

Our School Garden



In our school garden, we have planted 2~3 types of beans, jungle potato (diascoria), ginger, ipomoea, turmeric, cardamom, Indian spinach, cowpea, roselle, pigeon pea etc. We have seen our daddies bringing some of these from the sabji mandi!!



We regularly take home vegetables like ladies finger, amaranthus, ridged gourd, sword bin etc. They taste much better than the vegetables our daddies bring from the market. If we had more space, we could feed the whole school with the vegetables grown in our garden. We could give vegetables for our mid day meal too. According to our calculations, a 20 feet by 20 feet space can feed 30 primary school children, if one can plan properly.



We have selected a space in our school compound where we want to raise our vegetable garden. We have selected this space as it is nearer to the source of water.



First of all, we cleared all the weeds and grasses...



... and then learned to use the spade. Hneioo...



Our teachers lent their hands too. We were so happy. It was so different from the text book-pen-pencil-paper-black board cycle. At least we got a chance to use our hands to build something new for the school, for us and our friends. Great fun!!



These are the beds – the raised beds. We give water in the drains in between. It helps in saving water. We use straw and dry leaves to stop water from evaporating.



The width of the bed is made in a way so that we could reach the centre of the beds from both sides for weeding. The blackness is due to the vermicompost we mixed while preparing the soil.

Garden or Jungle!!



Yes, it has to be like a jungle. Jungle means a variety of trees, plants, tubers, insects, birds, animals of various height, shape and size. One helps the other to grow. So the jungle doesn't need pesticides or fertilizers or water. It remains productive forever.

This is true for our society too. We cannot live without the help of the others.



Here we sowed swamp cabbage, white and red amaranthus – all mixed together. In between, we planted lady's finger and rosselle. All of them have grown to full height now.



Turmeric repels pests, so it has been planted in the center of the bed.



Some creepers and climbers like jungle potato, yam bean, sword bean, winged bean, velvet bean, Indian spinach, ridged gourd, hyacinth bean, pumpkin and bottle gourd have been planted on the outer edge of the beds so that they could climb on a tree or net or scaffold or trellis.



This is a plan for the rainy season. For winter we will have a different plan.



In a garden, insects and pests are natural visitors. In our garden, we have seen black ants, spiders and yellow wasps taking away or eating pests. They are our enemy's enemy and therefore, our friends.



Most of the time, we applied small amount of neem oil diluted in soap solution and wood ash mixed with few drops of kerosene to drive away the pests. We understood that we should not kill pests by applying chemicals. Chemicals cause harm not only to the pests but our friendly insects and plants too. It can enter our stomach through the fruits. We read about this in the books, but now we can understand the ill effects of chemicals by looking at people around us who have been using it for quite some time.



In quite a few cases we could not locate the minimum soil space required. So we had to do raise the garden in tubs and pots. Here, we planted several medicinal plants. We have come to know about them from our books. Sometimes we planted chili and brinjal in between. We raised creepers like round gourd in pots and let them climb to the roof.



We did garden in the balcony, rooftop... everywhere.



Gardens can be made anywhere – in a tyre, in plastic bottles, trays, broken buckets, basins and what not. This can be a wonderful method of reusing and recycling wastes.



We have learnt to make vermicompost. We bring vegetable peels from our home.





We have learnt so many things while doing gardening – mathematics, bio science, botany, soil, environment, insects...

In the EVS and Eco Club classes we have learnt about

- the interdependence of the elements in nature and food web.
- classification of leaves, stems, flowers etc.
- types of seed, germination and pollination.
- types of soil
- insects, friends and foes of tree
- the impact of chemical pesticide and its alternatives

In fact, we have read about these in our books, but have never seen or experienced.





We have learnt how to plan a garden, how to do survey, how to keep our own record. Now we understand what a tough job a farmer is doing. Now we know the joy of seeing a fruit in a tree which we planted ourselves.

Students of

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