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About the Activity
Tucson Village Farm (TVF) is an urban farm built by and for the youth of Pima County Arizona. It was developed in partnership with the Pima County Cooperative Extension and the University of Arizona. A great way to start this activity is to learn about the basics of growing crops by watching the TVF Tour Video. If you don’t have the time to do that, that’s not a problem – go ahead and get started with the activity, using the information in the activity guide about plants, seasons, and animals to create your own virtual farm!

Supplies
These simple materials will get you started.

- Paper
- Pencil
- Ruler
- Colored pencils, markers, or crayons

Grades: 3-5
Topic: Agriculture
Time: 1 hour
Activity Steps
Follow these steps to create your farm.

1. First things first, choose between growing summer or winter plants. Because while we would sure love to plant tomatoes with carrots, certain plants grow better in warm temperatures, and some prefer colder weather. Use the charts from our guide to learn about summer and winter plants, their benefits, and what they need to grow best. You can also hear Farmer Tom discuss winter and summer planting [here](#).

2. Use your ruler to map out your space before you begin planning. Map it out like a grid where every square equals 1 foot. Download the activity guide to view examples of how to draw your grid.

3. Lay out all of your garden beds, being sure to allow for walking pathways in between.

**DID YOU KNOW?**
Plants need four things to grow: sun, air, water, and soil. Be sure to include these elements when you draw your farm.

4. Next, you can start to “plant your garden.” Be sure to include as many vegetables as possible and don’t forget to include animals for nutrient recycling on your farm. You could even plan on putting in a worm or compost bin!

**DID YOU KNOW?**
Farm animals like chickens and cows help farmers to create a cycle of nutrients: The animals eat food from the farm, which causes them to produce manure (the more polite word for poop!). The manure is broken down and then used to feed the plants more nutrients. Learn more about the cycle of nutrients [here](#).

5. Now, let’s get to (virtual) planting! Using the charts in the activity guide, make sure to give your plants the correct amount of space and all the other things they need to grow. Make sure to use every plant wisely!

**DID YOU KNOW?**
Bugs could be your enemy or your friend. Some bugs eat your crops, but bugs like bees and butterflies are examples of pollinators! These helpful bugs spread pollen across the farm, which helps to produce seeds. Flowers like marigolds attract pollinators and keep bad critters away. Learn more about the importance of pollinators [here](#).
Test Your Knowledge

See how much you’ve learned about planting vegetables!

QUESTION 1
What do plants need to grow?
- Water, air, sun, and soil
- Plant food
- Water and sun
- Soil

QUESTION 2
Which is a winter vegetable?
- Basil
- Tomatoes
- Sunflower
- Carrots

QUESTION 3
Which plant attracts pollinators?
- Squash
- Peas
- Lettuce
- Marigolds

QUESTION 4
How do farm animals help plants grow?
- By laying eggs
- By producing manure
- By harvesting the plants

Reflection Questions

• Why are seasons an important part of farming?
• How do animals and bugs help to make a farm better? How can some bugs harm your crops?
• What do plants need to survive?
Investigate & Explore

Take what you’ve learned to the next level to learn more and explore the possibilities.

Agriculture started thousands of years ago when our ancestors used the hunting-and-gathering method to produce food. Over time, humans started to settle into small communities and that’s when farming as we know it was born! This global transition is known in history as the Neolithic Revolution or the Agricultural Revolution.

As the global population continues to grow and technology advances, farming has changed to meet the needs of our society.

Machines that help to manage farms have made it easier for farmers to mass-produce fruits and vegetables that are sold in grocery stores across the world.

Farming has come a long way and continues to transform! It’s impossible to predict the future, but population growth, technology, and the environment will play an important role in the future of farming.