



Teacher Resource Pack



Supported By



for more information visit www.growninkent.co.uk

Farming in Kent

The predominance of orchards, fruit and field grown vegetables and hop production in Kent has given the County a well deserved reputation as the Garden of England.

In Kent, there is a proud heritage of food production which has helped to shape the culture and development of the land based economy within the County.

Kent County has a total land area of around 374,000 hectares of which 60% is farmed and around 11% is wooded. A mix of land use that has contributed to the unique landscape of the County.

The temperate climate of Kent and the close proximity of a growing urban population in London helped to encourage production of fruit and vegetables over the last century. The favourable climate in Kent is a result of the generally low elevation and the close proximity of the sea. Average rainfall and windspeeds are generally lower and the summer temperatures higher than other regions in the UK. In addition, Kent has a high percentage of high-grade soils suitable for agricultural production.

Historically, cherries and other fruit grown in Kent were transported to London on the River Medway and River Thames. As the London population grew, improved rail and other transport links allowed vegetable and fruit production to expand across the County.

Over the last 20 years the area of orchards and hops has declined significantly as more land has been converted to arable production of Wheat and Oilseeds.

Competition Details

March onwards is an exciting time on the vegetable plot as it is time to pull on your gardening gloves, scatter seeds and get planting. You will probably want to grow lots of different crops but for the purposes of this competition we will mainly be including foods farmed on a commercial scale in Kent.

Competition rules can be found on the website: www.growninkent.co.uk

How the competition works

You grow one of the listed foods. Each time anything is harvested it is weighed and the information filled in on the Harvest Record Sheet.

As close to 4pm July 1st as possible you need to add up the total weight for each crop and fill in the total column.

The next step is to look at the Value chart. Work out the monetary value of your crop from this. Now add up all your values.

Finally, to be in with a chance of winning enough Kent County Show family tickets for the whole class, you need to send your record sheet in to the Kent County Showground.

You can either post it to:

Kent County Agricultural Society, Kent Showground, Detling, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 3JF

or fax it to: 01622 630978

or scan and email it to:

info@kentshowground.co.uk



Sources of additional information

Garden Organic provides a free set of 'Grow Your Own' cards, an excellent resource for vegetable growers of all ages. These can be downloaded at: http://www.gardenorganic.org.uk/growyourown/all_cards.php

Alternatively, any school joining the 'Food for Life' campaign gets a free hard copy and lots of other excellent child friendly resources and help.

The RHS, Garden Organic and Gardeners World Magazine all have web sites with month by month guides on what to do in the vegetable and fruit garden.

Magazines

Grow Your Own and Kitchen Garden Magazine are useful starting points.

Further Advice and Help

If you would like pupils to garden at school but would like it to be organised for you, Vegucatekent is an option. Based in Kent and run by two ex teachers, it organises and runs school and community growing projects in Kent.

www.vegucatekent.co.uk

vegucatekent@hotmail.com 079301

40001/07758031725

Suppliers

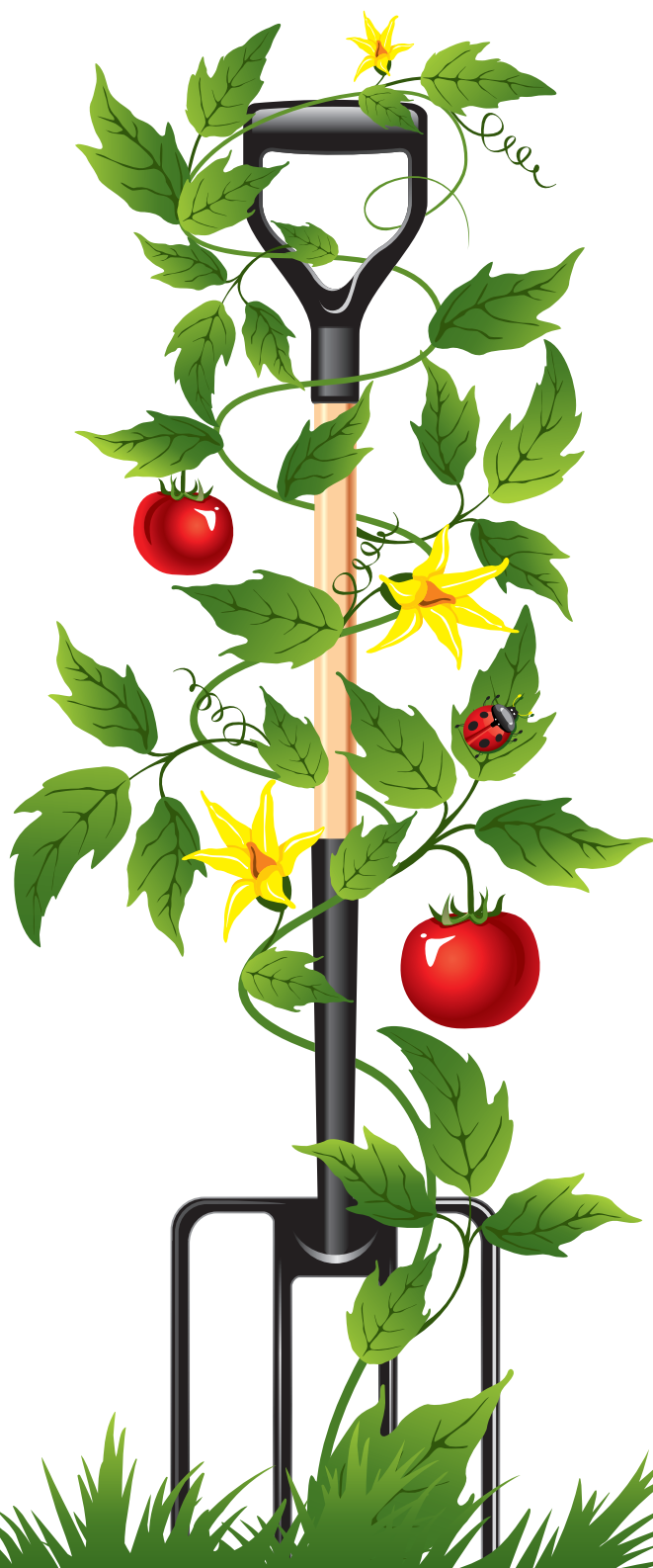
Growing materials such as seeds, compost and onion sets can be purchased online or from catalogues as well as from local garden centres.

- For example:
 - Thompson and Morgan*
 - Garden Organic*
 - The Real Seed Company*
 - Sutton Seeds*
 - Seeds of Italy*

- *Nikkis seeds, online but Kent based.*

Tools

If school growing is a new venture and you are considering purchasing garden tools, try to buy good quality child sized equipment. It is a false economy buying cheap tools as they do not last. Joseph Bentley tools are excellent quality. Their Apprentice range is designed for primary school aged children. Local garden centres should be able to supply them.



Instructions on How to Grow Your Own Food

You'll be amazed how easy it is!



Beetroot

1. Beetroot is easy to grow. You can sow the seeds straight into the ground or start them off in module trays filled with compost. It only takes between 10 and 14 days for the seed to start to grow (germinate).
2. Make a drill (a mini trench) just 1/2 cm deep. Sprinkle in the seed. Try not to do it too thickly. Remember: each seed might grow into a beetroot and each one needs space to grow. If you want more than one row, they should be 20-30cm apart.
3. If lots of the beetroot seed starts to grow and they are very close together you will have to pull up some of them (thinning out). You should end up with each beetroot 7-13 cm apart.
4. Water every week or so.

5. **Harvesting:** after 8 to 12 weeks it will be time to harvest your first beetroot. Use a hand fork to loosen the ground around the beetroot. Now pull it up.
6. **Warning:** if you cut the leaves off a beetroot it will 'bleed' a red liquid that stains. Always twist off the leaves rather than cut.



Broad Beans

1. March is a good time to sow seed straight into the ground, 2cm deep in rows, 20x30cm apart. They like sunshine so don't choose a shady spot.
2. Now watch and wait. It will take from 7-14 days for the beans to start to grow (germinate), and about 12-16 weeks before they are ready to pick.
3. Water when you see the bean pods swelling.

4. You can pinch out the tops of the plants (shoot tips) to help stop black fly. (Italians like to lightly fry these tips for a tasty treat).

5. Harvesting: you can eat the whole pod when it is young. Harvest the pod by cutting when about 8 cm long. OR just use the beans inside (for shelling) when the pods are older and larger. You will be able to see the bulge of the bean showing through the pod.

it and after a few weeks, roots will start to grow out of the bottom of the pot.

4. Your bean plant is ready to plant in the garden. If it is still very cold outside wait until the weather has warmed up. Beans do not like frost!

5. Harvesting: the beans are ready to pick when you can snap them in half! You must keep picking them, every 2 to 3 days at least. OR you can leave them on the plant to dry and harvest just the beans inside.



French Beans

You can start sowing beans indoors in pots in March.

Choose what sort of bean you are going to grow. You can grow short beans (dwarf) or tall ones (climbers). Almost fill a 4 inch pot or a toilet roll tube with compost. Add a little water.

1. Place 2 seeds on the moist compost and cover with more compost.
2. Put them somewhere to germinate (start growing). A window sill would be fine. They like warmth.
3. One or two seedlings will start to grow. If you get two, choose the stronger one and remove the weaker. Keep it warm and water



Lettuce and salad leaves

For the competition you can grow baby salad leaves just like the ones you see in bags in the shops or you can let the lettuce grow much bigger and pick the whole thing. Lots of farmers in Kent grow the variety Little Gem. This is a good one for you to try. You can either grow them in the ground (but slugs and snails like to eat them!) or in a pot. These instructions are for growing in a pot.

1. Fill a seed tray with compost.
2. Sprinkle over about a quarter of a teaspoon of seeds. The seeds are



very small but try not to put them all on top of one another.

3. Cover with a little compost. Not too thick. Water it gently and place the seed tray on a windowsill.
4. Wait, watch and water. Don't let the compost dry out.
5. **Harvesting:** when the plants are about 3in tall they are ready to pick. You can cut them and they'll grow back over and over! Don't forget to weigh your harvest and fill in your record sheet.



Another salad leaf you may want to try growing is Rocket

1. Sow seed in 1cm deep rows (or pots). Sow more seed every few weeks. It only takes 10-20 days before seed germinates.
2. You need to keep watering them.
3. Keep weeding too.
4. Rocket plants don't like to be too close together. Thin them to about 15-30cm apart.
5. **Harvesting:** after 2 weeks of growing you can cut baby leaves. They will be about 2-3 inches tall.

Cut to about 2 1/2cm above the ground. Rocket plants re grow over and over so keep cutting.



Potatoes

1. Place some potato seed tubers in an egg box and leave on a windowsill to sprout. This is called chitting. Make sure the sprouting end is on the top. This will take a few weeks. Don't worry if you do not have time to do this. They will still grow in the ground without being chitted.
2. Dig into the ground some well-rotted manure or garden compost.
3. Dig a trench or a little hole, 7-15 cm deep. Plant the tubers and cover over with soil. New potatoes should be 28-36cm apart. The plants grow quite big.
4. Water. Potatoes like water.
5. **Harvesting:** when the plant starts to flower it is time to start digging up the tubers.





Spring Onions

1. You can sow spring onion seed straight into the ground. Make a drill (a mini trench) just 1/2 cm deep. Sprinkle in the seed. Try not to do it too thickly. Remember: each seed might grow into a spring onion and each one needs space to grow. If you want more than one row, they should be 10cm apart. Repeat this every week or so to get a regular harvest.
2. Watch and wait. It could take more than 20 days before they start to grow.
3. If lots of the seeds germinate (start to grow) you will have to pull some up (we call this thinning) so that those left in the ground have enough room to grow (about 2 1/2 -5 cm between each one). Make sure you take away your thinning. If 'onion root fly' smell it, they will fly over and munch your onions.
4. Pull out any weeds. Spring onions don't like any competition.
5. **Harvesting:** it usually takes about 10-12 weeks before they are ready to harvest, when the onion is about 1-2 cm across use a hand fork to

loosen the ground around it. The leaves will still be green. Now pull up the bulbs.



Radish

Good news! This is a speedy seed. Only 4-7 days to germinate and 3-6 weeks before you can harvest.

1. Make a drill (mini trench) about 1/2 cm deep. If it is too deep the seed may not grow. Each row should be about 10-15cm apart.
2. Water the drill. Now sprinkle the seed in, not too thickly.
3. Only water once a week. Too much water just means more leaves not bigger radishes.
4. If lots of the seed germinates (starts to grow) you will need to pull out some so that there is about 2 1/2 cm between each radish.
5. You will need to pull up any weeds that grow.
6. Harvesting: you can pull them up when they are about the size of a 5p coin. If they get too big they are no good to eat. They become woody. You could let one or two get big to see what this is like!



Spinach

1. You can sow spinach seed straight into the ground. Make a 1 cm deep drill (a mini trench). Water it, then sprinkle in the seed. Try not to do it too thickly. Remember: each seed might grow into a spinach plant and each one needs space to grow. Cover over with soil or compost.
2. If you want more than one row, they should be 15-30cm apart. It takes between 10 and 20 days for the seed to germinate.
3. Keep the soil moist.
4. Keep weeding.
5. **Harvesting:** cut individual leaves to 2 1/2 cm above the soil surface (plants re grow many times)



Strawberry

1. New plants should be planted 30cm apart in rows 60cm apart straight into the ground.
2. OR grow them in large pots. They like to be in the sunshine.
3. Cover with netting to stop the birds eating your fruit.
4. **Harvesting:** pick when red.



Financial Value of Harvested Produce

Food prices vary greatly, depending upon the retailer and season. Values listed here are approximate.

(The circles size relates to their value, for instance; the Strawberries circle is larger than the Broad Bean circle as it has a higher value per 100g)

Radish
per 100g = 25p

Strawberries
per 100g = 50p

Tomato
per 100g = 40p

Spinach
per 100g = 40p

Spring Onion
per 100g = 60p

Broad Beans
per 100g = 20p

French Beans
per 100g = 40p

Baby Leaves
& Rocket
per 100g = £1.50

Beetroot
per 100g = 20p

Carrots
per 100g = 10p

Potatoes
per 100g = 5p

Record of Produce Harvested

Fill in the weight or quantity of harvested foods in the boxes below weekly.

Week										
Broad Beans										
French Beans										
Beetroot										
Carrots										
Spring Onions										
Potatoes										
Radish										
Salad Leaves & Rocket										
Spinach										
Tomato										
Strawberries										

Please send by post to: Kent County Showground, Detling, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 3JF

By email: info@kentshowground.co.uk

or by Fax: 01622 630978



Please ensure that your valuation sheet is returned by Fax or Email by 4:00pm on Friday the 1st of July.

Continued

Week							Total Weight	Total Value
Broad Beans								
French Beans								
Beetroot								
Carrots								
Spring Onions								
Potatoes								
Radish								
Salad Leaves & Rocket								
Spinach								
Tomato								
Strawberries								

We have read and abide by the competition rules

Name of School _____

Headteacher

Name _____

Signed _____

Governor/PTA

Name _____

Signed _____

