

What Goes Around, Comes Around: Educating Children on the Composting Cycle

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Background and Context:

- Around 60% of municipal waste goes to landfills and is expected to grow to 70% by 2025.
- There is a lack of accessibility to knowledge on proper composting habits in schools, or due to COVID restrictions.
- Children learn best in their developmental years, therefore that is the best time to introduce the importance of proper composting habits.

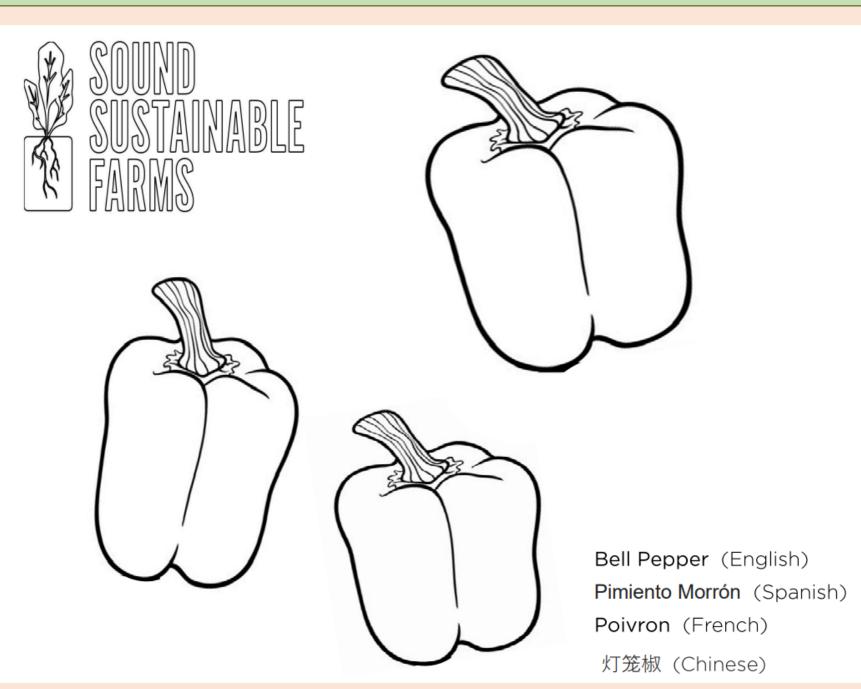


Figure 1. Example of an easier material provided on the survey

Internship/Methods:

- I worked with Cedar Grove to create educational materials to be put on the Sound Sustainable Farms website.
- I compiled materials into a survey that was sent out to people who are around children. The survey asked respondents to give their opinions on how interactive/informative they found the materials.

Research Question:

• What are attributes of successful self-directed learning regarding farms and composting?

Results:

- I received responses from people considering large age range of children (0-2 years, to 15+ years). More interactive materials were the more popular choice, depending on skill level.
- Respondents were asked to choose their favorite material (Figure 2). The highest ranked one was the Potato Stamp Activity (Figure 3), which is the most interactive.
- Respondents asked for more information to go in conjunction with indoor activities, as well as some options for outdoor activities.

What activity would be your child(ren)'s favorite, if any? 21 responses **—**3 (14.3%) Pick Your Produce -6 (28.6%)Accepted List Coloring Page Bell Pepper Coloring Page —1 (4.8%) ---3 (14.3%) Organics Loop Coloring Page -12 (57.1%)Potato Stamp -4 (19%)Produce Word Search **-9** (42.9%) Healthy Pumpkins, Happy Hipp. 2.5 5.0

Figure 2. Respondents picked their favorite educational material.

Significance:

- Landfills release toxic materials into the ground, and emit greenhouse gases into the air that will harm future generations.
- It is important for children to form proper composting habits at an early age, as this is when they learn the most.
- With lack of composting education included in many school curriculums, children need another way of getting this information.

Acknowledgments:

I would like to thank Maggie Brown and Leah Rubinsky. I would also like to thank my family and friends for all their support.



Create a fun craft for yourself and your kids with potato stamping! These can be used to create unique artwork, decorating gift cards, wrapping paper, and more!

What you'll nee

- Small metal cookie cutters
- Medium to large potatoes (must be larger than cookie cutter)
- Pencil or marker
- Water-based or acrylic paint
- Kitchen knife (parent supervision recommended)
- Paper (for decorating purposes)

 Pages and paper (for practicing & paint glob
- Recycled paper (for practicing & paint globs)

Instructions

- Clean the outside of potatoes and dry with a towel
 Cut the potatoes in half (each potato can make
- two stamps)
- Use small metal cookie cutters and press one down into the surface of the potato. Use a sharp kitchen knife to cut around the shape, and remove the cookie cutter. Ensure that the shape is raised off the surface of the potato
 - Other Option: make your own shapes; draw on the surface of a potato with a marker or pencil. Use a knife to cut around the shape.
- Use recycled paper or a flat plate to pour globs of paint on. Dab the potato stamp into the paint, so that the shape is evenly coated
- 5. For best results, remove the excess paint by using recycled paper a few times. Stamp the potato shape where desired. Press the stamp down firmly and depending on the amount of paint, the stamps can be used several times before requiring more paint. Wash the potato in between different color paints
- Leave the paper with paint stamps to dry, then add various decorations to the stamped artwork as desired



Figure 3. Example of an advanced material provided on the survey.