2009
Florida School Garden Competition

Altoona School, Florida
Mrs. Gustafson's 2nd grade class
(illustration above provided by Asa Newby, age 8)
2009 Florida School Garden Competition
ENTRY FORM

School: Altoona School

Teacher(s) & Grade(s) involved in garden program
Mrs. Jan Gustafson, 2nd grade

Contact Person: Jan Gustafson
Time contact person can be reached: 9:00 - 4:00
Phone: (352) 669-3444, Fax: (352) 669-3407

Address (please include city and zip code):
42630 State Road 19, Altoona, FL 32702

Email address: ronandjan@embarqmail.com

CATEGORY (Please mark only one)

[ ] SINGLE CLASS GARDEN (Garden used by one class only)
  Number of students in class and grade: 18

[ ] MULTIPLE CLASS GARDEN (Garden used by more than one class or grade,
  but not by the entire school)
  Number of students involved in the garden and grades:

[ ] ENTIRE SCHOOL GARDEN (Garden that is used by all grade levels at the
  school)
  Number of students involved in the garden and grade:

TYPE of school garden that you use with your students. (Please mark only one)
Vegetable

Flower

Combination vegetable/flower

Other, please specify

Please indicate the number of hours a week, on average; your students spend in the garden. **2 hrs.**

1. Please mark all the activities that your students participate in prior to gardening.

   - Planning the garden
   - Designing the garden
   - Preparing the garden
   - Choosing plants
   - Other, 

2. Please mark all the activities that your students participate in while in the garden.

   - Planting
   - Observing
   - Recording
   - Experimenting
   - Other, 

   - Watering
   - Weeding
   - Harvesting
   - Fertilizing
   - Sitting

3. Please indicate the percentage of time, on average, that you used the garden as an instructional tool in your classroom. **57%**

4. Please mark the subject area(s) into which you have incorporated school gardening. Check all that apply.

   - Math
   - History
   - Music
   - Ethics (responsibility and nurturing)
   - Other, please specify

   - Science
   - Health/Nutrition
   - Physical Ed.
   - Environmental Ed.
   - Language Arts
   - Social Studies

5. Please indicate the number of years that a school garden has been part of your curriculum. **3**

6. Please indicate the types of volunteers that have helped you and your students with the garden.

   - Master Gardeners
   - University students
   - High school students
   - Senior citizens
   - Garden club members
   - Older students at your school
   - Parents
   - 4-H members
   - FFA
   - Other, please specify
7. Please indicate the source(s) of information used to assist in the incorporation of school gardening into your school's curriculum. Check all that apply.

- [x] County Extension service
- [ ] Teacher in-service training
- [x] Personal knowledge
- [x] Educational journals/publications
- [ ] National Gardening Association's Growlab/Growing ideas newsletter
- [ ] Other, please specify

8. Please indicate the types of educational material(s) used in the classroom to support the use of school gardening in the curriculum.

- [x] Library books
- [x] Internet
- [ ] Filmstrips
- [x] Textbooks
- [x] Trade books
- [x] Newspapers
- [ ] Computer software
- [x] Videos
- [x] Personal books
- [x] Experiments
- [x] Gardening magazines and catalogs
- [ ] Other, please specify

***Please read and sign below***

By submitting the same you acknowledge and agree that the University of Florida (and Walt Disney World Co.) may reproduce the same, and all materials may be displayed (in part or in whole) at the 2010 Epcot® International Flower and Garden Festival and for other promotional materials. Such presentation materials (and School Garden packets) will NOT be returned to you (they will become the property of the University of Florida and Walt Disney World Co.) Finally, you acknowledge and agree that should your school be selected as a winner under the competition, then to the extent any of the photographs or materials submitted contain the names of likeness of students, teachers and/or others, you will be required to have adult individuals sign (and the parents/guardians of such students) sign consent/release forms provided by us so that we can display those photographs or materials concerning your winning garden. Such requirement would be a condition of your accepting the award.

I have read and understand the above.

Signature: [Signature] Date: 3/19/09
EDUCATIONAL RELEVANCE

HOW IS THE GARDEN USED FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING?

MATH
We have measured the garden and discussed square feet. We measure out fertilizer to apply in our garden.

SCIENCE
We have studied the parts of plants and and their function. We have discussed ecology and the need for safe insect and weed control. We have studied harmful and beneficial insects.

NUTRITION
We have discussed and studied the nutritional benefits from eating fresh vegetables.

WHAT RESOURCES ARE USED TO FACILITATE GARDEN LEARNING?
Our school provides us with garden plot and basic expenses for seeds and fertilizers.

We have enlisted the help of a local Lake County Master Gardener and a member of the Umatilla Garden Club to direct our activities.

WHAT FLORIDA SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS ARE ADDRESSED WITH THE GARDEN?

SC.2.N.1.1
SC.2.L.16.1
SC.2.L.17.2
MA.2.G.3.4

LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT

HOW DOES THE GARDEN PROMOTE STUDENT LEADERSHIP?

Students are assigned different tasks such as: being responsible for our tools, measuring out fertilizers, rationing out seeds, weeding and patrolling for harmful insects.

ARE THERE PARTNERSHIPS WITH GARDEN-RELATED ORGANIZATIONS?

We have partnered with the Lake County Master Gardeners, the Umatilla Garden Club and the Lake County 4-H.
WHAT TYPE OF SCHOOL SUPPORT IS THERE FOR THE SCHOOL GARDEN PROGRAM?

The administration of Altoona School has provided a garden area for us to use. They also provide as much financial aid as they can under these trying economic times. We need tools, seed money, fertilizer and a watering system.

WHAT TYPE OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT IS THERE FOR THE SCHOOL GARDEN PROGRAM?

Our school P.T.O. and Advisory Board support our garden whole-heartedly and financially as much as possible. Our parents are excited about the garden and like the fact that their children are actively growing their fresh produce. Much of the food is taken home by the children.

GARDEN QUALITY

HOW/ BY WHOM WAS THE GARDEN DESIGNED?

Master Gardener Jim Bottcher took over our school garden after Master Gardener and President of the Umatilla Garden Club Helen Scott passed away suddenly last year. Helen originally planned the garden. Jim Bottcher uses University of Florida Extension Service resource materials to plan for our crop selections and timing.

WHAT QUALITIES MAKE THIS GARDEN UNIQUE?

Altoona School is a very small rural charter school in North Lake County. The garden is the project for the second grade class. Their enthusiasm for the garden is contagious throughout the school and community.

HOW IS THE GARDEN CARED FOR AND MAINTAINED?

Every Wednesday afternoon the second graders work on their garden under the supervision of their teacher and Master Gardener volunteer. They spend approximately an hour and a half gardening and studying garden related curriculum.

HOW WERE THE PLANTS SELECTED AND USED?

We use reference material from the Master Gardener Clinic to establish the best crops and planting times.

IS THERE AN ENVIRONMENTAL FOCUS TO THE GARDEN PROGRAM?

We continually stress clean gardening to insure safe food crops and minimal impact on the environment. We use compost and natural fertilizers along with non-toxic pesticides.
Our Garden

Our combination vegetable and flower garden became a true source of excitement, energy, and enjoyment for our second grade class this year at Altoona School. The kids engaged in numerous hands-on learning activities, finding opportunities to get their hands dirty and watch all their hard work pay off in large dividends at the end.

From the beginning, our kids had a great deal of say into what their garden was going to look like and become. We planned where the flowers and produce would be planted and discussed at what time of the year would be the most advantageous to do so. The students were able to work along side and learn from several members of their community, such as Master Gardeners, 4-H members, garden club members, and parents.

Our students took a great deal of pride in their work, frequently mentioning to both others and amongst themselves that one of their favorite activities of the week was their Wednesday visits to the garden. They appreciated being given opportunities to use tools responsibly, measure out fertilizers, ration out seed, weed, and patrol their garden for harmful insects. Many fellow students, teachers, and additional staff alike would visit the garden to see what all the activity was about. It was fun having the chance to watch and listen to the kids eagerly explain and show their visitors exactly what they were doing and their role in our class garden. Their level of pride and excitement was palpable.

It’s easy to conclude that our class garden was a true success. It was a success not only for producing a beautiful display of flowers and produce, but more importantly it produced in our kids a deep sense of achievement and satisfaction knowing that they were capable of making a plan, weighing out the best course of action, implementing their plan, and then seeing the abundant rewards at the end.
A Garden Story
By Mrs. Gustafson's 2nd grade class

Preparing the ground for our vegetable garden -
August 27, 2008

Spreading peat and weeding our garden -
September 3, 2008
Planting Sunflower Seeds!
September 10, 2008
Planting bean seeds, weeding and watering our garden!
September 24, 2008
Planting tomatoes and beets, weeding the garden and planting basil for our greenhouse!
October 1, 2008

Inspecting our garden for weeds and new growth!
October 8, 2008
Fertilizing our garden and planting turnips, beets and pole beans!

October 22, 2008
Checking on our growing vegetable garden and basil that's in the greenhouse!
October 29, 2008
Weeding, hoeing, and planting new seeds!
Look at our beautiful garden growing!
November 5, 2008
Pruning our amazing vegetable garden!
November 12, 2008
Cleaning up our garden after a freeze (down to 29 degrees the night before - yikes!). Sadly, we lost our beans and tomatoes, but everything else looked good. We were also able to harvest our very first vegetables, our radishes!

December 3, 2008
Today we pulled lettuce, radishes, and onions from our garden. We then cut up the veggies, washed them thoroughly, and then ate some amazing salads!!!
December 10, 2008
It's harvest time for the second graders of Mrs. Gustafson's class at the Altoona School. The second graders are members of the Altoona Eagles 4-H Cloverbuds, and as their class project this year, they picked vegetable gardening. With the help of Master Gardner Jim Bottcher, they cleared a spot for their garden, added compost, and planted their many vegetables.

Unfortunately, because of the early freezes in the rural area, they lost their tomatoes and much of their bean crop, but that's all part of the learning experience. On December 10, they were able to harvest their lettuce, radishes, some beans, and onions. They proceeded to wash and cut the fresh vegetables, put the mixture into bowls and feasted on nature's bounty.

One boy was overheard saying that it was the first time he ever had a salad and the he liked it. When the Cloverbuds get back from Christmas vacation, they will be harvesting their sunflower seeds, beets, and turnips. They are all looking forward to starting a spring garden with many new vegetables and herbs to grow.
Altoona Eagles