

History in the Kitchen: Colonial Kitchen Gardens

Contributed by The Preservation Society of Newport County, adapted from Colonial Williamsburg

RI – SS – GSEs:

- HP 2
- HP 4

Recommended for Grade(s) 6 – 12

Description:

Students will learn about Colonial kitchen gardens and create a small container garden from herbs and vegetables at Green Animals.

Objective:

Students will learn about life in the American Colonies before and during the Revolutionary War. Through a tour of the gardens at Green Animals and a knowledge of regional plants, students will be able to get a better understanding of life during the Colonial era.

Green Animals Connection:

Students will explore the vegetable and herb gardens at Green Animals to gain a better understanding of the produce that is able to grow on Aquidneck Island.

Background:

“Colonial Gardens” from the Arnold Arboretum at Harvard:

<http://arnoldia.arboretum.harvard.edu/pdf/articles/1971-31-4-colonial-gardens.pdf>

“A Colonial Kitchen Garden” from Colonial Williamsburg

<http://www.history.org/history/teaching/enewsletter/volume5/june07/teachstrategy.cfm>

“Colonial Kitchen Garden” from the National Park Service

<https://www.nps.gov/rowi/learn/historyculture/colonial-kitchen-garden.htm>

Procedure:

1. Instructor will give a brief overview of the day’s activity
2. After a discussion of the 18th century gardens and produce, students will come up with a list of fruits, vegetables, and herbs still common today
3. With the garden instructor, the class will explore the vegetable garden at Green Animals to learn about ornamental planting of kitchen gardens and to get an idea of how to organize their small container garden.
4. Returning to the classroom, students will use the remaining time at Green Animals to plant their Colonial kitchen garden

Take – Home:

To extend the project, students will keep a journal of their garden’s progress.