



4-H Club Sample Agenda - Gardens!

Agenda Outline

WELCOME

Name that vegetable! As people are arriving, have them look at pictures of various vegetables (or samples of the real thing) and have them guess what type of vegetable they are—leafy, fruit, root, legume, or vine.



MEETING PURPOSE

Brainstorm club project ideas and learn about crop rotation in a garden!

BUSINESS (5-10 MINUTES)

Remember if too much business is planned, members might not come back! Below is just a sample. See other [optional business items](#) on our Leading a 4-H Club web page.

- [4-H Pledge](#)
- Roll Call: Share your favorite vegetable!
- Recap what we did last time
- Decide on a club project
- Celebrate any member accomplishments!

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY - [Gardens!](#) (30 MINUTES)

[RECREATIONAL ACTIVITY](#) (10-15 MINUTES)

[REFLECTION](#) (5 minutes)

- How did we do?
- How are we living out the 4-H Pledge?

REFRESHMENTS

Veggies and dip



Educational Activity - Gardens!

4-H project area

Agronomy, Horticulture, Fruits, Plants and Soil Science

What it is

Learn the importance of crop rotation, the different vegetable/fruit crops, and how to rotate your crops.

Why it matters

Gardens are a good way of growing your knowledge and appetite for healthy and fresh fruits and vegetables.

Getting started

Time: 30 minutes

Delivery mode: In person or virtual (see [Virtual Meeting Ground Rules](#))

Materials (per person):

- [Crop rotation graph](#)
- Paper
- A pencil or colored pencils

Background

Crop rotation is planting a vegetable/fruit that is from a different plant family than the one that was just harvested. We do not plant a vegetable from the same family in the same place one season after another. There are two main reasons why we rotate crops:

1. **Soil nutrition.** It is important to rotate crops because different crops use different kinds of nutrients from the soil. If we plant the same types of vegetables in the same place, the vegetables keep taking the same nutrients from the ground. Some vegetables put nutrients into the soil. The soil will be more fertile if we rotate crops. Different crops take from and put into the soil other nutrients.
2. **Pest Control.** Some pests live in the soil. Different pests like different plants. Pests will be less of a problem if you rotate crops, because pests will not be able to attack the same plant season after season.

Here are some crop rotation best practices:

- Do not plant leafy vegetables or fruit vegetables in the same place two seasons in a row. Vegetables in these two families are the most likely to have insect pests and get a disease.



- Keep good records, so everyone knows what was planted in the garden each season. Without documents, it will be challenging to rotate crops from season to season.

How to do it

1. Ask youth if they know what crop rotation is and use the Background section to explain if they don't.
2. Ask why they think crop rotation is important and use the background information to fill in what they don't think of.
3. Pass out the [Crop Rotation Graph](#)
4. Note all 5 of the different groups of plant families (leafy vegetables, root vegetables, fruit vegetables, legumes, and vines).
5. Talk them through an example:
 - Season 1: Plant tomatoes and peppers (fruit vegetables)
 - Season 2: Plant carrots and turnips (root vegetables)
 - Season 3: Plant vines or leafy vegetables
6. Pass out paper and colored pencils. Have youth make a drawing of their last season's garden. Include types of fruits and vegetables and where they were located (if they don't have a garden they can make one up).
7. Now draw next season's garden, including where the new crops will be. Refer to the crop rotations chart. If you want you can color in your garden, each color representing a different crop.
8. Make sure to double-check that you didn't put the same type of crop in the same place it was last season!
9. If your club is meeting in person near a garden, go visit it! Note what type of vegetables (leaf, root, fruit, legume, vine) are in the garden. How should they rotate their crops next season? If meeting virtually, share some pictures of gardens are your screen, such as:
 - <https://www.ellsworthamerican.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2020/02/GettyImages-641479942.jpg>
 - <http://www.focusnewspaper.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Vegetable-Garden.jpg>
10. Reflect on the activity!
 - Why is it important to learn about vegetable families?
 - Why is crop rotation so important?
 - Do you think other gardeners or farmers think about rotating crops? Why or why not?
 - If your club is deciding to do a community garden, how can you talk about planting rotation?
 - What about the rotation of plants in a pizza garden?



Recreation Ideas

Grow Your Name: Introduce yourself and share a plant for each letter of your name. For example Brian - (**B**roccoli- **R**adish - **I**rish - **A**pple - **N**eillia)

Family Plant Brainstorm: Have each family identify five plants they would like to see in the garden. Encourage them to have a couple of back-up plans to ensure families don't duplicate.

Vegetable Tag (in person only): Decide on one person to be "it." Have the rest number off by 5. All 1's are leafy vegetables, 2's are root vegetables, 3's are fruit vegetables, 4's are legumes, and 5's are vines (if your group is small, just have them number off by 2's instead). "It" tries to tag anyone. Others are safe who can link up with someone who is not the same type of vegetable. They can only link up for 5 seconds before having to run around again. "It" can't "babysit" a linked group.

Pollinator Plus: Have your families try to identify plants to attract pollinators in your garden. The most creative gets a prize.

Additional Resources

<https://extension.umn.edu/yard-and-garden-news/rotate-crops-your-small-garden> (U of M Extension Rotate Crops in Your Small Garden)

If you liked this, check out 4-H Ag & Hort Afternoon Adventures. See <https://extension.umn.edu/projects-and-more/4-h-agronomy> for future topics and dates.

Crop rotation activity adapted from

<https://agricorps.org/wp-content/school-garden-curriculum/english/garden-lesson-guides/lesson-12-short-crop-rotation.pdf>

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Crop rotation graph

