

Class Title: The Back Yard Farmer Gets Ready for Winter **Maximum Students:** 10

Grade or Age Levels: 5 years- 12 years

Start Date: September 11th **End Date:** October 30th

THURSDAYS 1:00 - 3:00

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Weeks Total: 8

#Hours (Required): You must attend at least 6 classes

Total Semester Hours Possible: 16 Hours

Locations/Address:

Circle "C" Stable
905 Pine Hills Lane
Benton Harbor, MI 49022

We will be holding class in our meeting room/classroom at the stable. Please drive very slowly as we do have horses surrounding us. You will drive down the driveway, drive around the first barn on your right, come to the big barn, and follow the signs for the meeting room (It will be around the left of the big barn). You may park by the classroom door. Please note, we will be going outside every class meeting, so wear appropriate clothing for the weather.

Main Instructor:

Cindy Nimtz

Contact Information:

Cindy Nimtz
circlestable00@gmail.com
269-208-9152

Additional Registration at Site Required?

** We have a liability release form and picture release form for social media.*

Course Description:

Through provided hands on learning, inquiry, and observation, students will gain an understanding of the basics of organic backyard gardening and an appreciation for being a good steward of the Earth. They will learn about composting, proper soil composition, bulbs, harvesting, and become knowledgeable in how to plant and tend a Fall Garden with sustainable practices. In addition, students will learn how to make a few recipes with our herbs and vegetables that we harvest and how to properly store away seeds for Spring Plantings. Your student will actively participate in readying our raised bed gardens for Winter.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT- what will be used to evaluate student progress and/or end of semester pass/fail status?

All classes abide by the following:

- 1) Student agrees to attend at least 80% of class sessions/lessons offered. Attendance is kept online and tracked by Partnership staff. Failure to meet 80% or be on track to meet 80% may result in program discontinuation.
- 2) The Partnership Student Assessment or Performance Form is filled out by the teacher and turned in to Partnership staff. The link to this form is found on the web page for this class. Failing marks for lack of participation, behavior issues, practice time, etc. may result in program discontinuation.
- 3) This is a pass/fail course. Each class meeting, each student will complete an entry in their Garden Scrapbook. Upon final completion of their Garden Scrapbook, they will be given a pass/fail grade....basically on effort and class participation.

CLASS SPECIFIC ASSESSMENT:

1. Students will be encouraged to keep a Backyard Farming Journal. We will provide the journal. During each class, they will have an opportunity to share any of their entries.
2. Each student will take a turn in collecting compost to feed our worms. An instruction book and a composting can will be sent home with them when it is their turn.

CLASS POLICIES:

Attendance: Please let me know if your student will not be attending due to illness or vacation. You can just call me and leave a message or text me.

Behavior: If your student is disrespectful in class, distractive or puts other students (or horses) in danger, I will ask they be picked up early.

Weather: I follow the local district for closures. If the district the class is held in closes, we will not have class. If you do not feel safe going out, then please stay home and just let me know via a text or voicemail. We will hold a make up class or arrange an at home activity for your child to complete.

Other:

*We will have hand sanitizer available to use throughout our class time, and we ask that all students either wash their hands or use hand sanitizer as soon as they walk into the classroom.

*You may bring your own reusable water bottle to class and a small snack. If the weather permits, we will have our snack break outside of class or in the neighboring barn

The BackYard Farmer Gets Ready for Winter

Syllabus

Course Objective

Through provided hands on learning, inquiry, observation and experimentation, students will gain an understanding of the basics of organic backyard gardening and an appreciation for being a good steward of the Earth. They will learn about composting, proper soil composition, bulbs, harvesting, and become knowledgeable in how to plant and tend a Fall garden with sustainable practices. In addition, students will learn how to make a few recipes with our herbs and vegetables that we harvest and how to properly store away seeds for Spring plantings.

*Please note that I may change around the classes due to Mother Nature and interests of our students:)

In each class students will:

- *record observations in their garden journals & have a chance to share their insights with the rest of the class
- *harvest vegetables
- *share their composting collection to feed our worms in our vermicomposting farm
- *be responsible for garden clean up before departure

Week One: Vermicomposting & Composting

Students will learn first hand about what to compost and what not to compost as they dive into our compost bin that was started in the Spring. We will also learn about Vermicomposting as we harvest worm castings (worm poop) from our worm farms. We will set up new bedding in our worm farms. Each student will have a turn to collect compost at home to feed our vermicomposting friends!

*If butterflies are around, we will spend some time talking about these important pollinators and set up feeding stations for them in our gardens.

Week Two: Fall Planting

Students will learn about cool weather veggies and which ones tend to grow well in raised beds here in Michigan. We will plant some fall veggies in some of our raised beds and learn about garden design. Students will learn how to properly plant seeds and bulbs.

We will also discuss proper soil conditions and add in our worm castings to our beds.

Week Three: Storage of Seeds & Tomato Basil Harvest

We will learn how to harvest seeds from some of our Sunflower Plants and from some of our other veggies. We will label them and properly store them away for Winter.

We will finish up harvesting our tomato plants and Basil. We will learn how to make a tomato basil soup starter. Each student will bring some home for their families!

Week Four: Lasagna Garden Turn Over

We will begin our preparation of our lasagna garden beds for Winter. We will turn them over (basically turning the soil and diving into their compost layers and adding more dirt). We will reconstruct our lasagna garden bed with layers of compost we find around the stable's property, dirt, etc.. We will see what composted well in our garden and what took longer as we look through the layers.

Week Five: Continuation of Lasagna Garden Turn Over**Week Six: Let's learn about Herbs!**

We will learn all about herbs that are commonly used in the kitchen. We will learn their scents, textures and how to identify them as we harvest our rosemary, oregano, dill, sage, and parsley. Students will learn how to properly store herbs for Winter. They will also make their own herb salt and herb seasoning that can be use don roasting poultry or pork or even veggies.

Week 7: Finish Harvesting and Tucking Our Gardens in for the Winter

We will learn proper techniques on how to cut plants back, planting our Spring Crop of Garlic, and set up frost blankets for carrots and lettuce that will still be currently growing. We will add in some good soil amendments (more from castings, compost and horse manure) and then add a final layer of straw to our beds.

Week 8: Taking Care of Gardening Tools

After a final check on our garden beds, we will wash up our gardening tools, buckets and potato bags and properly store them away for the winter.

We will do a final share with our Gardening Journals and set up a seed starting schedule for the Spring.