

## Indoor Garden Activity Log

### Garden Drop-in 1: Intro training session with Les Verts

#### Learnings noted:

- Hydroponics is growing food without soil.
- The growing medium is 'lava rock' which needs to be soaked for about 10 minutes before planting seeds into it
- You can move the plants from inside to outside
- LED lights, fans and water - the water turns on for 12 minutes every day on a timer and water level needs to be checked, plus the Ph and nutrient levels

#### Questions/engagement from students:

- What is the size and quality of growth compared to outside growing?  
Due to the controlled nature of the Terrace Pro and correct levels of nutrients in the soil, consistent temperature, air circulation, no pests, etc., the quality of the produce can be higher than outside but would not replace outdoor growing.
- How much does it cost to have a Terrace Pro at home?  
30 cents per day for electricity and you get your money back in grocery savings. The cost of the Terrace Pro in the school is approximately \$5,000.
- Wow, the lettuce looks unreal, it's so perfect...  
This sparked a discussion about imperfect veggies tasting just as good as perfect, sometimes better and the type of advertising that makes us think perfect tastes better.
- Can you grow tomatoes?  
Yes, but tomatoes grow more slowly than other produce, and we recommend dwarf varieties for indoor growing.
- Can you grow beans?
- No, they would become too tall.
- Are the seeds different?  
They are the same as any you would purchase, but the 10 varieties Les Verts provides in the starter kit have been tried and tested, to be the best success rate.
- Seed saving from Terrace Pro/outdoors could be a really nice project. Students were engaged with this suggestion.

### **Top tips for growing & maintenance:**

- Microgreens need to be spread evenly across the tray and always soak the mat first (for 10 mins)
- Every 3-4 months you clean the Terrace Pro .
- Water testing: the reservoir needs to be tested every week for pH and nutrient levels, plus volume (make sure it's filled up properly)
- Using the nutrient 'EC' stick, the light will determine where the level is (use the guide to check adjustments needed)

### **Garden Drop-in 2: Intro to the Terrace Pro**

- Discussed the responsibilities of maintaining the Terrace Pro, went through checking pH, nutrients and dipped into the Terrace Pro Guides
- Students shared they want to try growing bok choy
- Hemp - one student was particularly interested in this plant and its versatility, the fact that it's a female plant too, suggested we can discuss plants of interest in this session and do some research around these if students are interested
- Students named the garden 'Greta'

### **Actions:**

- Students are keen to have a 'Garden Council' Teams channel where they can share interesting articles/communicate who has done what for the Terrace Pro
- Future drop in theme ideas:
  - Mindful moments, using meditations
  - Lettuce as the most wasted food in the world due to food miles, sanitised 3 times, shipping and food waste in the process

### **Garden Drop-in 3**

- Refreshed what Hydroponics means
- Planted 12 heads of lettuce together, students enjoyed this most
- Checked pH and nutrient levels and students searched for answers in the Growing Guide and Manual on what to do if the pH is too basic or there's not enough nutrients
- We talked about how soil outside can also be tested for its composition (idea to do this in a future drop-in with a jar and water)
- Students decided to number the trays so it's easier to navigate the Harvesting Guide

### **Thoughts and reminders:**

- It was a stop/start session as we learn how everything works, but students are intrigued and understood we are all learning.
- Remember humidity domes air holes need to be shut so the warmth/moisture stays in.
- You can make a 50:50 water to nutrient solution to add to the reservoir in future and any

lettuces individually planted don't need to be watered from the top. They may seem dry, but as long as they are soggy on the bottom, that's ok as it's where the water gets ingested.

- Water level should be  $\frac{3}{4}$  inches from the top of the reservoir.

#### **Garden Drop-in 4**

- Followed the new posters created for weekly tasks
- Transplanted lettuce (15 heads) into grow blocks
- Students were really excited that we harvested 2 trays of microgreens for LunchLAB, and put a sign up in lunch room
- Planted a tray of microgreens following instructions and memory from training demo
- Also went outside to start thinking about what we might want to grow outside, but start inside.
- Student ideas shared to research variety possibilities:
  - Strawberries
  - Cucumbers
  - Carrots
  - Zucchini
  - Runner beans (need to find the space for these to climb)
  - Bok choy
  - Herbs: Basil, Mint
  - Potatoes (start direct outside)

#### **Actions:**

- Get some West Coast Seeds growing guides to get students looking up what space/environment the plants they want to grow need, what can be directly sown and what can we grow in the Terrace Pro, perennial, annual and biennial
- Outdoor garden manager check in could be helpful to make sure all on same page for being outdoors more post-spring break and planting in the two garden beds.

#### **Garden Drop-in 5**

- Most of the students have come regularly, and some students are really engaged in the process and are coming every week
- Due to spring break, students harvested 6 large lettuce heads to take home
- Students are more familiar with the weekly tasks and keeping notes in the log print out

#### **Garden Drop-in 6 - over spring break**

- Simply did maintenance and harvested 3 lettuce
- Left microgreens for after spring break

### **Garden Drop in 7**

- Garden Drop-in is a nice space for students to ask questions, this student asked about career opportunities after school in non-profits which was nice to talk about in an informal setting.

### **Garden Drop-in 8**

- Students are getting quicker at doing tasks to maintain the garden and also plant new seeds.
- Went through seeds with students and looked at retail seed guide to work out which need to be transplanted/started in the Terrace Pro and those we can direct sow.

### **Garden Drop-in 9 – cancelled due to health fair**

- Harvested 4 lettuce for lunch and lots of parsley and basil for pesto pasta

### **Garden Drop in 10**

- Harvested tray of microgreens
- Started 2 trays of microgreens (2 students)
- Maintenance tasks (2 students)
- Got outside to
  1. Loosen soil - rake it and move it around deeply (or at least 30cm in depth to be loose for veggies growth)
  2. Water soil
  3. Remove mulch
  4. Plant seeds for bed 1 - Transplant lettuce from Terrace Pro, plant potatoes and lupines around the border of bed 1

### **Garden Drop-in 11**

- Garden manager came to talk about the garden and plans for future Earth Spirit Healing Garden.
- Planted microgreens and started garden prep outside, planted potatoes and got beds ready for next week.
- Transplanted some lettuces that we'd started inside outside
- Basil in the runner beds and parsley amongst the lettuce for companion growing

### **Garden Drop-in 12**

- Transplanted some dill amongst the garlic that hasn't sprouted
- For the climbing plants - transplanted cucumber plants in the runner bed
- Planted some lupine seeds round the borders of the beds to hopefully attract pollinators
- Bed 2: carrots, sunburst squash and radishes with a bunch of winter purple kale which has lasted
- With 5 weeks left of school, think about lettuce production until then