

## RELATED FOUNDATIONS:

- Curriculum, Teaching & Learning
- School & Classroom Leadership
- Social & Physical Environments

## RESOURCES:

- Watering and Plant Growth Tracking Sheet
- Aztec Salsa Recipe
- [A Guide to Growing School Gardens in Alberta](#)

## GROW IT... in the Classroom!

**ACTIVITY GOAL:** To have children learn where food comes from and how food grows by providing direct experience with planting, growing, and harvesting their own vegetable plants within their classroom.

### ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Engage students in a discussion about our food supply.

#### Educator Prompts:

- Where does our food come from?
  - Why is it important to know where our food comes from?
  - What types of foods can you grow?
  - What do fruits, and vegetables need to grow?
  - Helpful resources: A Guide to Growing School Gardens in Alberta visit:  
[http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$Department/deptdocs.nsf/all/aet15480/\\$FILE/get\\_growing\\_manual\\_revised\\_2015\\_post.pdf](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$Department/deptdocs.nsf/all/aet15480/$FILE/get_growing_manual_revised_2015_post.pdf)
2. Use the Classroom Garden Guide to decide what plants to grow, the equipment required, and create a class planting schedule so that all plants can be harvested at the same time. For additional information about School Gardens visit: <https://www.durham.ca/en/health-and-wellness/resources/Documents/SchoolHealth/SchoolGardenGuide.pdf>
  3. Divide the class into groups and assign each group a different plant to grow, or complete planting as a class.
  4. Have the class create fun labels for the different plant containers.
  5. Remind your students to water their plants on a daily or as needed basis. Have students measure the progress of their plants with a ruler. Use the Watering and Plant Growth Tracking Sheet included below so students can record the growth progress of their plants.
  6. Have the class harvest the vegetables and make the included Aztec Salsa Recipe for a class party to celebrate!

### Curriculum Connections

- Grade 4: D1.1 Nutrients; D 2.1 Personal eating habits; D3.1 Healthier eating in various settings
- Grade 5: D2.1 Nutrition facts tables, food labels; D3.1 Media influences – food choices
- Grade 6: D2.1 Influences on healthy eating; D3.1 Benefits of healthy eating /active living
- Other Connections: Science and math



# Classroom Garden Guide

## 1. Decide which plants to grow for the Aztec Salsa Recipe.

Recommended Plants:

Plant	Type	Planting Depth	*Time until Harvest
Tomato	Tiny Tim, Red Robin, or Pixie Hybrid	¼ inch deep	45-50 days
Green Onion	Any	¼ inch deep	20-30 days
Cilantro	Any	¼ inch deep	21-28 days

**\*\* Cross reference harvest times with seed packages.**

You can choose to grow as many plants as you like. You can grow all three plants (i.e. tomatoes, green onions, and cilantro), or only one plant (e.g., green onions) – do what is best for your classroom.

## 2. Purchase the required equipment for your plants. You can do a class fundraiser or ask your students to bring in items from home to save money.

General Equipment to Purchase:

Item	Quantity	Cost	Locations
Watering can	1	Approx. \$7.99	Home Depot, Home Hardware, Canadian Tire, Lowes
Soil	1 bag	Approx. \$2.98	Home Depot, Home Hardware, Canadian Tire, Lowes
TOTAL			\$10.00
+ 13% HST			\$13.00

Equipment for Growing Tomatoes:

Item	Quantity	Cost	Locations
Tomato seeds	1 package	Approx. \$2.95	Home Depot, Home Hardware, Canadian Tire, Lowes OR order online from:
6 Gallon pot (14 inches deep)	1	Approx. \$9.48	Home Depot, Home Hardware, Canadian Tire, Lowes
TOTAL			\$12.43
+ 13% HST			\$14.05

Equipment for Growing Green Onions:

Item	Quantity	Cost	Locations
Green onion seeds	1 package	Approx. \$3.25	Home Depot, Home Hardware, Canadian Tire, Lowes OR order online from:
10 inches deep pot	1	Approx. \$7.48	Home Depot, Home Hardware, Canadian Tire, Lowes
TOTAL			\$10.73
+ 13% HST			\$12.12

Equipment for Growing Cilantro:


Item	Quantity	Cost	Locations
Cilantro seeds	1 package	Approx. \$2.50	Home Depot, Home Hardware, Canadian Tire, Lowes OR order online from:
10 inches deep pot	1	Approx. \$7.48	Home Depot, Home Hardware, Canadian Tire, Lowes
TOTAL			\$9.98
+ 13% HST			\$11.28

**3. Determine the timing for planting each item in order for all of the plants to be harvested at the same time. Below is an example calendar to help guide your plan.**



Each plant has a different amount of time until it is ready for harvest. The tomato varieties take 45-50 days until they are ready, so plant these first. The green onion takes 20-30 days, therefore plant it second. The cilantro only takes 14-21s days, so plant it last.

Example planting calendars below, be sure to adjust to match to the current year.


March

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	March 13 Break 2019	14	15	16
17	18	19	 20 Plant Tomatoes (50 days)	21	22	23
24 31	25	26	27	28	29	30

April

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	 8 Plant Green Onion (30 days)	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	 18 Plant Cilantro (21 days)	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

## May

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
			1	2	3	4	
5	6	7	8	 CLASS SALSA PARTY!	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
26	27	28	29	30	31		

**5. After your class has harvested the plants, have them make the *Aztec Salsa Recipe* and eat it as part of a class party to celebrate your students' hard work!**

### Equipment for the Class Party:

- For the Aztec Salsa Recipe:
  - 1 can of black beans
  - Lime juice
  - Vinegar
  - Chili powder
  - (+ avocado and sriracha if desired)
- Whole wheat pitas for dipping in the salsa

Remember, if your class did not grow all 3 recommended plants, or the tomatoes don't ripen on time you will have to purchase the remaining items in order to make the salsa!

# Watering and Plant Growth Tracking Sheet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Plant: \_\_\_\_\_ Month: \_\_\_\_\_

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<u>Weather:</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Sunny  <input type="checkbox"/> Cloudy 	<u>Weather:</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Sunny  <input type="checkbox"/> Cloudy 	<u>Weather:</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Sunny  <input type="checkbox"/> Cloudy 	<u>Weather:</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Sunny  <input type="checkbox"/> Cloudy 	<u>Weather:</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Sunny  <input type="checkbox"/> Cloudy 
<u>Height in cm:</u> 	<u>Height in cm:</u> 	<u>Height in cm:</u> 	<u>Height in cm:</u> 	<u>Height in cm:</u> 
<u>Watered:</u> 	<u>Watered:</u> 	<u>Watered:</u> 	<u>Watered:</u> 	<u>Watered:</u> 
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<u>Weather:</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Sunny  <input type="checkbox"/> Cloudy 	<u>Weather:</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Sunny  <input type="checkbox"/> Cloudy 	<u>Weather:</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Sunny  <input type="checkbox"/> Cloudy 	<u>Weather:</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Sunny  <input type="checkbox"/> Cloudy 	<u>Weather:</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Sunny  <input type="checkbox"/> Cloudy 
<u>Height in cm:</u> 	<u>Height in cm:</u> 	<u>Height in cm:</u> 	<u>Height in cm:</u> 	<u>Height in cm:</u> 
<u>Watered:</u> 	<u>Watered:</u> 	<u>Watered:</u> 	<u>Watered:</u> 	<u>Watered:</u> 
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

# Aztec Salsa Recipe

Grow the vegetables as a class, and then use them in this delicious salsa recipe! Hold a class party, where the students will harvest their plants and then make this recipe. Dip into this yummy salsa with some whole wheat pitas.

## Salsa Ingredients:

- 2 cups small, diced tomatoes
- 2 tbsp chopped cilantro
- 3 tbsp finely chopped green onion
- 1/2 cup black beans, strained from any liquid
- 3 tbsp lime juice (or 1 ½ large limes)
- 2 tsp vinegar
- 1/2 tsp chili powder



## Optional Ingredients:

- 2 tsp sriracha – OMIT if you don't like spicy foods
- 1 large avocado (or 2 medium avocados), peeled, pitted, and chopped

## Preparation:

Mix everything except beans, tomatoes, (and optional avocado) in a bowl. Make sure there is no excess water in the chopped tomatoes and add to the bowl along with beans. Stir well. If adding avocado, add and gently mix. Add more cilantro, lime juice, or chili powder to taste! Enjoy with some whole wheat pitas on the side.

*Recipe and photography courtesy of Super Sprowtz*

*Recipe adapted with permission by the Middlesex-London Health Unit*