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NASAP
Cultivating Community
*This institution is an equal opportunity provider*

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CLASS OUTLINES

January

February 4, 2013 – Class 2 “Vegetable Farming in Maine 101”

Goal: To give a very basic introduction to the principles of growing produce in Maine with an emphasis on highlighting both what is similar to farming in Africa and what is different from farming in Africa. The primary goal of this class is to present sufficient information to convince the new students that they will need to alter their familiar growing methods to successfully grow produce in Maine. A secondary goal of this class is to enforce the vegetable names that farmers are learning in English classes.

* Class will begin with time to ask questions about anything that arose from the previous week
* Depending on the written/oral proficiency of vegetable names in English, we will practice:
	+ Recognizing pictures of vegetables and naming them in English
	+ Reading their name in English
	+ Writing their name in English
* Introduction to farming in Maine
	+ Farming looks different in Maine/Africa
	+ Maine – 4 distinct seasons
		- Each one has its function
			* Vegetables just can’t grow without protection and heat during certina seasons.
			* Vegetable farming in Maine happens pretty much just when leaves are on the trees
			* If the soil is too cold to be barefoot, it is too cold for most vegetables to grow well
	+ Africa – wet/dry season
		- There are certain things that you can only/never do in those two seasons
	+ Frost dates
		- What is frost and what does it do to plants?
		- End of May and end of September
			* Some vegetables can only survive between these dates, some can survive for a month or two on either side.
	+ Farms are planted differently in Africa – put seed in a wait
	+ In Maine, we have to be very organized and planned about how we plant
		- Why? Because the season is very short and the sun is very weak.
			* Plants get much of their energy from the sun
				+ In Africa there is enough sun for all the plants
				+ In Maine, there isn’t enough sun – so we have to give individual plants more space
		- Why? Because we have a lot of plant diseases
			* Crowded plants get sick more easily
		- So, we plant in rows and beds with particular spacing to make sure that our plants stay healthy and strong
	+ Introduction to spacing
		- We practice reading our spacing handouts
			* Practice spacing for 5 crops
	+ Weeding is very, very important in Maine
		- Weeds grow very, very fast and compete for sun, water, and nutrients
		- Most of the veggies we grow in Maine are originally from a different part of the world where they have less completion, a longer growing season, and more sun. Our native weeds grow much faster than our vegetables.
		- Weeds blow in on the wind, they come in on your shoes
			* The seeds stay in the soil for many years…sometimes for 20 years or more
			* If you don’t spend time at least 2 times/week weeding your field, you will lose vegetables and we will mow your weedy vegetables down
		- Mulching is a great way to prevent weeds
			* It also helps keep your soil moist
		- You can use an African hoe or different kinds of American hoes.
			* American hoes are easier to use on American farms because they are made for weeding between evenly spaced vegetable and in rows.
	+ Recap what can grow in cool weather, what can grow in hot weather
		- Activity – organize veg cards into these two categories
	+ What is harvested in the summer
	+ What is harvested in the fall
	+ What do we harvest multiple times from the same plant
	+ What do we harvest only one time
	+ What do we plant one time
	+ What do we plant many times
	+ Time for questions