

OFE Newsletter for January 27, 2022

This week we focused our attention on potatoes in the class room as well as in the gardens. We got to see how this root crop comes from many different plant families, that is the white potato being related to the solanaceae or nightshade family while the sweet potato from the morning glory (Convolvulaceae) family and the yam from the lily family. The potato lesson comes at just the right time as it is the that at this time we start planting our white potato crop, with hopes for a good harvest in mid-May

As I alluded to in the last newsletter, the weather is a challenge at this time of year. This last week gardening was a bit chilly and this Thursday is being forecast as another cool day with the potential for the week's end and the weekend being cold possibly below freezing. Thus we will most likely cover our more sensitive crops once again..

Last week I wrote: 'Even with all the cool weather our compost bins have continued to create more compost. The bin temperatures were above 120 degrees Fahrenheit while the ambient temperature was in the low 40's. There are a couple of pumpkins that have sprouted in the compost bins and we are taking note of whether the warm compost will protect the young plants. If you are nearby take a look in bin 1 but please don't disturb the new plants as we would like to see how they handle the cold.' Even though the compost bins were above 120 degrees, the young pumpkin plants above ground were hit hard by the frost. The roots however were fine and I suspect they would probably grow new tops if allowed too.

This week we will concluded the discussion on potatoes and also planted the annex garden with 66 potato pieces. Don't forget I put a chart comparing the nutrients of 10 staple foods on our website in the bulletin board section. Reading charts and making judgements regarding what has been presented is a valuable skill that all scientist use on a very very frequent basis. It is important when thinking about any presentation of information to consider where the information originated. Take the time to see if you can tell why the sweet potato is considered more desirable than the white potato or maybe it isn't?

We still need plastic grocery bags for putting the harvest in to take home at the end of day Thursday. So please make a mental note to check and see if your family can spare some of those grocery bags we'd love to have them.

See you next week!