Farm-to-School Lesson Plan

LESSON: Pest Control
GRADE: Kindergarten

OBJECTIVE
Students will learn what integrated pest management means, and why it is useful in the garden.

NEXT GENERATION SCIENCE STANDARDS
- Events have causes that generate observable patterns (K-PS3-1)(K-PS3-2)
- All animals need food in order to live and grow. They obtain their food from plants or from other animals. Plants need water and light to live and grow (K-LS1-1)
- Plants and animals can change their environment (K-ESS2-2)
- Asking questions, making observations, and gathering information are helpful in thinking about problems (K-ESS3-3)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (FOR EDUCATORS)
Often times when a pest is in the garden it is common to resort to pesticides and herbicides. Utilizing Integrated Pest Management can be a very successful option without the use of harsh chemicals. This method of pest management also demonstrates to students what critical roles organisms have in the ecosystem and the evolutionarily beneficial characteristics some organisms have. IPM is simply using plants, insects and animals to help keep the garden ecosystem in check so that healthy plants can grow.

INTRODUCTION (15 MIN)
Plants and animals can change their environment. Let’s think about how that is possible. When we see rabbits in our garden, how might they impact our plants or the presence of other organisms? Rabbits will likely nibble on our plants and can attract predatory animals into our garden. To prevent damage to our garden we need to think about ways to prevent organisms from causing damage. One way to prevent damage is through integrated pest management (IPM). IPM is using natural means of keeping the population of organisms in our garden in check. For example, if we have too many mosquitos in our garden, we might consider planting plants that repel mosquitos to try to minimize their activity.

GARDEN/GREENHOUSE ACTIVITY
Assessing Pests
Materials Needed:
- Poster board
- Printer
- Marker

Bring students out into the garden or greenhouse to take try to make a list of any pests that are around. After making a list, print pictures of each pest and glue them vertically down the poster board. Make two additional columns titled pest and helper. As a class come up with a positive and a negative about each pest. For example bees might sting us while we are in the garden, but they pollinate our crops and can provide us with honey. If your class is having a hard time coming up with answers for both columns, spend some time in the garden to observe the critters!
IN CLASS ACTIVITY

Pest Matching Cards

*Materials Needed:*
- Nourish Pest Matching Cards

Have students split into pairs to work through the matching card set. Once the first student finishes, have the other student give it a shot. While students are waiting for the rest of the class to finish have them talk about a time when they have seen that animal, insect or plant in the garden.