

OFE Growers Newsletter for October 20, 2022

This week we are studying planting seeds and transplant. We have been putting these practices to good use the last couple of weeks , we've planted lettuce, radishes, carrots, turnips, kale and collards. This week we also started harvesting our sweet potato crop which has been growing all summer long. In fact the 5th grade class before you all planted this crop just before the school year was complete. So you all will do the same for the next class sort of a pay it forward! So far we've harvested 332 pounds 11 ounces and we are 2/3 done harvesting. So far we have harvested 549 # 2 oz from the Orchard and Annex areas. Last year we harvested about 794 pounds, do you think we will beat that harvest this year?

Remember the sweet potatoes need to rest for approximately 10 days to 2 weeks before using them so that the sugars in the sweet potato can continue to be converted into carbohydrates. Can you tell me why we don't wash the sweet potatoes right away?

The evenings are getting cooler and the days feel like we are experiencing fall. It's very invigorating and if you don't feel it look closely at the gardens. All the newly planted vegetables look a beautiful vibrant green and are strong and healthy looking such as the broccoli, turnips, radishes, and collards, just to name a few.

Our compost bins have been working overtime giving us a lot of great compost/plant fertilizer for transplanting and preparing beds. Remember compost is not soil, can you remember what it is??

Has anyone solved the math question "how many panels/equal areas of sweet potatoes is each team responsible for harvesting?"

Often it is worthwhile to step back and consider whether we are just learning facts (separate snippets of information) or are we integrating concepts. Another way of thinking about it is can the things we are learning be used in many different situations or adapted to solve different challenges. For instance, the process of transplanting young new vegetables or flowers, can that be applied to planting a tree? or a bush? Should it be? What do you think? Do large bean seeds and small lettuce seeds need to be planted at the same depth? Should we plant a lettuce seed 1-2 inches deep? Does seed size give us a clue about how deep it can or should be planted? Identifying facts and then applying them to the bigger picture (by standing back) helps to understand how everything is related to one another. So we do experiments to identify facts that lead us to conceptualizing why and how things relate to one another. With this in mind, can we draw any conclusions about our 'compost tea experiment' at this time? Is this a good experiment? When should we conclude that the experiment is complete?

I hope you all are enjoying gardening and recognize that even gardening requires math/science and most of all an open mind. Lots more fun ahead, I look forward to seeing you all in a couple of weeks!