



Community and Home Gardening
Kid Friendly Fun

Experiential Activities

Grades K-2



Blueberries in a Basket – Paint Stamping!

Materials Needed:

- Blue Paint
- White paper
- Glue
- Corks or fingerling potatoes
- Popsicle sticks (9 for each child)

An adult should cut a small “x” into the bottom of a cork, to make the design of a stem when stamping. If using potatoes, cut an end off of each potato and then make a small “x.” Children can also use their fingers instead of a cork or potato to make the blueberries.

Dip the “stamper” in blue paint, and stamp the paint onto the white paper, arranging the stamps so they make circles to represent blueberries. After the blueberries have dried, glue the Popsicle sticks over the blueberries, in the shape of a basket (see photo).

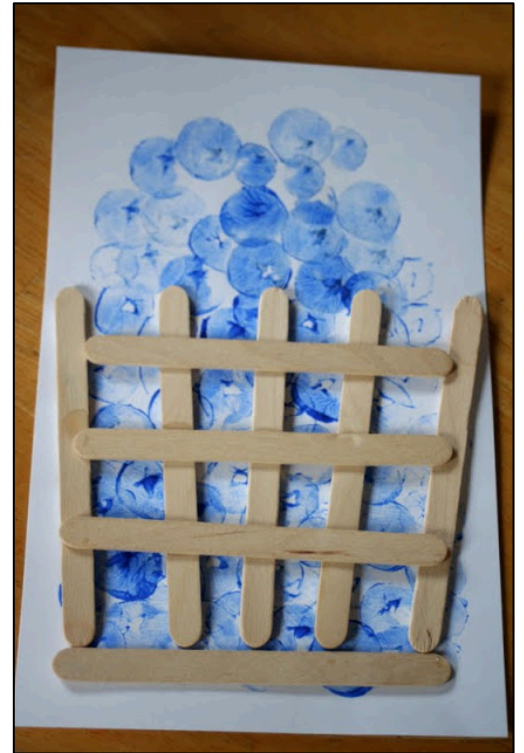


Photo Source: littlepageturners.blogspot.com





Rainy Day Indoor Blueberry Picking Hide-and-Seek!

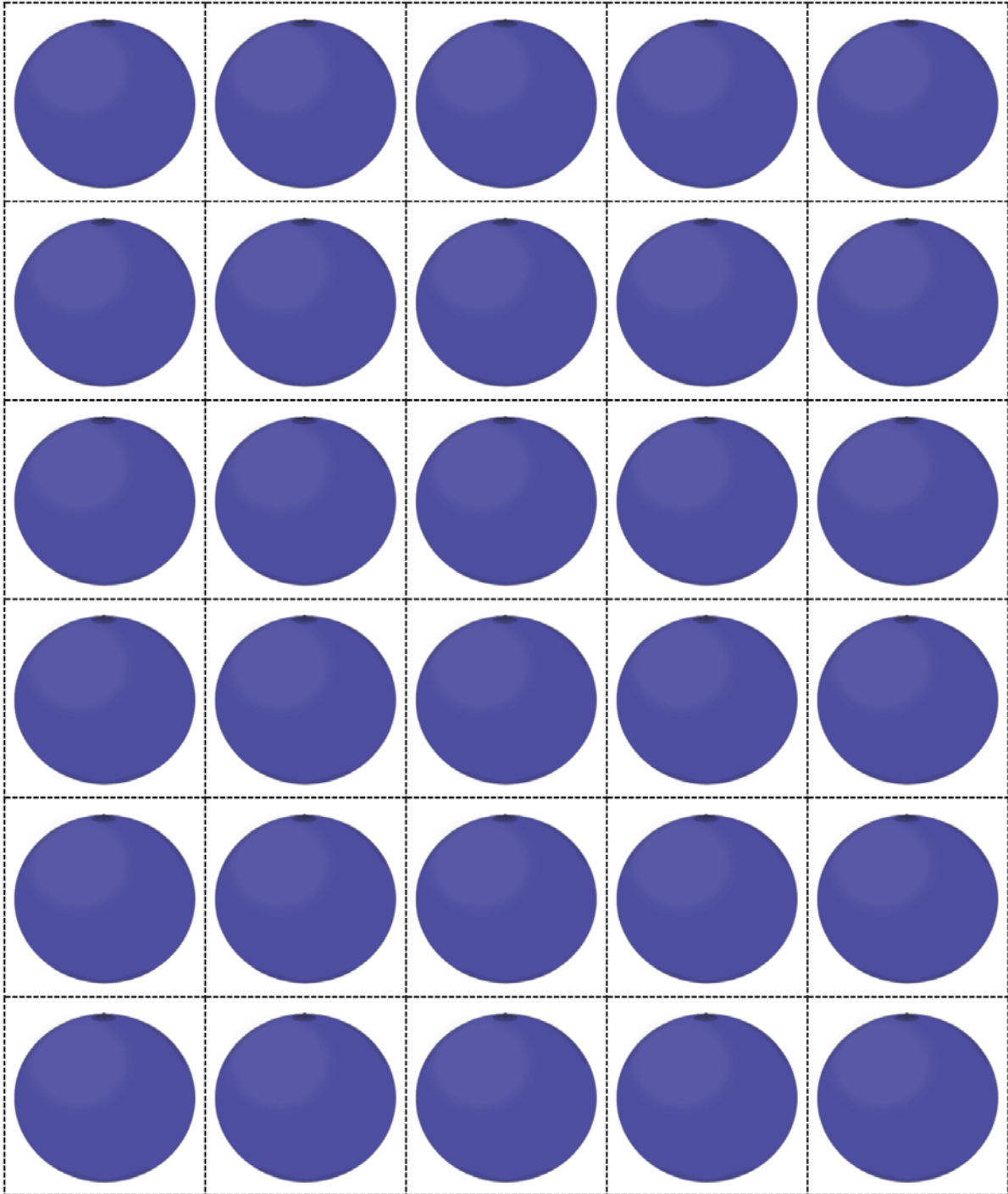
When it rains and you can't go outside, perhaps take your kids on an Indoor Blueberry Picking hide-and-see! Print and cut out enough of the "blueberries" on page 2 so there is enough for each child to find a couple blueberries. Place (or hide) the blueberries around the room and then have the children go "pick" them. Afterwards, encourage them to share how they like to eat blueberries and different ways they can be enjoyed (fresh, in smoothies, on salads, in whole wheat pancakes, etc.).



Adapted from: <http://www.myjoyfilledlife.com/2014/06/01/blueberries-for-sal-storytime-activities/>



Community and Home Gardening
Kid Friendly Fun



The badge is a white rectangular card with a red border decorated with yellow dots. It is set against a background of a strawberry field with green leaves, white flowers, and red strawberries. A silver bucket filled with strawberries is visible in the lower right. The text 'Official Strawberry Picker' is written in a large, red, cursive font. Below the title is a horizontal line for a name, with the word 'NAME' printed in red above it.

Official Strawberry Picker

NAME _____

To learn more about strawberries or obtain
more copies of this booklet, visit
www.ncstrawberry.com

© 2001 North Carolina Strawberry Association

PICK-YOUR-OWN BERRIES!!

Ask an adult to help you find, and visit, a local farm where you can pick your own strawberries, blueberries, or raspberries (<http://www.pickyourown.org/#states>). But before you go, there are some important things you need to do, take, and remember:

1. Call ahead to the farm to make sure the berries are ready to be picked!
2. Go in the early morning or early evening, if possible, as it could get very hot in the berry fields!
3. Don't forget the sunscreen, boots (it might be muddy!), hats (sun could get hot), drinks/snacks, and something to put the berries in! And a camera!
4. Wear old clothing!
5. Use the bathroom before you leave! (there likely will not be any bathrooms at the farm)
6. Watch where you step – you don't want to crush or injure the berry plants.
7. Use both hands when you pick – hold the stem with one hand and grasp and pull off the berry with the other.
8. Ask before you sample – eating while you are picking might not be allowed!
9. Don't pick more than you plan on buying!
10. Tell your parents, or the adult taking you, to bring cash - the farm might not accept credit cards.
11. Bring towels or baby wipes in case you get really messy! Even plastic bags for dirty shoes and a change of shoes/clothing.
12. Bring a wagon or stroller to put the picked berries in (you might have to walk a bit to get back to your car from where you were picking)!
13. Be prepared to have lots of fun, meet bugs, get dirty, and taste yummy fruit as fresh as you will ever get it!

Adapted from: <http://www.frugallivingnw.com/strawberry-picking-with-kids/> and <http://kiddingaroundgreenville.com/picking-your-own-berries.html>



Refrigerator Strawberry Jam for Kids!

What You Need:

- Containers of strawberries
- Sugar
- Heavy saucepan
- Jar with lid
- Stirring spoon

Before making your yummy refrigerator strawberry jam from the berries you picked up at your local Farmers Market or Pick-Your-Own farm,* spend some time explaining to your children how a strawberry grows. Point out the plant, blossom, white berry, red berry, and then, eventually jam!

- For fun and extra learning, ask younger children to pick out three berries of varying sizes. Can they put them in order from the smallest to the biggest?
-
- After the berries have been washed, help younger children with husking them. This is an activity that involves the use of both hands. Encourage them to use their thumb and index finger to pinch and twist the husks, or teach them to use a strawberry huller.
- Finally, make a batch of fresh refrigerator jam! Assist younger children in mashing about a pint of strawberries (2 ½ cups). Put in a heavy saucepan. Add ¾ cups sugar. Cook over medium-high heat, stirring constantly. Bring to a full rolling boil. Continue boiling for two full minutes. Remove from heat and pour into a clean jar. Let the jam cool first before putting on the lid and storing in the refrigerator. Enjoy your homemade jam for up to two weeks!
- If you have plain mailing or address labels at home, let your child draw/color labels for the jars!

*If you are picking strawberries, show your children how to use both of her hands to pick berries so they do not hurt the plant. They should hold the stem above the berry with one hand, and grasp the berry with the other, then pull gently.

Adapted from: https://www.education.com/activity/article/Lessons_From_the_Berry_Patch/



FARMERS MARKET SCAVENGER HUNT

*With help, go to <https://www.ams.usda.gov/local-food-directories/farmersmarkets> to find a Farmers Market near you, ask an adult to take you there and don't forget this scavenger hunt list (or as an alternative, go to the produce section of your local grocery if no farmers market exists in your town)! Write (or draw) your findings after each question (don't be afraid to ask a farmer, or produce worker, for help) and share what you've discovered with your family and friends!

1. Find one yellow **fruit** and one yellow **vegetable**:
2. Find three green vegetables. If you haven't tried one before, buy it to try!
3. Ask a farmer how long it took him or her to get to the market and what time he or she had to get up that morning.
4. Find something sold in a jar:
5. Find your favorite fruit or vegetable:
6. Find a fruit that grows on a tree:
7. How many different kinds of berries can you find?
8. How many different colors of peppers are sold there?
9. Ask a farmer what his or her favorite thing to grow is, and why:
10. Can you find a fruit or vegetable that you've never heard of before?
11. Find something that grows on a vine:
12. Try any free samples. What is your favorite?

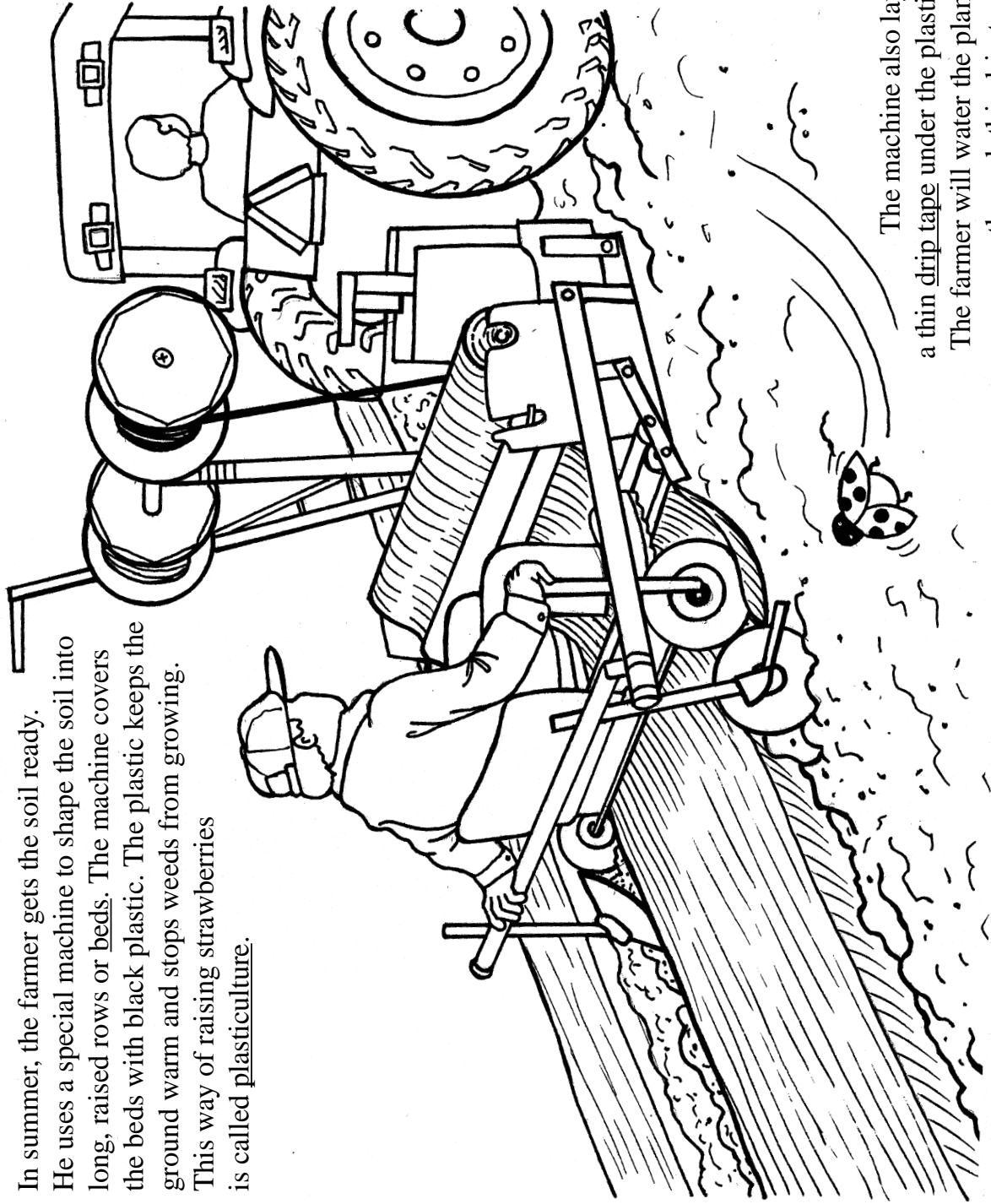




The following pages are reproduced from *Strawberry Time*, a coloring and activity booklet published by the North Carolina Strawberry Association. Educators and families are welcome to download and print these pages in small quantities (quality of cover illustrations will not equal that of actual booklets). If you wish to make more than 50 copies, please contact the North Carolina Strawberry Association by e-mail at ncstrawberry@mindspring.com for permission. Reprinting this booklet in whole or in part for resale or monetary gain is not permitted. Copies of the booklet itself, which includes a cardstock cover illustrated in full color, may be ordered from the North Carolina Strawberry Association. For information about ordering, visit www.ncstrawberry.com.

The farmer gets the land ready.

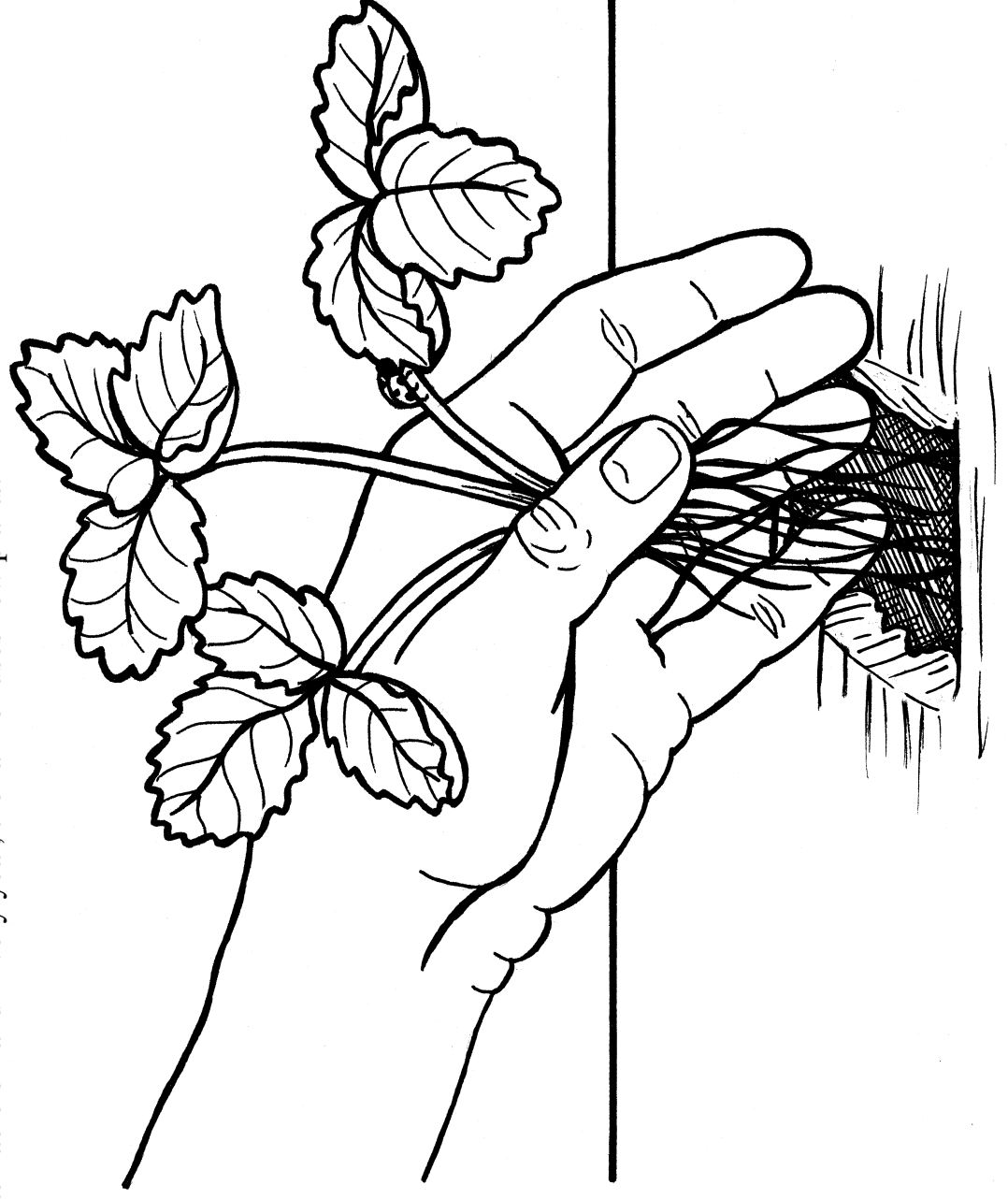
In summer, the farmer gets the soil ready. He uses a special machine to shape the soil into long, raised rows or beds. The machine covers the beds with black plastic. The plastic keeps the ground warm and stops weeds from growing. This way of raising strawberries is called plasticulture.



The machine also lays a thin drip tape under the plastic. The farmer will water the plants through this drip tape.

The farmer sets out plants.

In the fall, the farmer sets out young plants in the beds and gives them water. Strawberry growers set 17,500 plants in each acre of land! Every year, the farmer uses new plants.



The plants begin to grow.

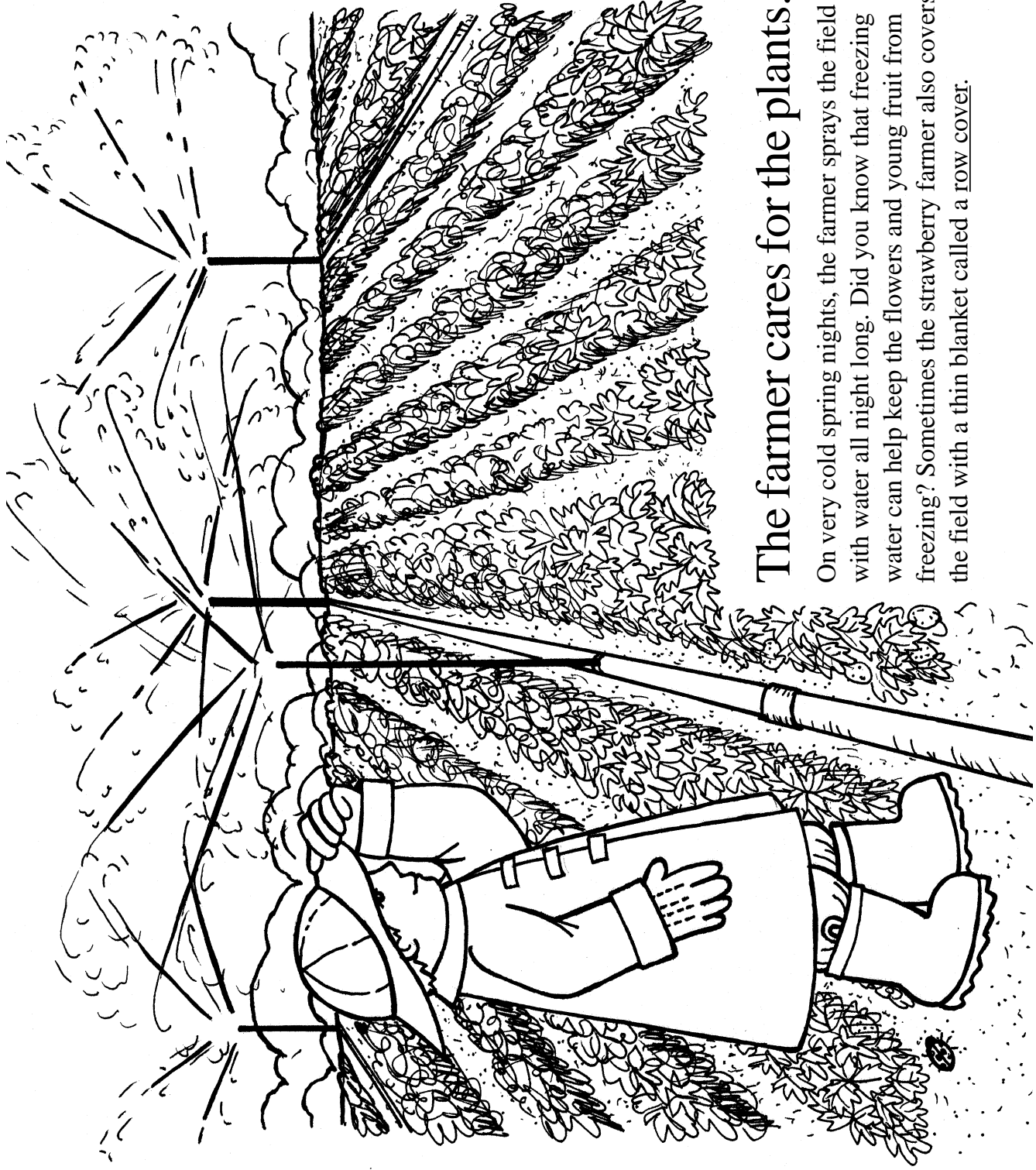
The plants grow new leaves and roots during warm weather in the fall and winter. When spring comes, they grow quickly. They start to flower, too. Small green strawberries begin to form.



Bees visit the strawberry flowers.

Bees land on the flowers to gather pollen for food. This helps fertilize the flowers so the berries will grow larger and have a pretty shape. The center of the flower becomes the berry.

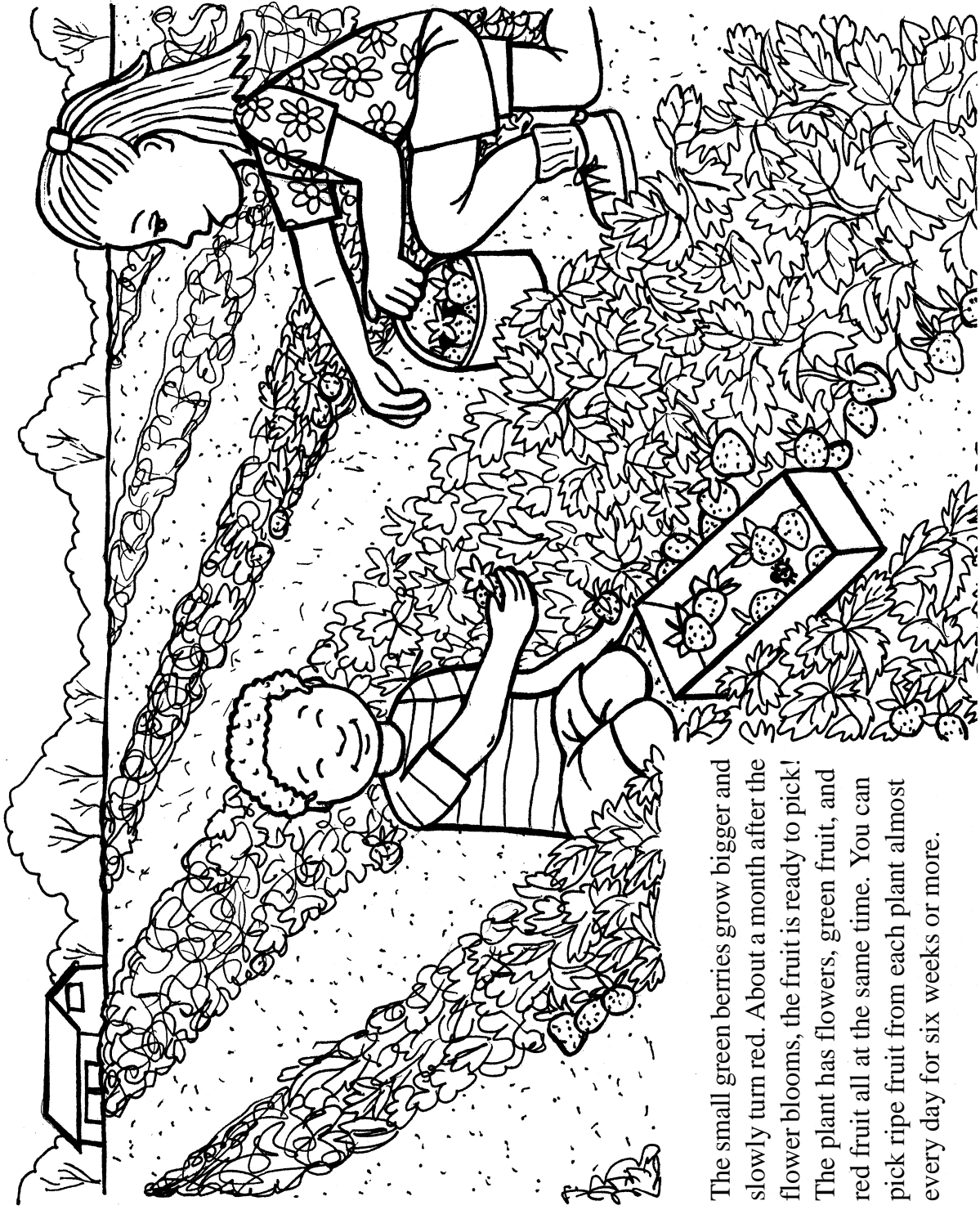




The farmer cares for the plants.

On very cold spring nights, the farmer sprays the field with water all night long. Did you know that freezing water can help keep the flowers and young fruit from freezing? Sometimes the strawberry farmer also covers the field with a thin blanket called a row cover.

The strawberries grow. Soon they are ready to pick.



The small green berries grow bigger and slowly turn red. About a month after the flower blooms, the fruit is ready to pick! The plant has flowers, green fruit, and red fruit all at the same time. You can pick ripe fruit from each plant almost every day for six weeks or more.