

## Arts

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### Spare Times: For Children

By [LAUREL GRAEBER](#)

## GLOBAL FAMILY GARDENING: SUMMER HARVEST FESTIVAL

Many young New Yorkers will soon discover the realm of the yardlong bean, the pungent perilla and the balloon flower. And they won't do it through a book. While these may sound like species from the Hogwarts campus or the Andromeda galaxy, they're growing right in the Bronx. But they do have roots in distant lands: the bean in China and the perilla and flower in Korea. They flourish locally thanks to the [New York Botanical Garden](#), which will celebrate their presence — and that of other plants from around the world — this weekend in a Summer Harvest Festival.

“The global garden space is to learn about plants that you may not recognize but are important to people all over the globe, like Italian heirloom eggplant or dandelion greens or lemon grass,” said Toby Adams, manager of the botanical garden's Ruth Rea Howell Family Garden (above right). The Howell is home to five Global Family Gardens, all tended by community volunteers from different cultures. Children will explore these plots botanically and gastronomically. (All demonstrations are part of “The Edible Garden,” a gardenwide tribute to homegrown food that ends Oct. 17.)

“We'll invite families to make a notebook” with informational inserts, Mr. Adams said. “Each garden gets a page, and it has a prompt with a question or an activity.” Young visitors may be asked to copy the Chinese characters for bitter melon or to help dig out the last of the potatoes in the Ireland Garden.

The volunteers will offer ethnic recipes, some prepared with ingredients they've harvested. Visitors can sample mango salsa incorporating red onions and Dominican cilantro from the Caribbean Garden, and a caponata made with eggplant from the Italy Garden. Adventurous eaters can investigate [the balloon flower](#), so called because the bud's petals are fused in a balloonlike shape. “Koreans actually shred the root and boil and sauté it,” Mr. Adams said.

He added that he hoped the festival would help children understand gardening's variety

and its universality. “It’s a tradition, and we’re inviting people to come and garden with us and be inspired by it,” Mr. Adams said. “There’s not just one way to garden, but a lot of ways.”

(Saturday through Monday, 1:30 to 5:30 p.m., Bronx River Parkway, Exit 7W, and Fordham Road, Bedford Park, 718-817-8700, [nybg.org](http://nybg.org). Free with admission: \$15; \$13 for students and 65+; \$8 for 2 to 12; free to under 2 and members.) **LAUREL**

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### **For Children**

**‘Toys: The Inside Story’** (Friday through Thursday) This toy story doesn’t star Woody, Buzz Lightyear and Mr. Potato Head, but Etch A Sketch, Operation, Hokey Pokey Elmo and other popular playthings and games. This traveling exhibition, developed by the Montshire Museum of Science in Norwich, Vt., shows how the items on display really work, with hands-on segments devoted to pulleys, circuits, gears and other elements of engineering. (Through Sept. 18.) From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., except this Friday, when the museum is open until 8 p.m., the Tisch Building, 212 West 83rd Street, Manhattan , (212) 721-1223, [cmom.org](http://cmom.org); free with admission: \$10; \$7 for 65+; free for under 12 and members; free for all this Friday from 5 to 8 p.m.

**Veggiecation** (Sunday) What do you get when you mix vegetables and education? Veggiecation, a school-lunch program for grades 1 through 3, aims to encourage healthy eating while offering children choices not typically found on cafeteria menus. Lisa Suriano, the program’s founder, will give a cooking demonstration during the Brooklyn street festival Move About Myrtle, in which she will prepare teriyaki snap peas and carrots; pass out coloring pages and crayons with vegetable characters; offer children a ballot box to vote on how much they liked the food; and circulate tip sheets to parents on encouraging a love of vegetables. From 1 to 4 p.m., Myrtle Avenue between Vanderbilt and Clinton Streets, Clinton Hill , [myrtleavenue.org](http://myrtleavenue.org); free.

**‘The Wizard of Oz 4-D Experience’** (Friday through Thursday) The Yellow Brick Road now begins in Times Square, where Madame Tussauds New York is presenting this new attraction. The road, which starts with a wax figure of [Judy Garland](http://www.judygarland.com) as Dorothy, leads into the Poppy Fields and a huge re-creation of the Emerald City. It culminates with a 3-D film incorporating converted footage from the original “Wizard of Oz,” along with effects like powerful winds to mimic the Kansas tornado. (Through November.) From 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., Madame Tussauds New York, 234 West 42nd Street, Manhattan , (800) 246-8872, [nycwax.com](http://nycwax.com); included in all-access passes to the museum: \$35.50; \$32.50 for ages 60+; \$28 for 4 through 12; free for under 4.

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