

# STEM starts now

## Vegetables and Fruits

**Recommended Age:** 53–60 Months

**STEM concepts:** Science (life science), Technology (simple tools), Engineering, Math (patterns and classification, shapes and spatial identification)

**Materials:** A large garden or a large planter box, various fruits and vegetables seeds, soil, sunlight, shovel, water, extension requires paper, ruler and pencils.

**What to do:** The easiest but hardest activity you can do with your child is grow a garden. The success and failure of gardens make a great conversation. So if you don't have a green thumb, that's okay! Start by gathering your materials and your child. Tell them you are going to start a garden and observe how the different vegetables and fruits grow. Start by observing the different seeds and their likenesses and differences. Once you have observed them, plant them according to their directions. Water and wait. Each day take a moment to observe the plants and see how they have grown and how they are different.

**Language and Communication:** First conversation should be about what your plants need to grow. Make sure your child knows that all things need sun, nutrients and water. Mention their nutrients are found in the soil. Ask them if they know where nutrients come from first! Discuss the different types of seeds and also the different instructions. Why do some seeds require to be planted in larger pots or deeper in the soil. Some seeds require sticking out of the soil! As the plants grow or don't grow - discuss why this is happening. Do they have enough sunlight? Were they planted correctly? Do they have the right temperature? Was it the right time of year? Talk about what the vegetables and fruits look like when they grow and how their plants changed to get that way.



**Expand the Activity:** To expand this activity use a notebook or loose paper and have your child draw what they see. Use a ruler to measure growth.