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The Kitchen Garden

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A kitchen garden is all about adventure and great food.

When I was a little kid, I grew up tagging along with my grandfathers and my dad through their gardens. I picked fruit and veggies and bugs, skipping though the planted rows of tall okra and dodging the big, white bush squashes. I'd laugh when my grandmother would admonish me from the kitchen window in Cajun French for eating veggies staight from the garden without having washed them. I'd sit for hours with my mom shelling *field peas [1]* and *tongue of fire beans* [2] (we called them "bean et grané") with their beautiful, mottled pink pods. I learned how to harness the rain with barrels and that sugarcane fiber (bagasse) makes a great mulch. I've bitten into fresh-picked Creole tomatoes as though they were apples, their juices running down to my elbow.

As an adult, I grow many of my own vegetables. It's tough work at times?amending the soil, battling pests, and scaring away critters. Still, the kitchen garden has far more rewards than challenges. There's nothing like seeing a Big Rainbow tomato ripening on a plant that you grew from a tiny seed. Running straight to the garden to pluck salad greens and herbs right before dinner can't be beat, either.

[3]

This coming Sunday, August 22 is World Kitchen Garden Day 2010. If you grow a kitchen garden, take some time to show it to your friends. Better yet, share with them the fruits of your labor, as well as your gardening knowledge. You never know when you'll inspire someone else to eat healthy and work their own little spot of earth.

For more info, see the Kitchen Gardeners International's site: http://kitchengardeners.org/world-kitchen-garden-day [4].

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[1] http://makearoux.blogspot.com/2008/07/southern-field-peas.html
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