

Lesson 1: Introduction and Planting

Nutrition topic: introduce the program and CBH, go over packets and handouts, and ask what participants want to learn from the series.

Gardening topic: Planting and Irrigation

Recipe Demonstration: Instructor Choice, focus on produce that will be included in the garden

Objectives:

Participants will be able to:

- Define the Create Better Health (SNAP-Ed Program)
- Describe the purpose of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- Distinguish the difference between cool- and warm-season crops.
- Identify the timing for planting and plant appropriately in the garden.
- Practice appropriate irrigation for plant establishment and/or seed germination.
- Optional: Demonstrate safe movement in the garden.

Optional Garden Highlight: gardening and injury prevention

Preparation Required

- Watering Schedule

Required materials

- Water source
- Seed packet
- Seedling

Required handouts:

- Series schedule
- Start Simple with MyPlate
- Warm and cool season crops and planting methods

Recommended handouts:

- Garden injury prevention handout

Nutrition topic: Introduction to series and CBH, ask what participants want to learn from series.

Welcome and Introduction

Create Better Health Utah (SNAP-Ed)

What is Create Better Health?

- Create Better Health is Utah's SNAP-Ed Program. SNAP-Ed is the nutrition education component of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP.
- The Create Better Health program is offered through Utah State University Extension offices.
- Create Better Health teaches people who have limited time and money how to eat well and be active. Our classes focus on teaching participants how to make delicious and nutritious meals from foods they already have on hand.
- All the information you will receive in the Create Better Health classes is based on the USDA's nutrition and physical activity guidelines.

- Each class is designed to build upon the previous lessons. After attending the series, you will have the knowledge and skills to lead a healthy lifestyle.

The Dietary Guidelines: An Overview

- The current nutrition recommendations established by leading nutrition and health experts in the U.S. are known as the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
- They are intended for all healthy children and adults throughout the entire life cycle, from infancy through adulthood. They are updated every five years. When followed, these recommendations may help avoid or delay the most common health problems we face in our country today, including obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, and some cancers.
- All of the recommendations for diet and physical activity choices in the Dietary Guidelines are evidence-based. This means there is strong scientific evidence that supports each of the recommendations for what to consume from the food groups and how often we should be physically active.

Introduction to Create Healthy Gardens

Create Healthy Gardens is a six-class series. In each class, participants will gain the knowledge and skills necessary to grow their own garden. CHG is a partnership between USU Extension's Create Better Health and Master Gardener programs. Participants will grow vegetables in local community gardens and attend monthly workshops taught by nutrition educators and Master Gardeners (in select counties). These workshops focus on gardening tricks and nutrition tips. It is expected that by the end of the gardening season, participants will eat more vegetables and have the confidence and skills needed to grow a garden in the future.

Discussion starter: "What are you hoping to learn from this series?"

Establish a water schedule. See the packet to assign dates and participants.


Gardening topic: Planting and Irrigation

Basic planting information

- How to know when to plant what:
 - o Cool-season crops: **planted at 55–75 degrees Fahrenheit**
 - Examples: peas, chards, beets, spinach, onions, leeks, garlic, shallots, chives, cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, kale, mustard, kohlrabi, turnips, radishes, arugula, carrots, parsnips, celery, parsley, dill, fennel, cilantro, lettuce, artichokes
 - o Warm-season crops: **planted after the danger of frost has passed.**
 - Examples: tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, tomatillos, potatoes, corn, pumpkins, squash, cucumbers, beans, amaranth
 - The average last frost along the Wasatch Front is around May 10th (the Wasatch Back is around June 10th)
 - Please refer to this fact sheet for suggested planting dates for other areas of the state:
<https://extension.usu.edu/yardandgarden/research/suggested-vegetable-planting-dates-for-utah>

Cold & Warm Season Crops and Planting Methods

CREATE
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Vegetable plants vary in their tolerance to cold temperatures. Each season has its own unique weather conditions. Plants can be started from seed or transplants (young plants).

Cold Season Crops
Planted at 55-75 degree Fahrenheit

Artichokes, Arugula, Beets, Broccoli, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Chard, Chives, Cilantro, Dill, Fennel, Garlic, Kale, Kohlrabi, Leeks, Lettuce, Mustard, Onions, Parsley, Parsnips, Peas, Radishes, Shallots, Spinach, Turnips

Warm Season Crops
Planted after the danger of frost has passed

Amaranth, Beans, Corn, Cucumbers, Eggplant, Melons, Peppers, Potatoes, Pumpkin, Squash, Tomatoes, Tomatillos

Planting Method
Certain crops should be direct sowed while others are better being transplanted.

✓ Pumpkin	✓ Chard	✓ Kale	✓ Tomatillos
✓ Squash	✓ Beets	✓ Radishes	✓ Potatoes
✓ Cucumber	✓ Spinach	✓ Carrots	✓ Corn
✓ Beans	✓ Garlic	✓ Lettuce	
✓ Melons	✓ Broccoli	✓ Tomatoes	
✓ Onions	✓ Cabbage	✓ Peppers	
✓ Peas	✓ Cauliflower	✓ Eggplant	

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Starting from seeds vs. plugs

- Plants that work well as transplants: tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, kale, kohlrabi, onions, and leafy greens transplant well.
- Plants to direct sow as seeds: melons, cucumbers, squash, and tap-rooted vegetables such as radish, beet, carrot, turnip, rutabaga, and parsnip.
- Plant spacing and thinning
 - See the Pocket Gardener for spacing information.
 - <https://pocketgardener.usu.edu>
- How deep to plant plugs
 - Plant the root ball so the top of it is flush with the soil line.
 - Tomatoes can be planted deeper, buried halfway up the stem.
- How to water plantings
 - Plants don't have an extensive root system, so they will need to be watered often at first.
 - Once established, they can be watered as little as one to two times per week, depending on soil and temperature.
 - Mulch: Adding mulch such as straw or grass clippings can help retain moisture in the soil.

Basic irrigation information

- How to tell when watering is needed
 - Finger test: the top 2 inches of the soil have dried.
- What happens when a plant is too wet or dry?
 - Too wet: disease issues, root rot, can look wilted.
 - Too dry, wilting, crispy leaves

Recipe Sample

Allow time for participants to taste the sample.

Encourage participants to give their feedback on the recipe, including what they would do differently.

Optional: Gardening safely to prevent injury

Three Foundational Movements for Gardening Safely

Explain to them that they will be learning three movements that can be used to do most gardening activities. These movements help them use the correct muscles, so they are less likely to hurt themselves or be sore the next day.

- **Squat**
 - Pick up and put down large or heavy items.
 - Example: lifting a bucket or heavy bag
 - Engages quads, hamstrings, hips, glutes, and abdominals
 - Helps avoid strain to the back, knees, ankles, neck, and shoulders
- **Pivot Technique**
 - Change directions without twisting.
 - Ex: picking up leaves and putting them in a bag next to you
 - Helps avoid strain on the back, knees, and ankles.
- **Back and forth weight transfer**
 - Move items back and forth with a long-handled tool.
 - Ex: raking leaves
 - Helps avoid hunching over, pulling, and twisting
 - Uses larger leg muscles rather than straining the back and arms.

If there is an internet connection:

- Show: Gardening Safety: Ergonomics: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZanK34Evp-A>
- After each movement is shown, pause the video and have them practice with the instructor 5 times.

If no internet connection is available:

- Use the handout to demonstrate the three movements and the script to talk through the instructions while demonstrating.
- Stop after each movement to have them practice with the instructor 5 times.
- Optional: The leader can have items to demonstrate with (a bucket or bag, a rake, and a shovel).

Optional: 12 Gardening Stretches

- The leader can use the handout as a guide to take them through a few stretches during each break.



Lesson 1 gardening terms:

- **Cool-season crops:** crops that can grow even if temperatures are below 40 degrees at night and can handle light frost. They thrive between 55 and 75 degrees.
- **Warm-season crops:** crops that will be stunted or killed if temperatures at night dip below 40 degrees.
- **Frost:** When tiny ice crystals form on plants due to low temperatures.
- **Transplants, plugs, or starts:** a fully germinated seedling or immature plant with roots that was grown indoors and can be replanted outdoors. They typically come in small disposable plastic pots or trays and have soil around their roots.
- **Thinning:** removing seedlings when they are small to allow for the appropriate space between fully grown plants.
- **Germinate/Germination:** When a seed sprouts and begins to grow.