

Happy Harvesting

THIRD GRADE

EUSD's practice of food scrap composting is one of the reasons why our schools divert over 80% of waste from the landfill. Students in 3rd grade are likely very familiar with composting their food scraps during lunch time by using the SCRAP Cart. In this activity students get a chance to "harvest" the compost from the worm bin.

NOTE: Check with the school's garden coordinator or EUSD's compost manager, barbara@bckprograms.com to make sure the worm bin is ready for harvesting.

SUBJECT

SCIENCE

TIME

30 - 45 MIN

MATERIALS

Compost from the worm bin

Buckets, 1 per group

Cardboard trays, 1 per group

Newspaper, a few sheets per group

Hand trowels, several to share

Watering cans, several to share

DIRECTIONS

- Bring students to the garden and ask them if they use the SCRAP cart during lunchtime. Ask if they know what SCRAP stands for (Separate, Compost, Recycle and Protect). Ask them why they think the "P" stands for Protect (recycling and composting are actions we do to help conserve resources and combat climate change).
- Next, explain that another great result from composting is that we are able to create an organic nutrient-rich fertilizer that we can use in our gardens. In the activity planned, tell students they will get to collect or "harvest" the finished compost.
- Have students sit together in groups of five or six. Give each group newspapers to lay out on a table, a bucket and a cardboard tray.
- Have one person from each group fill their bucket half full of finished compost from the worm bin.
- Empty the bucket onto the newspaper in each station and make a large mound.
- Direct students to work gently from the outside of the mound by taking a small handful of compost and removing any worms and placing them in the cardboard trays. Worms should be kept out of the sun as much as possible. Cover the worms with some of the compost to keep them cool and shaded.
- Students should place the remaining compost in their hands without the worms back into the (now empty) bucket. Any plastic bits, fruit stickers or large pits should go in the trash.
- When the cardboard tray gets full of worms, ask students to gently return them to the bin.
- Repeat the process as time allows, leaving a few minutes to "feed" the garden beds and trees in the garden. If garden beds have plants in them students can sprinkle a handful of the compost on top and then water with watering cans.
- If garden beds are empty, students can "feed" the soil by mixing the compost in with hand trowels. Water with watering cans.

SOURCE

- BCK Programs

