

# Planting an Orchard and Strawberries



## Time of Year

Orchard - October to February,  
Strawberries - September.

## Aim

To plant a fruit orchard.

## Cross Curriculum Relevance

SESE: Living Things, Environmental Awareness and Care.  
Languages: New words, spelling, literacy.  
Art: Myself & the wider world, active citizenship.  
Informal Curriculum: Green Schools Programme, Discover Primary Science.

# 1

## Planting an orchard

- Decide where the orchard is to be planted and source fruit trees.
- Mark spots roughly 2 - 6m apart (depending on the height the trees will grow to eventually) using the flour or bamboo sticks.
- Dig holes approximately 200mm deeper and wider than the root ball of the tree.
- Add a trowel full of compost or manure and mix with soil.
- Remove tree carefully from pot and place into hole, make sure that it is at the same level as it was in the pot i.e not planted deeper.
- Fill soil back in around roots and press down with feet.
- Mulch the trees individually with 1m<sup>2</sup> of black plastic or cardboard.
- Weigh down the plastic/cardboard with bark mulch/grass clippings/straw.

# 2

## Types of fruit tree

**Dessert Apples** Greasy pippen, Reid's seedling, Peach melba, Keegan's crab, Kerry pippen, Brown crofton, Yellow pitcher, Ross Nonpareil, Cavan sugarcane.

**Cooking Apples** Mother of household, White moss, Cavan strawberry (all available from Irish Seedsavers Association).

**Other fruit trees** Pear, Plum, Cherry, Crab Apple, Medlar, Quince.

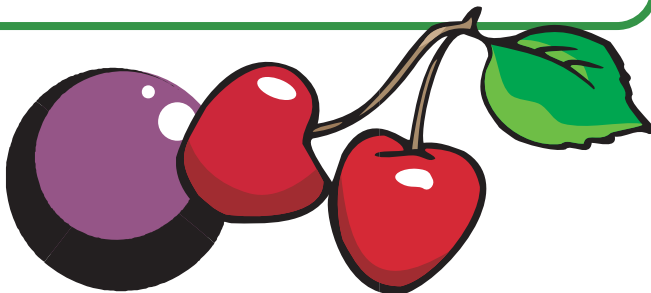
**If you have lots of space** walnut, sweet chestnut.

**Note:** bare-rooted trees can only be planted in the November to later February. Potted tree can be planted all year round.

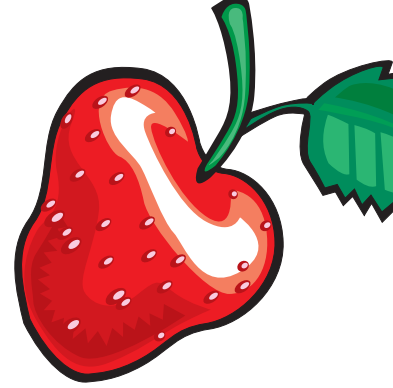
# 3

## Resources needed

Fruit trees, strawberry plants or runners, manure/peat free compost, black plastic/cardboard, shovels, trowels, spades, forks, gloves, bark mulch/straw/grass clippings, secateurs, flour/ bamboo sticks, stakes/ties.



# Planting an Orchard and Strawberries contd.



## Health & Safety

Always use tools safely. Wash hands after garden session.  
Please refer to the worksheet on Health & Safety for detailed information.

# 4

## Planting Strawberries

- Put soil/compost in small pots and water – add more compost if necessary.
- Use a large U shaped staple or stone to hold the runner tip onto the top of the soil.
- The runner will then send out roots into the soil.
- Once established, cut off new plant from the parent plant.

## Resources needed

Strawberry plants, peat free or home-made compost, hand trowels, gloves, signs. If making a strawberry tower you will also need 5 litre, 3 litre and 2 litre pots.

- Strawberry plants can be purchased from a garden centre.
- They can be planted straight in the ground (around fruit trees for example), in a raised bed or in pots.
- See 'Moving Plants from Classroom to Outdoor Beds' sheet for details on planting.
- Try a strawberry tower – a stack of 3 pots with strawberries planted around the edge of each pot.
- If you already have strawberries, you can propagate more plants from the runners (the long tendrils sent out by the plant in September, after fruiting).
- Alpine or wild strawberries can be grown also – they are smaller and make a good ground covering crop.

# 5

## Where to go for more information?

**The internet/ the library**

**Irish Seedsavers Association** [www.issa.ie](http://www.issa.ie)

**Apple & Pear Catalogue**

– Irish Seed Savers Association

– very good manual on planting fruit trees  
**Future Forests** [www.futureforests.net](http://www.futureforests.net)

# 6

## Ideas for Research projects

**SESE** – Research apple facts – how many varieties are there? Why do they float in water?  
How are strawberries good for us?

**Local Heritage** – when was the oldest apple found in Ireland? How long have we been eating apples? Is there a local variety in your area?

**Art/Communications** – make a display for the garden or green schools notice board of the orchard and fruits area.

Research Words: **BARE-ROOTED**

