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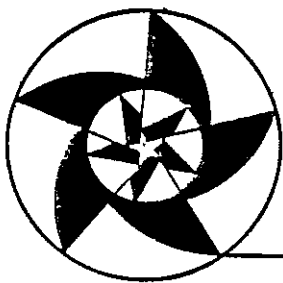
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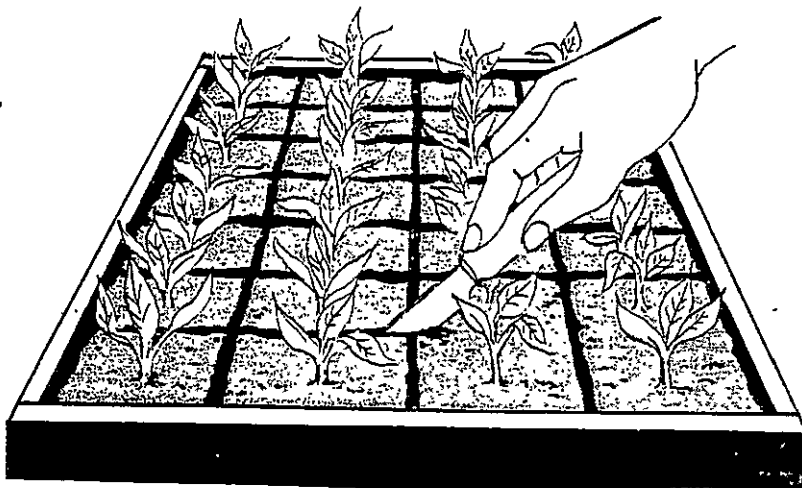
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Battery Times

STAR · SYEP · SUMMER 1983 PROGRAM · AUG/ISSUE 3

GARDEN VIEWS



Alida Snow interviewed Michael Diamond of Peaks Island.

One thing Michael Diamond brought with him to Peaks Island is a great deal of practical experience in organic gardening. Initially motivated by a desire to work outdoors, Michael signed on in 1975 for an "apprenticeship" under organic gardening pioneer Elliot Coleman in Harborside, Maine. After a few hard years in Harborside, Michael went to work on an organic "mini-farm" in northeastern Connecticut where he continued to find it extremely difficult to eke out a living. Inspired by these experiences, Michael spent a year at the Center for Human Ecology Studies in Freeport. While studying small scale family farming in Maine he learned that all small farms in New England face similar financial obstacles. Economies of scale presently give large growers such an overwhelming advantage that the small grower simply cannot compete.

Although he isn't trying to make his living at it right now, Michael still maintains a vegetable garden behind his house on Upper A Street. Techniques Michael employs to keep his garden productive include starting many of his seeds indoors in flats, collecting organic wastes in a compost bin and turning the pile regularly, and making sure he always has the right tool for the job.

He claims that one of the most valuable lessons he has learned is to only till and plant as much garden as he can easily manage - nothing destroys motivation quicker than an oversized weed garden. He also advises that if space or time are limited, the home gardener would do well to concentrate his/her efforts on the more expensive, rapidly perishable vegetables such as tomatoes, cauliflower, lettuce, brocolli, and peas. He/she will be rewarded with pennies saved, better tasting vegetables, even fresh air and exercise!

A.S.



ORCHARDS



By next spring we will have the beginnings of an apple and pear orchard. The trees will be planted on the empty lot where the first version of the outhouse was to be built. We will be ordering 6 dwarf apple and 6 dwarf pear trees this fall. Being dwarf trees they will be smaller and will produce fruit in 3-4 years instead of 5-6 years like the bigger trees.

The ground is now being dug up and it will be fertilized with peat moss, manure and lime. The holes are being dug now to let the air penetrate the soil so the soil won't be wet in the spring. The holes will be 3'-4' wide and 4'-5' deep.

The trees will be planted 12'-15' apart. The rest of the land will be covered with rye or clover, crops that help the soil replenish itself.

Some of the types of apples that might be planted are Prima, Priscilla, or Surprise. Some good pear trees are Spartlett, D'anjou and Moon-glow.

L.K.



GREENPEACE

The STAR group had an interesting visit by Ann Compton and Steve McAllister from the Green Peace organization.

They gave us a slide show presentation explaining what Green Peace does. It tries to prevent illegal whaling, to stop the dumping of toxic chemicals at sea, and to prevent any more damage to the sea and sea life.

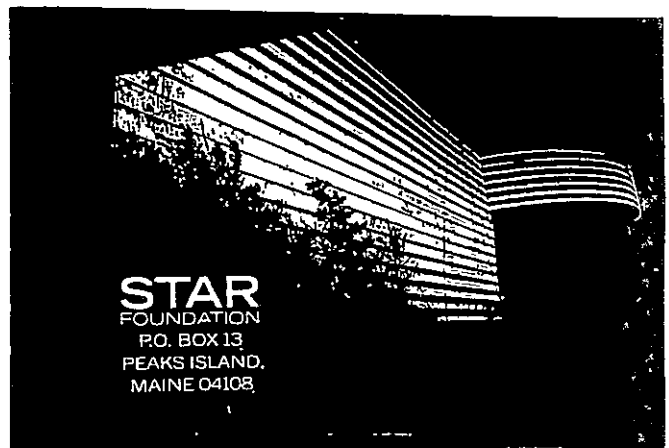
Their work is often very dangerous but they feel that what is gained by their actions far outweighs the risks they must take.

R.B.



Coming Events

- August 19 - The last day for the In-School SYEP group!
- August 20 - STAR Open House, 11 am to 5 pm at Battery Steele. Food, music, fun, games & walks. Everyone invited!
- August 25 - Movie at the Public Service building about Ruth Stout, author of books such as "How to Have a Green Thumb Without an Aching Back"
- September 2 - Last day for the Out-of-School SYEP workers.



STAR
FOUNDATION
P.O. BOX 13
PEAKS ISLAND,
MAINE 04108

BATTERY TIMES - ISSUE NUMBER 3

Editors - Ralph Brown, Lalanika kelso, Cynthia Cole, Alida Snow.

Contributors - Seamus Watson, Gretchen Hall

Typists - Ralph Brown, Lalanika kelso, Cynthia Cole.

Progress Report on
SUMMER 1983 PROJECTS



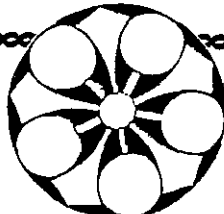
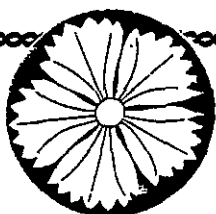
The Marsh: Chris reports that the marsh trail has been cleared; two trellises have been built for the rosebushes (*Rosa Virginiana*) growing in the area, and a 17 foot long bridge, spanning a small brook, is almost complete. Peder built a small dam to create a pool for frogs, crayfish, and the like. A bird house has been constructed and 1/3 of the trail has been lined with stones. Chris is pleased that the city of Portland has just agreed to transport 35 strong telephone poles to Peaks Island free of charge; these will be used to begin building the boardwalk. The coming period will see Chris and his team working on the pamphlet which will describe the dozen viewing stations within the marsh environment.

Gardening: The first green pepper was picked on Monday, August 8 - the beginning of a bumper crop, everyone hopes. Chris's group counted 215 blossoms on one tomatoe plant which already had 20 fruit nearly ready for picking! A bountiful harvest is in the making and some of it will be used to create vegetable concoctions for STAR's Open House on August 20th.

Battery Steele site: The greenhouse have been shingled and painted, and a brick walk built between the two buildings. In addition, four oil tank holes were filled in so that animals (such as Frosty - see story elsewhere in this issue) will not fall into them ever again.

Composting Outhouse: Work is progressing on this project with considerable dovetailing of efforts on the part of Alida and Dana and their crews of SYEP workers. The footings and the block walls of the containment bin area are in place. This week will see further work on the cement floor and the beginnings of the wooden superstructure of the building. Albert Pressgraves has been very helpful to Rodanthe; John is also giving advice and help. A volunteer work Saturday is planned for August 13 when all STAR staff will contribute time and talent.

Miscellaneous: Battery Times has been enhanced by the considerable planning and organizing that Alida Snow has put into this issue. Chris Kenoyer is already working on the next (and final) issue of the newsletter which will highlight the marsh project.



RODANTHE'S REAR

Rodanthe, a supervisor for the STAR Foundation, says she is having a good summer, but on Wednesday the 27 of July, she had a bad fall.

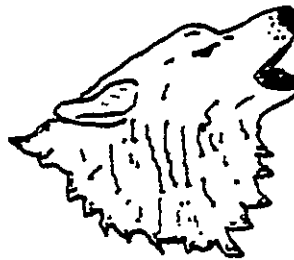
While there was a crew working in the garden & another crew working in the marsh, Rodanthe opted to work on the outhouse project alone. There is a 6 foot hole dug for the foundation of the outhouse and beside the hole there is about a 4 foot pile of dirt that was taken from the hole. We have not figured out why, yet, but Rodanthe was walking up the pile beside the hole. Halfway up the pile she lost her footing and fell about 8 feet into the hole onto solid bedrock and the wooden forms for the foundation, how she survived we don't know, but she was able to go for help. She was very lucky she only received minor injuries, such as a huge bruise on her leg and a hematoma on her Glutius Maximus. She is now fine, but she still finds it painful to sit down.

R.B.

S.Y.E.P. WORKSHOPS

As part of this summer's learning experience, the three out-of-school S.Y.E.P. workers go to the Portland office twice weekly to study and learn more math and english skills, with the help of work-books, computers, and an excellent teacher.

R.B.



ooowwhh

THE DOGGY IN THE HOLE

Alida was watching Frosty because his owner was on a trip. Alida took him to Battery Steele and let him run free. After a while Alida was wondering where he was and went looking for him. She was feeling very sad when she went home without Frosty.

A week later Ralph, Chris, Rodanthe, Wally, and Peder heard a dog whining and they thought it might be Frosty. Ralph and Wally remembered about the holes in the side of the Battery that were not covered. They ran to the holes and they found Frosty.

When Alida first found out that Frosty had been found she was extremely happy. Now Frosty is feeling a lot better. For the first couple of days Frosty had to eat foods like soft boiled eggs, toast, milk and Trix. The vet thought that his stomach might have shrunk while he was in the hole starving, and that if he ate hard food he would puke. We're all glad that Frosty is safe at home instead of in a hole.

S.W.

ANGIE'S INTERVIEW



Lalania Kelso interviewed Angie Kelso about her gardening experiences.

Angie first got involved in gardening when she moved to the island in 1970. She had never done any gardening before, but her new house on the island had a yard big enough to have a garden so she became interested. She learned most of what she knows now through her husband and various gardening books.

Since then she's been involved in the Garden Club at Battery Steele, and she's helped coordinate food coops on the island for the past 10 years. She also does her own canning, freezing, and drying of her own flowers, fruits, vegetables, and herbs.

She and her husband fertilize their garden with rabbit and chicken manure and compost made from vegetable matter. She mulches her garden with grass clippings. She doesn't use seaweed because she likes walking through her garden barefoot and dry seaweed is not soft enough to walk on without shoes. Even so she would like to try it in the future. Some other methods of gardening she practices are raised beds, tee-pee planting her beans and, to kill off large sections of weeds or grass, she uses black plastic.

Her best crops have been Tomatoes, Peppers, Lettuce, Swiss Chard, Rhubarb, flowers, and a large assortment of herbs. She hasn't been lucky with her cucumbers or corn.

One of the most important things for her garden is the compost. This is something that everyone can do at home by putting your vegetable scraps into an old bucket or container and let the scraps decompose. It enhances the nutrients in garden soil.



resources

WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT GARDENING
IN MAINE?

Here are a few resources that may
be helpful to you.

I ORGANIZATIONS

THE CORNUCOPIA PROJECT is an effort
sponsored by the Rodale Press to
let people know that the American
food system is in trouble, why it
is in trouble, and how you can
help to better it.

For more information, write to
Cornucopia Project, Rodale Press,
33 E. Minor ST. Emmaus Pa. 18049
or call (215) 967-5171.

THE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE,
disseminates information and has
informal educational programs in
the Cumberland County area regard-
ing agriculture, nutrition, and
community development.

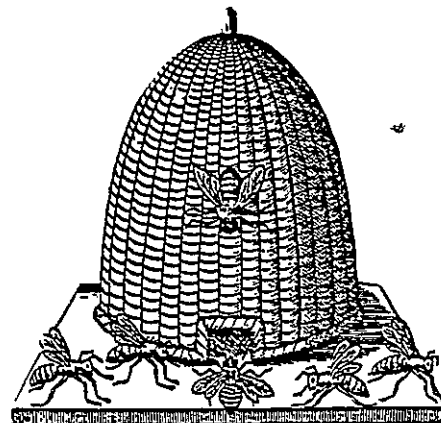
you can reach them by writing to
the Cumberland County Cooperative
Extension Service, 96 Falmouth ST,
Portland Me. 04103 or call 774-5686

THE MAINE ORGANIC FARMER AND GAR-
DENER ASSOC. (M.O.F.G.A.) is a
statewide educational organization
that is concerned with the advance-
ment of organic agriculture and
small farming in maine.

They can be reached by writing
Judy Adams, executive director,
M.O.F.G.A. 283 Water ST. PO box
2176, Augusta Me. 04330 or call
(207)622-3118.

II PUBLICATIONS

Square Foot Gardening is about a
new system of gardening, one that
is so simple and easy anyone can
enjoy a weed-free garden all year
and produce a continuous harvest.
Can be found at most bookstores.



island animals

Although the island is no longer a
farming community, we have had a wide
variety of animals and livestock.
Throughout the years people have
raised chickens, rabbits, ducks, bees,
a horse, and even an iguana. Most
people raised these animals for their
eggs or to eat, but others enjoyed the
pleasure of just having a pet.

The Kelso's on Willow Lane have raised
chickens, rabbits, and turkies in the
past. They don't have turkies and
chickens any more but they do have 2
rabbits. The Klains used to raise
rabbits and the O'Ganes on Luther St.
raised chickens and bees for a while.
They got rid of their chickens when
the chickens got too old and stopped
laying eggs.

There may also be other people on the
island who have raised small animals
for agricultural purposes or who plan
to do so in the future.

L.K.

(PUBLICATIONS (continued))

The Encyclopedia of Organic Gardening.
For the past 18 years the Encyclopedia
has helped millions of gardeners through-
out the world to restore the fertility
of their soil, grow more beautiful crops,
eat better food, increase their personal
productivity and self reliance.
Can be found at bookstores.

Early Farming In Casco Bay

By Gretchen Hall

World War II brought an end to farming as a way of life on Peaks Island. The federal government took over the large farm on the back shore that included meadow and pasture for the cattle which produced not only milk sold on the island but manure to enrich the soil for the vegetable gardens that helped feed the summer people. Residents who lived on Peaks Island at the time of the take-over could point out just where the farm was, and might even help a present day explorer locate the remains of the orchard which every proper farm has.

Back a hundred years ago, when summer people were just beginning to discover Peaks Island, -most people's living was made, for the most part, by fishing and lobstering to earn money for the things their orchards and gardens and woodlots didn't provide. The same has been true for generations. Back then it took the work of everyone in each home to keep a family going. So, as the children grew up, each one learned how to keep a garden growing.

The first gardens on Peaks Island were no doubt planted by the Indians who lived on Casco Bay islands in the summer and in the mainland forest in the winter. We don't know what they grew to eat fresh, but they did grow corn, and perhaps beans, to take back into the deep forest to live on when the hunting wasn't good. During the summer months they feasted on oysters, clams, lobster and fish, as well as the wild berries in season.

The first white men to camp on Peaks were teams of fishermen here to make up a cargo of dried fish to sell across the Atlantic. The fishing teams consisted of three or four men, fishing from a shallop. One of the team stayed ashore to tend to drying the fish, and could well have brought along a pocket full of seed from which to grow squash and beans to eat with the fish and berries.

The time came when some of the fishermen wintered over to protect the shallops and the fish drying stages from Indian attacks. When that happened, houses were built and corn was planted to provide bread through the winter. Eventually, it became less necessary for each ship from England to carry all the bread and drink needed for the crews returning to England since provisions were grown & prepared here in Portland and on the islands.

The Trelawney Papers (ask for the book at the Maine Historical Society) is an account of a settlement on Richmond Island that includes careful detail about



CANOES WENT OUT AT LOW
TIDE WHEN THE WINDS
STOOD STILL. THE
LOBSTER WAS STUCK
TOWARD THE
HEAD AND LIFTED
ABOARD.

(continued on next page)

Gardening — Then & Now



On Tuesday, August 2, I interviewed Mrs. Gretchen Hall of Peaks Island to find out her views on gardening. The first question I asked her was how she got interested in gardening. She told me that her high school years had been spent in Searsport, Maine. On her family's land there was a very large garden that she and her brother kept up while their father taught them the "art" of gardening.

At that time in Searsport it was considered wasteful not to utilize good soil for gardening. Therefore, most families had back yard gardens for home use.

I also asked Mrs. Hall what techniques she used in her garden. She informed me that in the past she primarily weeded the garden and broke the surface soil after a rainfall to help the water penetrate the soil better. She is now learning different things, for example, what mulch can do for your garden, such as controlling crab grass (there is plenty of this on the island). She also plants marigolds with vegetables now because they help to control certain bugs.

Mrs. Hall informed me that you can plant your garden later in the spring on the island because the water surrounding the island absorbs the cold more than the land does, thus giving the islands a later frost. This also allows you to harvest later in the year.

R.B.



(Early Farming continued)

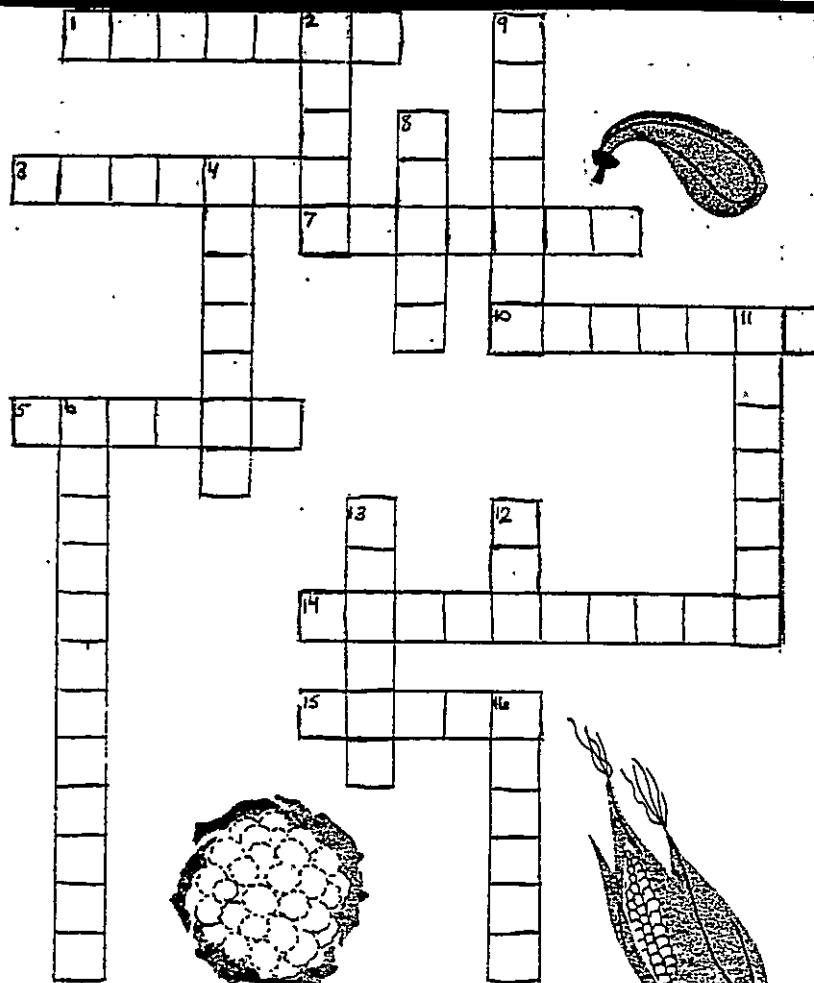
the plants the early settlers grew there during the early 1630's. They also raised livestock, mostly pigs, to provide meat in the winter. George Cleeve, who first settled on the Munjoy Hill shore of Portland, kept his pigs on the Diamond Islands where they were safe from the wolves which hunted for food on the mainland.

We know there were sheep on Peaks Island in 1676. They had been left behind when the settlers fled to Massachusetts because of the Indian raids during King Phillip's War. Some of the settlers from the mainland escaped to a fort that had been built on Cushing Island. Once there, all they had to eat was wild berries and the few fish they could catch without attracting the attention of the Indians. They got to thinking about the sheep over on Peaks. Finally some of the men took a boat, probably after dark, and went over after the sheep. The Indians were waiting to greet them, and massacred them all.

GARDEN CROSS WORD PUZZLE



ANSWERS IN NEXT ISSUE



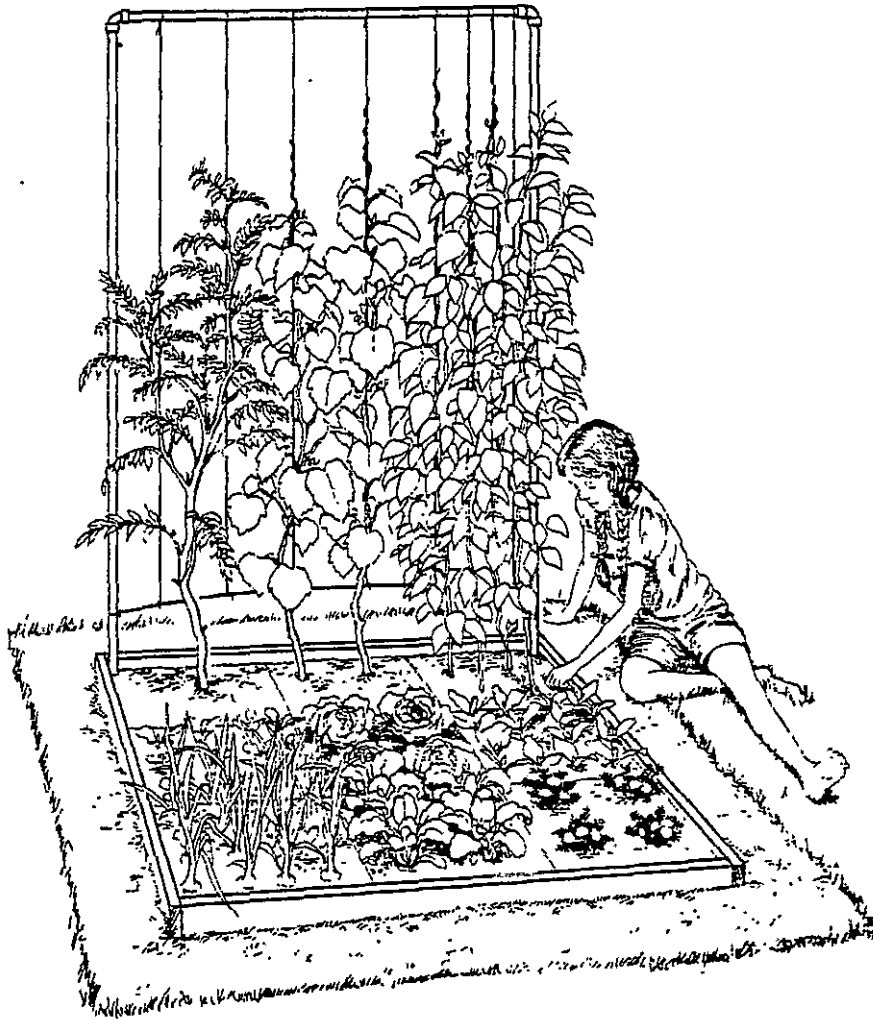
L.K.

DOWN

2. The bottom part of a scallion.
4. Vegetable that's good for your eyes.
6. The process of growing plants for food.
8. Is important for the growth of healthy plants.
9. Loose, top layer of the earth's surface.
11. Grows on a vine and can be pickled.
12. We see a lot of it in the summer.
13. Place where you grow vegetables.
16. A certain time you eat.

ACROSS

1. Vegetable used in spaghetti sauce.
3. A hardy variety of green cauliflower.
5. A red and white vegetable used in salads.
7. Most important element in soil.
10. Leafy, green vegetable usually eaten raw.
14. Grown in the back gardens between tomatoes.
15. Something gardeners dislike and try to get rid of.



A garden for children should contain an assortment of colorful, easy-to-grow plants to encourage them to develop a lifelong interest in gardening.

[from Square Foot Gardening]