

Foraging is a great outdoor activity for the whole family to enjoy. Make sure you follow the 'do's and don'ts' of foraging.

Seasonal Wild Green Soup

Ingredients:

2 large handfuls of edible wild greens (nettles, chickweed, comfrey, common mallow, fat hen)
1 medium onion chopped
2 medium potatoes peeled and chopped
Chicken/vegetable stock cube
Butter
Salt and Pepper
100ml Cream

Recipe

Peel and roughly chop the onion. Add to a pan and fry with butter until just browning at the edges.
Make stock by adding one litre of boiling water to stock cube. Add to the pan with chopped potatoes and bring to the boil for 10-15 minutes until potatoes are soft.
Rinse your wild greens thoroughly and add to the pan at this point, turning the heat down to a simmer. Simmer for ten minutes then remove from heat.
Liquidise the soup and then add seasoning to taste. Serve with a large splash of cream.

Syllabub with Berries

George Courtauld, Colne Engaine, Essex.
(From the recipe book of Charles Plum, George Coultauld's Great-Great Grandfather's butler!)

Ingredients:

Serves 6 - 8
5oz/140g double cream
5oz/140g Malmsey or sweetish sherry
2.5/70g oz brandy
1 lemon
4 oz/110g caster sugar
1 nutmeg to grate, or ground nutmeg
10oz/280g berries – wild strawberries, currants, blackberries or any other small berry

Recipe

The first four ingredients should be well chilled before you start.
Put all the ingredients, except the fruit and nutmeg, and whip into a stiff froth. Carefully mix in the fruit.
Spoon immediately into wine glasses, grate the nutmeg over each helping and serve as soon as possible.
This dessert must be as cold as possible; it must not be allowed to stand for too long. The berries must be small, ripe, crisp and entire, not sliced, peeled or wounded.

Hedgerow Jam

Dominie Courtauld, Colne Engaine, Essex

Ingredients:

It should be possible to pick these on the same day.
Hips 8oz/225g
Haws 8oz/225g
Nuts (hazel) 4oz/115g
Elderberries 1lb/450g
Crab apples 2lb/900g
Blackberries 1lb/450g
Sloes or Bullace 1lb/450g
Sugar 3lb/1.3kg

Recipe

Wash fruit well. Put rose hips, haws, sloes/bullace & chopped crab apples into pan, add water to cover, cook until mushy.
Sieve by carefully pushing the pulp through a fine sieve by hand (to remove all the tough skins, pips and fibres).
Put pulp into pan with entire blackberries and elderberries, and chopped nuts, simmer for 15 minutes.
Add sugar. Cook over a low heat until sugar has dissolved, then boil rapidly until setting point is reached.
Put into jars.

If you are foraging for these ingredients, then measurements will depend on the amounts you are able to source. The general rule is to use half crab apples, to half other fruit. Once the fruit is cooked and sieved, measure the juice and add 450g of sugar per 600 ml of juice.

Nettle Pesto

Nettle pesto is a great alternative to basil or spinach pesto. Pick the young leaves at the top of the plant before it flowers.

Ingredients:

4 handfuls of stinging nettles
Parmesan cheese
Pine nuts, roasted
2 large garlic cloves
2-3 tbsp olive oil
1 tbsp lemon juice
Salt and pepper to taste



Blanche nettles for a minute in boiling water. Remove to a salad spinner and shake off excess water, then ball up your nettles (wearing gloves) and give one good squeeze to wring out more water.

Add nettles to food processor, along with roasted pine nuts (or walnuts, if you prefer), grated parmesan, garlic cloves, lemon juice, and seasoning. Pour half of the olive oil in and mix. Pour the rest of the oil in. Mix again until you reach your preferred consistency. Add as much or as little of the ingredients as you like.

Serve with pasta or as a dip/spread.

Other Edible Essex information leaflets:

- Edible Essex 'Foraging for Wild Food'
- Edible Essex 'Simple ways to grow your own – in the UK's driest county'

About Edible Essex

Edible Essex is funded through the Big Lottery's Local Food Programme, supported by Essex County Council and managed by the Rural Community Council of Essex.

Edible Essex aims to increase the number of people growing, sourcing and using local food in their everyday lives by:

- offering practical support to help set up or renovate allotment sites and orchards across the county.
- organising free training sessions and events, and
- disseminating information.

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EDIBLE ESSEX



Edible Essex

Recipes from the plot (...and other places)



Rural Community Council of Essex is an independent charity helping people and communities throughout rural Essex create a sustainable future.

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LOTTERY FUNDED

Recipes from the plot (...and other places)

There is nothing more rewarding than eating fruit and vegetables that you have grown or foraged yourself!

Not only will you ultimately reap the health benefits of eating fresh fruit and vegetables, you will also get fresh air and exercise along the way. There is no packaging to throw away and you'll save money!

Once you've put in the effort of growing or finding your own food, don't spoil it or let it go to waste!

The Edible Essex project has come across some fantastic ideas of how to use freshly grown or foraged produce.

This leaflet contains some suggestions of tasty recipes directly from the allotment plot, and other places.

Packed Lunch Plot Competition



The competition was featured on BBC Countryfile in July 2013.

We asked Primary School children in Essex to design a small allotment plot and then create a recipe for a healthy packed lunch using the produce.

Emily Lawrence from Birch C of E Primary School won the 2013 competition and her school received a polytunnel enabling them to undertake activities in all weathers and increase their gardening club membership. Her class also got to plant her design at RHS Hyde Hall!

The 2014 competition has been won by Chipping Ongar Primary School.



Matt Baker from Countryfile with Emily & classmates



Emily Lawrence and Sadie Broad



Chipping Ongar Primary School Allotment Club. Head Teacher Bridget Hill, Sophie Buxton and Stan

Summer Sunshine Pasta Salad and Lavender Cupcakes

(Emily Lawrence, Birch C of E Primary School, winner 2013)

Ingredients:

Summer Sunshine Pasta Salad
Pasta of your choice
Tiny Tim tomatoes
Rocket
Little Gem lettuces
Sugar snap peas
Chives
Pot Marigolds
Olive oil and white wine vinegar

Lavender Cupcakes
125g self-raising flour
125g soft unsalted butter
125g lavender sugar
2 eggs
Salt
Tablespoon of milk
250g Royal icing, violet colouring
Handful of lavender



Plot design



Emily's packed lunch

To make the pasta salad, first cook and drain the pasta, add tomatoes halved, a handful of rocket, a sliced little gem lettuce, some sugar snap peas, chopped chives and toss with olive oil and white wine vinegar. Sprinkle with chive flowers and pot marigold flowers.

Make your own lavender sugar by placing some lavender buds/flowers in a jar with caster sugar. Make the cupcakes using a normal cupcake recipe but using the homemade lavender sugar.

When cool, decorate with the violet icing and a lavender stem.

"I selected the produce as they are easy to grow, they keep growing as you pick them and you can get all of your five a day in one easy dish! The lavender attracts bees to help pollination and pot marigolds attract insects like ladybirds to help keep pests away." Emily Lawrence, Birch C of E Primary School

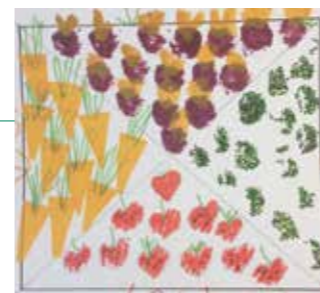
The Red and Gold Lunch Box

(Reception Class, Rettendon Primary School – runners up 2013)

Ingredients:

Honey Beets
Beetroot
Feta cheese
Carrots
Honey

Carrot Waffles
2 Carrots
Ground almonds
Baking soda
Eggs
Ground cinnamon
Vegetable oil



Plot design

Cook the beetroot and chop it into cubes. Cook the carrots and chop them into cubes. Stir in a spoonful of honey. Chop the feta cheese. Put it all in a pot for lunch – yummy yummy!

Grate the carrots. Mix with all the other ingredients. Put in a hot waffle maker then eat!

"We like to grow what we like to eat and we like to eat what we like to grow"
Reception Class of 2013, Rettendon Primary School

"Crazy Daisy Vegetables" Carrot salad, homemade crisps and beetroot cake

(Allotment Club, Chipping Ongar Primary School, winner 2014)

Ingredients:

Crazy Carrot Salad
Sweetcorn
Carrots
Sunflower seeds
Basil
Olive oil and black pepper
Lemon zest

Homemade Crazy Crisps
Potatoes
Olive Oil

Snazzy Wazzy Beetroot Cake
Beetroot
Chocolate cake ingredients:
eggs, butter, sugar, flour and chocolate/cocoa



Plot design

To make the carrot salad you grate the carrots and mix in the sweetcorn, basil, sunflower seeds, lemon zest, olive oil and black pepper.

To make the crisps, slice the potatoes very thinly. Soak in cold water until the edges curl, drain and pat dry.

Drizzle with olive oil and cook in the oven at 200C until golden brown and crisp!

To make the beetroot cake, add cooked, mashed beetroot to your favourite chocolate cake recipe.

"We love it because it's healthy and you can grow it yourself!"

Delicious Potato Salad

(Jake Archibald, Takeley Primary School – runner up 2014)

Ingredients:

New potatoes
Garden peas
Tomatoes
Cucumber
Spring onions
Sunflower seeds

Chives
Spinach
Parsley
Mayonnaise
Salt and pepper to season



Plot design

Wash and prepare the vegetables, remove the peas from their pods, the sunflower seeds from the flower heads and the roots from the spring onions.

Chop the potatoes into large chunks, dice the cucumber and tomatoes, slice the spring onions and chives and cut up the parsley and spinach leaves.

Boil the potatoes until soft and drain well. Boil the peas until cooked and drain well.

Put the vegetables; potatoes, peas, tomatoes, cucumber and spring onions into a bowl, add a large dollop of mayonnaise and mix well.

Add the herbs; chives, spinach, parsley, salt and pepper to the mixture and stir again. Spoon into a lunchbox container and sprinkle over sunflower seeds.

Put the lid on securely and your lunch is ready to go!