

2020 All-America Selections Vegetable Winners



Photos courtesy of All-America Selections

Pumpkin 'Blue Prince'

For any vegetable entry to become an AAS Winner, it must outperform the comparisons and Blue Prince Pumpkin scored high in the areas of maturity, yield, fruit size, uniformity, color, taste and texture. Vigorous trailing vines produce 7–9 pound, beautiful, blue flattened pumpkins with non-stringy, deep orange flesh with savory sweetness. These pumpkins are as pretty as they are delicious. Of all the varieties trialed, Blue Prince was first to flower and fruit, which is beneficial for gardeners with a shorter growing season.



Cucumber 'Green Light'

This award winner is an excellent mini cucumber, said many of the AAS Judges. The yield was higher than the comparison varieties with more attractive fruit, earlier maturity and superior eating quality. Grow Green Light on stakes or poles for a productive, easy-to-harvest vertical garden that will yield 40 or more spineless cucumbers per plant. Pick them when they are small, approximately 3–4 inches long and be rewarded with great tasting cucumbers that do not need to be peeled.



Tomato 'Chef's Choice Bicolor'

The first bicolor tomato in the Chef's Choice series is here. Indeterminate plants produce large 7–8 ounce flattened beefsteak tomatoes with beautiful pinkish-red internal stripes within a yellow flesh. These heirloom looking tomatoes are as sweet as they are beautiful with a better flavor and texture than the comparisons. Gardeners will enjoy earlier maturity and more uniform fruits that hold up all season long, producing well into fall.

Source: All-America Selections



GARDEN GUIDE

THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH

Mary Jane Frogge, Extension Associate,
Lancaster County

Complete the pruning of shrubs, ornamental trees before growth starts, except for spring flowering shrubs like lilac. Prune those which bloom in spring as soon as they finish flowering.

March is a good time to start transplants indoors of tomatoes, peppers and eggplant.

How are your houseplants doing? Check all five growing factors if your house plants are not growing well. Light, temperature, nutrients, moisture and humidity must be favorable to provide good growth.

Buy a notebook and use it to keep all your gardening information. List what you plant in the garden. Include the name of seed companies, plant name, variety, planting date and harvest date. During the growing season, keep notes on how well the plant does. If the variety is susceptible to disease, record what was used to treat any problems. All this information will be helpful in planning future gardens.

Turn the compost pile.

Some annuals, such as verbenas, snapdragons and petunias, take 70–90 days to bloom. They should be started indoors in early spring.

Buy some new perennials for your flower border. Spring is a good time to renew and add variety to your landscape.

Finish repairing and painting of window boxes, lawn furniture, tools and other items in preparation for outdoor gardening and recreational use.

Do not plow your garden when the soil is wet. It will form clods which are difficult to break up and interfere with cultivation during the summer.

Rake the lawn to remove leaves and twigs.

If you have not done it already, check stored tools and outdoor furniture for signs of rust. Remove any surface rust with steel wool and paint with rust-preventing paint.

Look Who's Hatching Program for Childcare Centers "Incubates" Imagination

Jaci Foged

Extension Educator,
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Look Who's Hatching is a program available from Nebraska Extension for childcare centers and family childcare programs with preschool-age children. Each spring, a childcare workshop is offered at the Extension office to support early childhood teachers in learning to use an emergent curriculum in their classrooms. Emergent curriculum is a process where teachers plan activities based on the specific group of children they are working with, taking into account their skills, needs and interests.

The workshop, Look Who's Hatching: Exploring Oviparous (Egg Laying) Animals with Young Children, focuses on using the Experiential Learning Model (see chart below) to support children's learning. In the workshop, participants

learn that rather than provide children with the answer to what is inside the eggs, teachers should instead follow the child's lead and explore all of the possibilities by asking questions that provoke children's thinking. This helps the children think about and process their ideas.

The Look Who's Hatching program starts with the concept of "What could be inside of the eggs?" A children's story about oviparous animals is read to the group, and children begin to wonder about what could hatch from their eggs — turtles, crocodiles, snakes and even dragons are some of the ideas children have. Children use magical thinking as a way of figuring out how things work.

When we provide children with an opportunity to think outside the box, magic happens. Suddenly it is more than just a simple egg, like the eggs they might have seen in their refrigerator. The simple provocation of what COULD be in the egg creates many days of exploration and learning — for the children, their parents and their teachers too! The program lasts approximately four weeks, but depending on the children's interests, classrooms might explore oviparous (egg laying) animals for many weeks after the chicks have hatched and left the classroom.

What to Expect

Week 1: Extension staff drop off incubators in participating classrooms. The following day, educators bring a variety of chicken eggs to the program. Shhh, don't tell the children they are chicken eggs! Extension staff will read a book to the children which discusses a variety of animals which hatch from eggs. Children then brainstorm what they believe will



Molly Halloway

Youth at childcare centers participating in Look Who's Hatching can experience chicks hatching.

Teachers are encouraged to follow the children's interests and provide opportunities to further learn around this new concept.

How to Participate

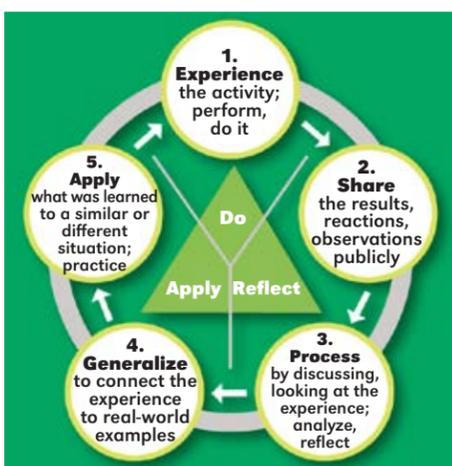
Participation is fairly easy — attend the workshop (see box below) and sign-up to bring the program to your classroom (for a small fee). Extension staff will deliver the necessary items (incubator, chicken eggs and brooder box) and Extension will pick everything up after the program is over. Hatched chicks are delivered back to the farm we received the eggs from, which can create a wide range of potential interests for children to explore even after the program is over.

Peer reviewed by Katie Krause and Leanne Manning.

Upcoming Training

Nebraska Extension teaches several early childhood development classes for child care providers. Listed is an upcoming class at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln. For more information, contact Jaci Foged at jfoged2@unl.edu or 402-441-7180. Registration form is at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/family>.

Look Who's Hatching — Wednesday, March 25, 6:15–8:15 p.m. Cost is \$10. 2 in-service hours. Register by March 16. Learn how to implement Nebraska Extension's curriculum, "Look Who's Hatching," in your program. Participants will have the opportunity to hatch chicks in their own program using an incubator on loan from Extension for an additional fee of \$50.



Experiential Learning Model