

OFE Growers Newsletter for 4-28-2022

This week we completed the lesson on Legumes. Legumes are plants that have a symbiotic relationship with bacteria that make nitrogen available for the synthesis (making of) proteins and other biological molecules to support life. We also started to harvest our 10-15-Y onions. Do you remember what the 10-15-Y stands for, remember it has to do with ... seeds. We harvested better than 60 pounds so far and we still have many more beds in the Annex to harvest.

You may also notice that there are a couple of beds of white potatoes that are now starting to grow. These will not be ready for the 5th grade class to harvest as they had a poor start this year. We will continue to let them grow as space allows. If the weather doesn't get too hot we may have white potatoes later in the summer?.

As I look back on all the lessons we have covered, I am impressed with all we have covered and along the way how to work the soil, how to plant the seed and young transplants and yes even trees, how to nurture the young seedlings to maturity, and then how to harvest their fruits and veggies. We have covered the value of organic gardening. How a balanced use of organic fertilizers and IPM supports the consumption of uncontaminated veggies and fruit, and preserves the eco-system. We've learned about how to handle a number of garden tools such as pruners, and the importance of pollinators, and yes compost and mulch. As we move away from an agrarian society, we are losing these skills and the appreciation of what it takes to grow good food. The manual that you have from this class is truly a good source of information but remember it is based on the Houston area i.e. climate and weather. The techniques are good where ever you end up. But if you move to the North there would be only one garden season and growing times and conditions will be different.

We are now moving into the STAAR test period and while the 5th grade will not be testing on Thursdays of the test period we will not be giving class instruction in the school. We will however get to meet outside the school building and will have a short lesson followed by time in the gardens.

Finally, we will have a Harvest Fest of sorts on May 26th which will involve fun and treats more about that in upcoming newsletters.