Multi Age

MONTHLY PROGRAM OUTLINE

MONTHLY PROGRAM B

From Farm to Plate.

How do I use this outline?

1. **Choose the activities and experiences you would like to add** to your weekly, fortnightly or monthly plan from the educator monthly program outline.

2. Add your choices to the Empowered Ed **blank program template** (print or save to your computer) Make sure to fill in the dates at top of the program to indicate if your plan is covering weekly, fortnightly or monthly.

3. Match the numbered activities on your plan to the **corresponding activity guides (Playful Learning Page).**

4. Fill out the separate **organisation planner** each week if you wish to help you keep up to date with all documentation requirements including reflection, prep, observations and forward planning (optional).

Activity Guides to choose from:

A102 – Grass Tray

A29 – Rain Gauge Fun

Simple Suggestions to add:

What do I eat?

Set up some farm animal figures or animal photo cards. Add some common farm animal foods like grass, hay, grain etc and work together to match the foods to each animal. Watch this quick video as they feed their farm animals in the Blue Mountains.

Drought Investigation – Dry & Wet Experiment

Set up a table with some books, photos or pictures of farms in drought and show them the dry soil and lack of feed and grass due to no rainfall. Using two trays – both filled with soil you can investigate the difference when you add water to one but not the other. Explore the concept of wet and dry and talk together about how to conserve water in your own environment.

Grow Bags

This activity is about helping children to see that we can all be mini farmers at home even if we don't have lots of land. You will need a bag of potting mix with a little added compost and a few quick growing vegetable seedlings – peas, beans and lettuce are quick growers. Poke some drainage holes into the bag on one side using a knife then turn the bag over and cut some x's into the top – this will be where you plant the seedlings so spread them out a little. Show the children how to carefully remove seedlings from their pot and poke into the soil where you have cut the x's. Move the bag to a spot the children can easily access to water and look after. You can keep adding bags depending on how many seedlings you want to plant. Can you use your harvested produce in a recipe? Watch this video first if you need a little help to visualise the process.

Activity Guides to choose from:

A 3 – Muddy Truck Sensory Play

A 17 – Bricklaying Block Play

Simple Suggestions to add:

Farmyard Small World

Give each child a paper plate or perhaps a large lid or small box from the recycle bin. Add to the table a collection of different textures and materials like dirt, straw, grass grains, animals, figures, cars. Encourage the children to create their own farmyard small world on a plate. Make sure to take photos of their creation and write down how they describe their small world (for those talking of course!)

Farmer's Market Fun

Use some boxes, shelves or baskets to create a 'Farmer's Market'. Add some real and play food items and use the props as a prompt to talk about where food comes from before we buy it and if anyone has been to a market stall. Let the children decide how the play in this space will evolve - you could add some green shopping bags, a set of weighing scales, cash register and money to extend on the play.

Farm Animal Story Stones

Print off or cut out some pictures of farm animals and using a mix of watered down PVA glue (or modge podge) stick them to some smooth stones or landscaping pebbles (find them cheaply in the $2 shop!). Add another layer of the PVA mix over the top with a brush then leave to dry in the sun. introduce a basket of your farmyard story stones to block corner for the children to use as they like.

Activity Guides to choose from:

A6 – Hoop Painting

A88 – How do animals move?

Simple Suggestions to add:

Do the Chicken Dance

Get silly with movement and music when you do the chicken dance.

How do other animals on the farm move – call out an animal for everyone to try! What sounds do they make? Can you go fast then slow?

Boxes & Bales Play

If you have the space outdoors add some cardboard boxes and 1 or 2 bales of hay (usually $7-$11 at feed supply stores) to the play area for the children to build with, stack, knock down and arrange how they want to. If you don't have a lot of space, try using some smaller size boxes and handfuls of sugar cane mulch tied together in bundles with a rubber band. Stand back and let the children decide how to use them! You might like to also add some farm animals.

Yoga Fun

Go on a cosmic and active Bear Hunt with this simple yoga routine. Younger children will probably only last 5-10 minutes but still have lots of fun while working their coordination and balance skills!

Stretch it!

Lay a piece of lycra or other stretchy material down on the ground, set up some children on each side with their feet underneath the material and ask them to grab hold of the material edge. Now they need to pull the material toward them. Tell them not to let go! When they have the hang of it try singing Row Row Row your Boat as they go back and forth!

Activity Guides to choose from:

A8 – Pebble Sculptures – what else could you create a sculpture with if you didn't use pebbles?

A90– Sand Foam Egg Cartons – Add farm animals to the play and toothbrushes with a bucket of water for the children to scrub the animals clean!

Simple Suggestions to add:

Straw Brushes

Bunch a handful of straw or mulch together then secure at one end with a rubber band. Fan out the straw bristles at the other end (a bit like a mini straw broom). Encourage the children to dip their 'brushes' into paint or coloured water and get creative on walls, fences or paper.

Corn Cob Rollers

Introduce 3-4 corn cobs to the children with husks still on. Talk about how they grow and what other foods we might make with corn. Show the children how to peel the husk away from the cob and let them try for themselves. When the children are finished investigating the cobs roll in a paint tray then onto some cardboard or paper and have fun making prints. If you don't want to use food with paint you can get a similar effect/print by wrapping a cardboard tube in a little bubble wrap and rolling in paint, then over the paper.

Muddy Farmyard Footprints

Add a little brown paint or ideally some dirt and water mixed to mud onto a couple of trays. Tape some white paper or cardboard to a fence or wall (low enough for the smaller children to reach) then place a selection of farm animals, small tractors and trucks near the trays. Encourage the children to choose an object, press into the paint/mud then walk them or drive them over the paper to create tracks and patterns.

FINE MOTOR / MANIPULATIVE PLAY

Activity Guides to choose from:

A83 – Colour Squirt Tray – try using some farm animals and little people or trucks as the targets instead of pebbles to extend the theme play.

A71 – Sticky Toys – try using some seeds from the playdough play and some sugar cane, hay or grass depending on what you can easily access.

Simple Suggestions to add:

Seeds & Grain Dough

Add some of the grains, seeds or dry beans from your sensory tub into a shallow dish and place on the playdough table with some natural coloured dough. You could also add some greenery and farm animals for children to press into the dough or create their own mini small worlds.

As they play and explore you could open a conversation about how we cook the beans/seeds/grain, what foods they can be added to and how they are grown.

Egg Shell Snap

Collect some empty egg shells, wash thoroughly and leave to dry for a day in the sun (try not to break them up too much). Add the shells to a shallow sensory tub or tray and encourage the children to pick up a shell and snap or break using their fingers to form smaller pieces. Use the pieces in a collage. You can also soak them in a little edicol water colour to make the shells colourful. Obviously, this activity is only suitable if you don't have a child with an egg allergy.

Old McDonald Hide & Seek Tub

Add some dry grains and beans to a large tub (I like the underbed storage container with lid on rollers, so you can keep reusing). Push down a few farm animals, tractors and farmer figures (little people work well for toddlers) into the sensory tub, so they are covered. Encourage children to use small tongs to find the animals and pick them up using only their tongs. Depending on ages and developmental stages you may need to begin with hands then work up to using the tongs. You could also try singing Old McDonald and name each animal as it is found. What sound does it make?

Activity Guides to choose from:

A39 – Let's Cook – Pumpkin Soup

A122 – Old McDonalds Farm

Simple Suggestions to add:

Book Baskets – Farm themed *(see book list at end of outline for suggestions – ask at your local library or perhaps go on an excursion with the children to choose some to borrow).*

Place a few baskets of farm, drought, flood, animal and food themed books indoors and outdoors for children to explore. Try an include a range of different types of books to appeal to different ages – board books, non-fiction with real pictures to explore, pop up books, fiction.

Storytime Together

Watch and listen to a story about carrots and ladybirds working together.

Read or watch the story What the ladybird heard.

Join in Playschool Storytime as they read the very funny Pug the winner!

Music Time

Sing some favourite farmyard songs including:

Old McDonald, Dingle Dangle Scarecrow, I went to visit a farm one day, Farmer in the Dell, 5 Little pigs, This little pig went to market,.

Print off these puppets, tape to some craft sticks and sing 5 Little Ducks together.

What grows on a tree or shrub?

Cut out some pictures of various fruits, nuts and vegetables. As a group make a tree out of cardboard boxes and rolls or just paint one on some butcher's paper. Ask the children to help you choose the pictures of the food they think grows on a tree. Let them place their choices on the tree then talk about the ones they got right and where and how the other foods grow if not on the tree.

Activity Guides to choose from:

A124 – Sunglasses and Eyes

A78 – Hats, Hats, Hats – Include hats with wide brims that we need to use when working or playing outside in the sun. What type of hat and other clothing might a farmer wear?

Simple Suggestions to add:

Egg Hunt *(Not suitable for those children with egg allergies)*

Boil some eggs and hide them around the yard or inside play area. Give each child an egg carton or basket and encourage them to go egg collecting. Ensure there are enough eggs for each child to get at least one. When all the eggs have been collected show the children how to crack the egg on the table then peel away the shells themselves. Eat the boiled eggs for lunch or morning tea!

For a little extra fun watch this video of a man collecting a whole lot of eggs very quickly on an organic egg farm! Make a note of the chickens being able to roam freely on the grass and out in the sun.

My Favourite Foods

Collect some old magazines, posters or junk mail catalogues (the supermarket ones work well for this activity). Explain to the children they are going to find pictures of their favourite foods. Depending on ages they can cut the pictures out themselves (don't go and tidy them up – leave the cutting as is) or you can cut the pictures for them. Provide glue and paper for them to add their pictures to a collage.

Apple Peel or Spiral

This simple activity encourages autonomy and pride in completing a task. If you have an apple corer and spiralizer, set it up on the bench with some small apples. Encourage the children to choose their own apple and after you have put it on the spike firmly show the children how to turn the handle to peel their apple. Alternatively, you can show the children how to use a peeler (with close supervision).

Keeping it Simple:

- What sort of farms are there? (e.g. dairy, cattle, fish, egg, sugarcane etc?) What makes them different?
- What types of farms are in our local area or what would be the closest farm?
- Is that Wet or Dry?
- What happens after a seed is planted? How does the food get to our shops and then onto our plate?
- What is the lifecycle of a chicken? How do we get eggs?
- Talk about the differences between smooth and rough textures.
- Encourage creative thinking, problem solving and gross motor control by allowing children to use the boxes, bales and market/ farm props any way they want to. There is no need for them to stay with a farm theme!
- Observe pincer grip development and fine motor control.
- What do farm animals and crops need to grow? How can we help farmers?
- Extend on vocabulary by naming familiar objects using the books and farm/market props.
- Explore different ways to grow, harvest, buy and use food.
- Investigate simple scientific and sustainability concepts when playing with the grow bags and talking about drought or flood.

What other learning did you explore?

EVERYDAY ESSENTIALS FOCUS

This page includes some optional suggestions for setting up your environment to complement this monthly program outline. *Modify* according to your space and children.... or just use your own ideas! It is completely up to you whether to use these suggestions or not.

Everyday essentials can include the *blocks/puzzles/dressups/cars/dolls/loose parts and other resources that you tend to have available each day*. Decide what you want to use this month then put everything else away as part of a toy rotation system.

Materials & Interest Areas:

Farm/Produce/Animal Interest Area – Hands On

On a low table or shelf set up a few interesting materials around the topics of farming, produce, markets and animals. Encourage children to bring in their own treasures, photos or books as well. Don't put to much on the table at once – just put a couple of things out that they can pick up, touch, use in play and investigate. You can change it each week to add different items as you take away others. Hay, feathers, bird nests, grasses, seeds, grains, wheat, sugar cane, recipe books, a PowerPoint playing on tablet or other device or some pictures cut out from magazines and laminated all make for a simple but interesting area. The idea is you want it to be hands on – not just pretty to look at!

Dramatic Play Areas – Indoors & Outdoors

Add farm and market themed props and dressups – change around each fortnight. Set up a market stall, a stable, a chicken coop, dairy farm -try and include the 'end product like milk cartons, bread and eggs.

On The Shelves

Add a few baskets or tubs with some simple materials suitable as self-select items for the children to use and add to their everyday play. Some ideas for this month:

- A tub of farm animals, blocks and sticks to make farmyards and fences with.
- Animal and food themed puzzles, felt board with farm animals, Old McDonald and/or fruit and vegetables.
- Trucks, tractors, farmhouses, little people and natural materials.
- Some baskets and egg cartons for filling and emptying.

Books to find:

Try asking at your local library to see if they have any of these titles available. *Keep in mind these books are just suggestions and not necessary to complete your program!*

The Little Red Hen

What the ladybird heard.

The Bee book

Look and find on the farm.

DK Reads – A year on the farm

Busy Farm

Pigs: Beginners

What the ladybird heard next.

Farmer Duck

The cow who clucked.

Little Blue Truck

This Month's Activity Materials

Items to add to your regular craft & play resources include:

Cardboard boxes	Hats with brims	Pictures of animals
Shaving foam	Farm Animals	Tongs/Scoops
Playdough	Corn Cobs with husks	Seeds, grains, beans
Hay bales or sugar cane mulch	Lycra material	Egg shells
Large Bag of Soil	Vegetable seedlings	Contact paper
Egg cartons	Smooth stones	Tubs & Trays