

## Nutrition and Health Action Projects

In the Nutrition and Health Action Project, youth carry out an activity to promote good nutrition and health related to the garden. For example, they could host a banquet, develop a recipe book, create interpretive signs, research a health issue, or host a health and nutrition educational event. They can use what they learn during the *i-m-science investigations* to help decide the specifics of their Action Project. Although the examples here come from community gardens, you should be able to adapt them for home or school garden or other youth programs.



### Ideas for Nutrition and Health Action Projects

Hold a banquet using dishes prepared with vegetables from the garden

Host a barbecue in the garden for elders from the neighborhood

Create a poster about diet and health and laminate it for display in the garden

Use the Internet to find out more about the nutritional value of plants in the garden

Invite a Cooperative Extension agent to the garden to speak about diet and disease

Make a cookbook from gardeners' recipes

Present a workshop on the health benefits of vegetables for elders or children

## Example Projects

Following are several example Nutrition and Health Action Projects. Our intent here is to give you a range of possibilities, which we hope will prove useful as you help the youth develop their own project.

### **Garden Banquet**

Youth learn during their *i-m-science investigations* that the gardeners will be celebrating the fifth anniversary of the founding of the garden. They plan a banquet for the gardeners and their families, using produce from the garden. The youth and gardeners do the cooking for the banquet.

### **Recipe Book**

Youth learn during the *i-m-science investigations* about the ways in which the gardeners use their plants in cooking. They work with the gardeners and a nutritionist from Cooperative Extension to create a cookbook. The cookbook includes not only the recipes but also their nutritional and health value. The youth sell copies of the cookbook to earn money for the garden.

### **Interpretive Signs**

Youth create interpretive signs focusing on the plants they learn about from the gardeners. They use the plant Science Pages, the Internet, and interviews with the gardeners to learn about the nutritional and medicinal value of the plants.

### **Educational Event**

The youth make observations of health issues facing the gardeners, children, and other members of the community. They also express their own health concerns (e.g., weight, diabetes). They talk to a community nutritionist to learn more about their concerns. They then organize a Health Day at the garden, where they invite local health and nutrition organizations to set up booths to educate community members.

### **Research a Health Issue**

Youth use the Internet or library to research a question about cancer and diet that comes up during their *i-m-science investigations*. They use websites developed by university scientists to ensure that the scientific information is accurate. They synthesize what they learn into a poster or PowerPoint presentation for the gardeners.

