Radishes to Riches
Suggested Activities

4-H Leader’s Guide 142-L-5

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Resources

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You have selected an exciting program to introduce to your group! Radishes to Riches is a good project for young people who would like to raise and market a fruit, vegetable, or flower crop, or who have already completed a project in horticulture and would like a new challenge.

The project is unique because it combines disciplines that influence both the grower and the marketer, such as entomology, plant pathology, marketing, consumer economics, and business and money management. Because this makes the project rather complex, both the members of your group and their families should give the project careful preparation and thought.

Radishes to Riches is a very flexible project and has great potential. Members can raise a small amount of produce one year and a larger amount the next. They can add pizzazz to their displays as they gain confidence and learn what customers like. Members can sell produce on their own or together as a group.

This guide will provide you with many ideas for introducing Radishes to Riches to your group. It is divided into four sections, which complement the sections of the member’s guide that deal with the four Ps—Product, Place, Price, and Promotion. Each section includes appropriate activities for that topic. Many activities are brief, so you can include several in a meeting. Additional gardening activities are included at the end of this guide.

Every successful business has a marketing plan designed to improve its sales. The product must be a good one to get repeat buyers. Businesses try to determine who will want their product, where they will buy it, and how much they will pay for it. Once they determine the place to market their product, they look at what their competition is doing. By examining other prices in the area and determining what they need to cover their costs, they determine a price. The promotion of their product involves finding the best method of informing buyers about their product and persuading them to buy it.
Product: What Will I Grow?
(page 2, member’s guide)

Activity 1: Conduct a Consumer Taste Test

1. Select two or more identical fruit or vegetable products (peanut butter, catsup, jelly or jam preserves, or potato chips). One should be a name brand that is highly advertised and the other should be a brand that is not as popular or well known. If you have time, it is fun to run taste tests for several different products. This can lead to some interesting discussions.

2. Put the products to be compared in identical containers—one marked “Product A” and the other “Product B.” Record what brand you put in each container.

3. Provide sampling utensils, such as small cups, toothpicks, or spoons—whatever is appropriate for tasting the product.

4. Perform the taste test. Have the group members taste both products and tell you which they think is better, A or B. Record the results.

5. Repeat the taste test, but this time put out the products in their original containers. Important: Do not let the members know they are tasting the same products. (It is a good idea to use new containers so they don’t catch on!) Record the results.

6. Discuss the results. Here are some possible questions you can ask the group and points you can raise to lead a discussion:

   - Are you surprised by the results? Sometimes the less well-known brand wins in taste tests. This can be due to a number of reasons, such as the product contains more sugar, so it tastes sweeter.
   - Did the results of the two taste tests differ? Sometimes people tend to favor the more expensive or well-known product when they know what it is.
   - Why do you think people tend to buy the more expensive or well-known product?
   
   Possible responses: People know more about it. They have seen it advertised. They recognize it. They don’t know about other products. They don’t trust the other brands.

   - What does this exercise tell you about marketing produce?
   
   People are influenced by appearances, and they tend to buy products they have heard of from sources they trust. These results reinforce the importance of having attractive produce and a good reputation. Be good to people, and they are likely to come back!

7. As an additional activity, perform taste tests using several varieties of the same fruit or vegetable. For example, purchase three varieties of apple or squash. Talk about the differences in varieties, using words such as sweet, sour, mealy, and crisp. Practice writing comments about the varieties to use in advertisements. The availability of some crops will be seasonal.

Activity 2: Develop a List of Products

1. Have your group use the resources listed in their member’s guides to make a list of three vegetables, fruits, or flowers that they would like to sell.

2. Ask the members of your group the following questions: How long do you want to market your product? (Many will be limited to their summer vacation.) How long is the growing season of the product? What soil and light conditions does each crop need? What is the proper spacing? What are the days to harvest? What are the approximate yields? Will the three crops overlap, or will they be sold in three distinct seasons?

3. Discuss with your group their plans. Although this activity is done for fun, stress to them that it is also a very important step of their project plan. Ask what they learned from the exercise. They will probably be surprised by the number of factors to consider in selecting crops to grow.
Activity 3: Conduct a Survey

1. Have your group members survey at least three neighbors, asking the following questions:
   - Do you have a garden? What do you grow? What don’t you grow?
   - Would you purchase produce or flowers if they were sold in this neighborhood? If they were sold door-to-door?
   - List the locally grown vegetables, fruits, flowers, or herbs that you buy on a regular basis.
   - How often do you purchase unusual vegetables, such as Belgian endive or Chinese cabbage?
   - Which locally grown vegetables, fruits, flowers, or herbs do you not presently buy, but would if they were available?
   - Do you ever pick your own produce, or do you prefer to purchase products that have already been picked and cleaned?
   - Where do you purchase your produce? How far do you drive?
   - Do you prefer to purchase produce at a farmers’ market, roadside stand, or grocery store?
   - How often do you buy produce? How many times per week? Which day(s) of the week?
   - Would you buy locally grown produce if it were available?

2. Discuss the results of the survey at the next meeting. The questions will reveal information about both Product and Place. Ask your group: What answers were most surprising? How did the answers change your ideas about your marketing plan? Where do you think you will market your products now?

Activity 4: Visit Several Markets

1. Organize a group trip to a roadside stand, a farmers’ market, and a specialty store, for example, to see how fruits, vegetables, and flowers are displayed and sold. Visit more than one place so that the members of your group can make comparisons. Make an appointment with the produce manager of a grocery store as well. Encourage the members to ask the marketers and the manager questions, such as: How did you choose this method of marketing? Which products are especially popular? Would you consider another marketing option? Approximately how many horticultural products do you sell over a season? How do you advertise? This activity will be helpful for Activity 7 in the section on price.

2. Discuss the trip with your group by asking the following questions: How did marketing techniques vary among the places you visited? Did one place stand out as being especially interesting or attractive? How does advertising vary? What do the marketers do to get repeat buyers? (Answers might include comments about the marketer’s attitude or an innovative technique, such as distributing cooking recipes.)

Activity 5: Decide Where and How to Market

1. Have the members of your group each choose a place to market their crop. Your group may decide to share a booth at a farmers’ market. If members decide to market individually, have them discuss how they can help rather than compete with each other. For example, four members living on the same street will have trouble if they all sell cucumbers at the same time. Work out these details before the growing season!

2. Have the members each decide how their crop will be sold, whether as pick-your-own or already picked. If members are going to pick their crops, ask where they will sell their produce. Discuss the potential challenges of each method and how to overcome them. For example, a frequent difficulty with a pick-your-own strawberry crop is that customers trample the plants. To avoid this, a member could post an attractive sign that says, “Please stay on the straw between rows!” A challenge in roadside marketing is getting all the crops picked in time for market while keeping them fresh. To overcome this, members must be very organized and learn through experience to manage time.
Activity 6: Think of Pricing Strategies

1. Conduct a brainstorming session for pricing strategies. How many different strategies can your group come up with? Provide supermarket fliers to help spark ideas. Examples of pricing strategies include selling three items for $1.00; offering two items for the price of one; and selling a baker's dozen—13 items for the price of one dozen.

2. Discuss ways to encourage repeat sales during this session, such as offering a coupon for a free item or for a reduced cost on a future purchase.

Activity 7: Develop Your Own Prices

1. During a field trip to various markets (see Activity 4) encourage members to look at prices and compare them.

2. Ask them to think about the following questions: How do prices for the same products compare between markets? Are the differences great? If so, do they seem justified? For example, is the produce obviously of superior quality at the market with higher prices? What factors go into determining price? What pricing strategies do the markets employ? Do pricing strategies at roadside markets differ from those at supermarkets?

3. Have your group members develop prices for the produce they plan to sell.
Promotion: How Can I Interest People in My Produce?

(Activity 8: Think about Advertising)

1. Have your group members ask several newspapers and radio stations for their advertising rates and for information on circulation.

2. Have your group look for newspaper advertisements for produce and flowers and clip them. When several have been accumulated, have someone from an advertising agency visit your group and critique the ads.

(Activity 9: Learn How to Promote a Product)

1. Remind your group that many advertising alternatives exist. Ask them to discuss some of the places they have seen or heard ads for produce or flowers. (Examples may include the radio, a local newspaper, horticulture magazines, billboards, signs in a store, or direct mail fliers.)

2. Assemble the following materials:
   - magazines that have advertisements for farming supplies or produce
   - newspapers that have advertisements for products and services (such as computer consulting or house cleaning)
   - magazines and newspapers that have discount coupons (e.g., $1.00 off) and premiums (buy one, get one free)
   - direct mail promotional fliers
   - a copy of the activity work sheet (on page 6) for each participant and something to write with
   - scissors

3. Hand out a copy of the activity work sheet to each group member. Have them work together using the supplies provided to complete the activity.

4. Ask them to cut or tear out the advertisements they need to complete their work sheets. If this is not possible, ask them to write the title or product of the advertisement on their work sheets.

5. After they have completed as many activities as possible, bring your group together. Start with the first activity on the work sheet and have them share what they found. You may need to redirect them if they chose an advertisement that fits in a different category.

6. Encourage a discussion by asking the following questions:
   - Which advertisements are most eye-catching? Why?
   - Why do you like the radio and television commercials that you listed?
   - What is appealing about coupons and premiums? How could you use these in your marketing approach?
   - How many words did the best advertisements contain? Every word counts in a well-written ad, and the best ones are generally brief.

(Activity 10: Choose a Promotion Method)

1. Before meeting as a group, get prices in your area for newspaper display ads, classified ads, radio advertisements, and any other promotional methods you can think of, such as ads in the local weekly PennySaver.

2. Have each member choose a catchy, exciting slogan for their individual or group sales operation. This can be a great deal of fun and will no doubt generate some laughs!

3. Have each member choose a method of advertising, whether a sign along the road or a radio ad. Ask them how much they think their method will cost, then reveal your findings to them. Are they surprised by the cost? Are the costs too high for their budgets? Discuss ways that the members could share the costs of advertising as a group. Develop a sample advertisement, such as the one in the member’s guide. Remember to keep it simple.

4. Have your group create some attractive signs to use in their marketing projects. Some ideas include individual signs for each crop grown, signs showing prices, and a large sign to attract customers. The 4-H manual—Making Posters—is a good reference (see "Resources").
Work Sheet

Activity 9: Learn How to Promote a Product

Complete the following activities. Put a check in the box on the left of each when done.

☐ Find a magazine advertisement that relates to the crop(s) you are interested in raising.

☐ Find a newspaper advertisement that offers a service, such as cleaning chimneys or computer consulting.

☐ Find someone who likes the same television commercial you do. Write the name of the product and briefly describe the commercial.

☐ Find a discount coupon.

☐ Name a direct mail company or catalog from which you can buy products directly.

☐ Find someone who likes the same radio commercial you do. Write the name of the product and briefly describe the commercial.

☐ Find a premium offer (for example: buy one, get one free, or buy at a discount price).

☐ Design a point-of-purchase display for a fruit or vegetable you will be selling. This is an attractive display or sign that accompanies the produce where it is sold. Often, this type of display boasts the nutritional value, the few calories, or other healthful benefits of the product.
Additional Activities

Use the following gardening activities to supplement the Radishes to Riches project.

- Have your group prepare a public presentation related to gardening (for example, How to Plan a Garden, How to Test for pH, Growing Dayneutral Strawberries, or Hydroponic Gardening).
- Prepare with your group a food dish using vegetables and fruit that members have grown.
- With your group, create floral displays from flowers that members have grown.
- Have your group make identification notebooks for crops they have grown and exhibit them at a state fair.
- Teach your group the parts of a plant and their functions.
- Have your group make notebooks showing five to ten weeds found in a garden.
- Have your group catch five to ten garden insects, and teach them how to identify them.
- Arrange for your group to tour a commercial greenhouse, nursery, or orchard.
- Compare with your group several varieties of a single crop, and perform a taste test.
- Have each group member make a horticulture notebook of fifteen plants, including seeds, seedlings, and a mature leaf of each plant. They can either press plants or use pictures from nursery, seed, or garden center catalogs. An ambitious youth may even do botanical illustrations.
- Raise vegetable and flower transplants with your group.
- Encourage the members of your group to become involved in the National Junior Horticulture Association.
- Conduct cultural experiments on a crop with your group.
- Discuss with your group what it means to grow plants ecologically.
- Have the members of your group create works of art using overmature produce.
- Have your group members each create a new recipe to share using vegetables or fruit they have grown.
- Introduce your group to a new horticultural method, such as container gardening.
- Encourage your group to exhibit notebooks, collections, experiments, or horticultural methods at county and state fairs.

Have fun gardening!
Resources


Jeavons, John. 1979. *How to Grow More Vegetables than You Ever Thought Possible on Less Land than You Can Imagine*. Berkeley, Calif.: Ten Speed Press. (In addition to being a good overall resource, this is an excellent guide for determining spacing. Check for it at the local library.)


*Making Posters.* (Available from the National 4-H Council, Chevy Chase, MD.)

