

Lesson 2: Discover Dairy in Our Environment

Milk Carton Recycling Activity

Introduction

Dairy farmers protect the environment by recycling water and manure on their farms. We can also recycle materials we use every day in our schools and homes. One way to recycle these items is to use them again in our art projects.

At school most students get their milk in cardboard milk cartons. In this activity, students will recycle a milk carton into a bird feeder or a seed pot. Students will take their recycled craft home to feed birds or to grow a plant.

Materials Needed

- Clean Cardboard Milk Carton (any size), Paint, Markers, Paint Brushes, Hole Punch, and Scissors
- Bird Feeder: String, Sticks or Twigs, and Bird Seed
- Seed Pot: Soil, Seeds, Popsicle Sticks, and Water

Procedure

Students should complete the following steps to create their milk carton recycling craft.

1. Give each student a clean milk cardboard milk carton.
2. For the bird feeder, cut out a rectangle on the top half of the front panel. For the seed pot, cut the top part of the carton away.
3. Decorate the milk carton with paints and markers. If using paint, let the carton dry.
4. For the bird feeder, use the hole punch to put a hole in the top seam of the carton and thread the string through it to make a hanger. Also, make a hole in the front panel under the hole and put the stick or twig through it and push the stick or twig through the back of the carton for stability. For the seed pot, write the name of the plant on a popsicle stick.
5. For the bird feeder, add birdseed. For the seed pot, fill the carton with soil leaving an inch of room at the top and add the plant stick. Then lightly water the soil and put the seeds on the top of the soil pushing them into the ground. Lastly, put a piece of plastic wrap over the seed pot.
6. The bird feeder can be placed in a tree outside the classroom or at home. The seed pot can be put in a warm and sunny location in the classroom or at home.
7. Extension – chart the types of birds eating birdseed or chart the daily growth of the seeds.