



School Gardening
Resources

PRIMARY LEVEL

BORD BIA
IRISH FOOD BOARD

Planting an Orchard and Strawberries





Time of Year	Orchard - October to February, Strawberries - September.
Aim	To plant a fruit orchard.
Resources Needed	Fruit trees, strawberry plants or runners, manure/peat free compost, black plastic/cardboard, shovels, trowels, spades, forks, gloves, bark mulch/straw/grass clippings, secateurs, flour/ bamboo sticks, stakes/ties.
Cross Curriculum Relevance	SESE: Living things, environmental awareness & care Languages: New words, spelling, literacy Art: Myself & the wider world, active citizenship Informal Curriculum: Green Schools Programme, Discover Primary Science



1 Planting an orchard

- ★ Decide where the orchard is to be planted and source fruit trees.
- ★ Mark spots roughly 2 - 6m apart (depending on the height the trees will grow to eventually) using the flour or bamboo sticks.
- ★ Dig holes approximately 200mm deeper and wider than the root ball of the tree.
- ★ Add a trowel full of compost or manure and mix with soil.
- ★ Remove tree carefully from pot and place into hole, make sure that it is at the same level as it was in the pot i.e not planted deeper.
- ★ Fill soil back in around roots and press down with feet.
- ★ Mulch the trees individually with 1m² of black plastic or cardboard.
- ★ Weigh down the plastic/cardboard with bark mulch/grass clippings/straw.



2 Types of fruit tree

Dessert Apples Greasey pippen, Reid's seedling, Peach melba, Keegan's crab, Kerry pippen, Brown crofton, Yellow pitcher, Ross Nonpareil, Cavan sugarcane.

Cooking Apples Mother of household, White moss, Cavan strawberry (all available from Irish Seedsavers Association).

Other fruit trees Pear, Plum, Cherry, Crab Apple, Medlar, Quince.

If you have lots of space Walnut, Sweet chestnut.

Note: Bare-rooted trees can only be planted in November to later February. Potted trees can be planted all year round.



3 Planting Strawberries

- ★ Strawberry plants can be purchased from a garden centre.
- ★ They can be planted straight in the ground (around fruit trees for example), in a raised bed or in pots.
- ★ See 'Moving Plants from Classroom to Outdoor Beds' sheet for details on planting.
- ★ Try a strawberry tower - a stack of 3 pots with strawberries planted around the edge of each pot.
- ★ Alpine or wild strawberries can be grown also - they are smaller and make a good ground covering crop.
- ★ If you already have strawberries, you can propagate more plants from the runners (the long tendrils sent out by the plant in September, after fruiting).
- ★ Put soil/compost in small pots and water.
- ★ Add more compost if necessary.
- ★ Use a large U shaped staple or stone to hold the runner tip onto the top of the soil.
- ★ The runner will then send out roots into the soil.
- ★ Once established, cut off new plant from the parent plant.

Health and Safety

- ★ Always use tools safely.
- ★ Wash hands after garden session.
- ★ Please refer to the worksheet on Health & Safety for detailed information.





4 Ideas for research projects

SESE - research apple facts - how many varieties are there? Why do they float in water? How are strawberries good for us?

Local Heritage - when was the oldest apple found in Ireland? How long have we been eating apples? Is there a local variety in your area?

Art/Communications - make a display for the garden or green schools notice board of the orchard and fruits area.

Research Words: BARE-ROOTED



For more information

The internet/ the library

Irish Seedsavers Association - www.issa.ie

Apple & Pear Catalogue

- ★ **Irish Seed Savers Association**
- ★ **Very good manual on planting fruit trees**