

# Keep It Growing Trainer Outline

## **Section Theme**

This section provides an overview of the basic methods of watering, weeding, and dealing with pests in the garden.

## **Logistics**

*Time:* 50 minutes

*Location:* Garden

*Workshop Goals addressed:*

- Become comfortable with basic gardening skills
- Believe that creating and sustaining an educational garden program is an attainable goal

*Handouts:*

- Watering
- Weed Management
- Critters and Critter Control

*Gardens for Learning pages:*

- Maintaining Your School Garden, 69 – 77

*Web Resources:*

- Check for web resources on Keep it Growing at [www.csgn.org/csystg](http://www.csgn.org/csystg)

*Materials:*

- **Watering demonstration materials**
  - Watering can
  - Fan sprayer
  - Oscillator
  - Timers
  - Pressure regulator
  - Filter
  - Demonstration drip line setup
  - Irrigation kits: Different drip line materials and various attachments for small groups to practice putting a system together
- **Weed management demonstration materials**
  - Trowels
  - Hoes and other weeding tools
- **Pest management demonstration materials**
  - Sample row cover and/or netting
  - Slug or snail traps
  - Power spray hose attachment
  - Gopher wire or basket and gopher trap

## **Watering**

(Discussion and small group activity; 30 minutes)

Handout: Watering

1. Review Watering handout. Discuss watering basics from the handout. Be sure to do the following:
  - Demonstrate the soil ball squeeze test as a means of assessing soil moisture.
  - Demonstrate watering with a can or fan to show that a wet surface doesn't mean a well-watered area. Do this by scratching an inch under a lightly watered area—it should be dry. Point out that it is important not to flood the area that you're watering, but rather that allowing time for water to soak in is best. This often requires several passes with a can or fan.
2. Define and briefly discuss appropriate uses of the three main types of irrigation: sprinkler, furrow/flood and drip.
3. Demonstrate the various types of drip irrigation either in the garden or using a sample drip line set up. Point out the required components of a drip system: water source, filter, pressure regulator, drip line. Show how parts are put together. Distribute the sample irrigation kits to teams and let teams try "constructing" a system.
4. Make it clear that there are many brands of drip systems available. Point out that the sizes of system components such as pipe diameter and threading types, can vary slightly. Using multiple brands is not recommended, as components may not fit each other.

## **Weed Management**

(Discussion and small group activity; 10 minutes)

Handout: Weed Management

1. Discuss major points in "Weed Management" handout. Demonstrate a range of weed elimination methods and tools. Remind the group that considerations such as weed size and maturity, soil conditions, and who the weeders are will impact choice of weeding method and tools.
2. Discuss topics related to starting out a garden site and assessing what weeds exist and how to remove them before starting a garden site.
3. Have participants get to know weeds and the kind of information it's good to know about them. Have everyone find a weed in the demonstration garden setting. It's great if they can identify it or know something about it, but not necessary. What can they tell about it simply by looking at it that might provide clues about to how to best manage it?

4. Use the following questions to guide discussion. You can have these questions printed for participants to work with on their own or you can keep this a group discussion.
  - Where are its seeds, and what do they look like?
  - Do you know, or can you guess, if it propagates from seeds?
  - What types of spaces does it seem to “like” in the garden?
  - Are there many individuals of this weed growing?
  - Does it appear to be warm season or cool season?
  - Do you know, or can you guess, if it is an annual or a perennial?
  - From what you can tell about it right now, what methods and/or tools would you suggest or try in order to control it?

### ***Critters and Critter Control***

(Discussion and demonstration; 10 minutes)

Handout: Critters and Critter Control

1. Discuss the key points in Critters and Critter Control handout. Review the following steps for ecologically sound pest control.
  - Start with healthy soil.
  - Monitor for pests.
  - Discourage excess moisture on foliage.
  - Choose disease- and pest-resistant plant varieties.
  - Choose appropriate crops for your region and season.
  - Maintain a “clean” garden.
  - Encourage beneficial organisms.
  - Practice crop rotations.
  - Use non-chemical pest control and/or install barriers to pests.
  - Learn about trapping vertebrate pests.
  - Show physical barriers such as floating row cover or netting.
2. Show examples of pest control methods that are being used in the garden.
3. Use demonstration garden examples to introduce participants to critters and critter control methods.