cups, filling cups three-fourths full. Bake at 400° F for 15 to 18 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pans. Cool slightly. Combine powdered sugar, cream, maple syrup and ⅛ teaspoon cinnamon, stirring well. Drizzle over muffins. *Yield: 18 muffins.* **FL**

GET MORE: Find an additional recipe for winter vegetables at go.myFarmLife.com/busyrecipes.

