**Seed to Table—Plants and Farmers Grow Food for You**

**Goal**: Learning about the life cycle of a plant and the work cycle of a farmer.

**Anticipatory questions**: Where does food come from? (If they say the store, ask them where the store gets it.) What kinds of food do we eat? (Animal protein, vegetables, fruit, grain, etc.) How do they grow? Do they grow by themselves? Who helps our food grow?

**Introduction**: All food comes from farms. If we didn’t have farms, we wouldn’t have food. If we didn’t have farmers, you would have to grow it or hunt for it yourself. Do you think you could grow all your own food? How would you start?

**Lesson preparation**: Students in a group in front of wheel panel, images in a container to be presented one at a time.

**Lesson**:

1. Where do our vegetables grow? How do we make a nice place for vegetables to grow?
   1. SOIL PREPARATION: farmers make healthy soil by giving it food (compost) and getting rid of weeds. They make a nice place to plant the seeds. [IMAGE: hoeing, raking] [Hands on: container of nice soil and bad soil to feel]
2. What is a baby vegetable? A seed.
   1. SEED: farmers plant the seeds in a warm, sunny place. [IMAGE: planting seeds] [Hands on: container of seed varieties]
3. What does a seed need to grow and be healthy?
   1. SPROUTING A SEED: farmers make sure the plant has good soil, sun, water and space to grow where it is not crowded by other plants and weeds that take its energy. [IMAGE: sprouted seed, watering, weeding] [Hands on: a sprouted seed]
4. What does the plant need to make a vegetable?
   1. POLLINATION: plants can’t grow a vegetable without bees or other pollinators. Plants create flowers full of pollen and need to share their pollen to make a vegetable. [IMAGE: bee on flower]
5. What does a vegetable need to turn into food?
   1. FRUITING: a flower turns into a vegetable and ripens. Farmers provide water, and space to grow by weeding. [IMAGE: unripe vegetable, watering & weeding] [Hands on: unripe veg, if available.]
6. What happens when the vegetable is grown up and ripe?
   1. HARVESTING: the farmer picks the ripe vegetables. [IMAGE: harvesting] [Hands on: ripe vegetable]
7. What do you need to do to vegetables before they can be eaten or sold?
   1. PREPARATION: farmers cut off extra leaves and roots, and then carefully wash the vegetables. They can then sold to a grocery store or restaurant or to you at the farmers market. [IMAGE: washing, trimming vegetable][Hands on: dirty vegetable]
8. Start all over!

**Step 1**: Anticipation is a very effective way to prepare for learning. Asking anticipatory questions set the stage and get the student ready to learn.

**Step 2**: Introduce the lesson and what they will be learning.

**Step 3**: Conduct the lesson: Ask question, discuss briefly and show the individual image but don’t hang it up on the wheel. Continue through each step (1-8, but take out some of the questions for younger children or for time constraints). When finished, hold up a random image and ask the students where it goes. Assure them that they don’t have to get it right the first time. They can move them around as they get everything placed.

**Step 4**: Wrap up. Where does our food come from? Who does the work? How does it get to our kitchen table?

**Materials**: 3’- 4’ painted plywood circle, 7 lesson images, nails or hooks on wheel to hang images. Images on thin wood last longer than laminated paper. Simple images are easier to see than photographs.

