

A Season of Thanks and Service Earth Day Club Challenge

Take 3 Pledge: It takes time to create or change a behavior. We ask each 4-H'er to pledge for the next 5 months to challenge themselves for a healthy world. Are you up for the challenge? A few examples:

Have each person write their goal down and discuss how it is going with their challenges, tips, resources... EX: One 4-H'er may learn to make their own reusable bag and teach others or make some for others to hand out. Another may want to share a favorite meatless meal or maybe families cook together over zoom. Maybe there is a 4-H'er selling eggs from their chickens or making honey.

- Say no to plastic straws
- Bring my own bags to the store
- Add a meatless meal
- Eat fruits and vegetables in season
- Buy more local

Land Acknowledgement: Use this map to identify the indigenous areas your club/family inhabits. <https://native-land.ca/>

Plant a Row for the Hungry: Partner with a local food pantry to see what fresh vegetable they may like to have and plant a row in your garden/area to donate. Some food pantries may also be receptive to taking plants to pass along to people, such as herbs and patio tomatoes with more people being home and trying out gardening. Keep track of the following and take pictures.

- Types of Vegetables Grown
- Pounds Donated
- How many families/4-H'ers participated
- Where the donations went.

Tree Identification: Learn about the popular trees in the Northeast and how to identify. Learn about how trees help us and some products we get from trees. Project Learning Tree is a great resource.

- Plant a tree in your yard or community
- Create a nature journal with pictures /leaf rubbings
- Create a display or exhibit for the fair

Bird Identification: How many local birds do you know? Can you identify any by their song/call? Cornell School of Ornithology and Audubon are great places to start learning.

- Conduct a bird count in your yard, park or area
- Watch and record a bird's habits
 - Grooming known as preening
 - Eating
 - Singing/calling
 - Resting/sitting
- Go further and try observing other animals like squirrels

Pollinators: How many other pollinators can you think of? How can you support pollinators in your area?

<https://www.fws.gov/pollinators/>

- Celebrate Pollinator Week
- Plant Flowers for the bees and butterflies
- Learn the life cycle of a butterfly
- Visit an apiary or have a beekeeper speak to the group

Carbon Footprint:

- Visit PBS and learn about the Andriil Project. Try an activity <https://mass.pbslearningmedia.org/collection/antarcticas-climate-secrets/>
- Calculate your carbon footprint <https://4-h.org/parents/4-h-stem-challenge/4h2o/>
- Check out NYSD – Biofuels <https://4-h.org/parents/4-h-stem-challenge/biofuel-blast/>
- Meatless Mondays

Water

- Link to watershed map <https://www.mass.gov/doc/river-basin-map-appendix-b/download>
- Abe Lincoln activity (PDF to be uploaded)
- Edible Aquifer (Healthy adaptation we did with milk and cereal.)- Watch for FUN Friday Post
- Rain barrel/ rain gardens/ mulch – ideas for water conservation

Recycling/Upcycling

- Earth Day Clean up
 - Beautify Massachusetts a nonprofit organization that works on cleaning up litter, mess and planting for pollinators. Here is the link. It is very relative to Earth Day
 - <https://keepmassbeautiful.org/?fbclid=IwAR1m2OYvYycmXdQ9H--s1EyeZo9Wp58lvq4UKWOjCBO8CJzwudxvxHRjZQs>
- Earthcache or hike (Pack out litter)
- Upcycling something and consider entering in the fair
- Start a compost bin (worm composting/vermiculture)

Citizen's Science:

- Fireflies <https://www.massaudubon.org/get-involved/community-science/firefly-watch>
- Nature's Notebook https://www.usanpn.org/natures_notebook
- Bees <https://www.bumblebeewatch.org/>
- Lost Ladybug Project <http://www.lostladybug.org/>
- Birdwatch <https://www.birds.cornell.edu/citizenscience/about-the-projects/>
- NASA Clouds <https://observer.globe.gov/about/citizen-science> (also mosquito and land cover)
- 4-H Million Trees Project <http://www.4hmilliontrees.org/>

Other: Share your own projects/ideas Kim Pond kima@umass.edu