

Get Growing!

FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

The **Massachusetts Flower Growers' Association** and **Massachusetts Ag in the Classroom** are pleased to provide you with this educational kit. It is a simple seed starting kit designed to show elementary age children the science and wonder of horticulture. Funding for this statewide program is provided by a grant from the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR).

The Massachusetts Flower Growers' Association is a participant in a national program called "Plant Something." Our goal is to encourage everyone to enjoy the fun and beauty of gardening as a great activity with many benefits. We encourage students this Spring to take their families to a local flower grower who can share information with you about growing all types of flowers and plants!

Visit massflowergrowers.com to find your local grower/garden center.



Contained in the Kit

- 30 2-inch pots
- 30 seed starting Jiffy pellets
- 30+ Burpee seeds of sunflower "Giant Mammoth"

Simple Instructions for Success

Step 1: Soak the Jiffy germination pellets in water in a 1- to 2-inch deep tray.

Place the dry pellets into the tray and add water. They will expand to about 1 ½ inches. They should be fully moist. Add more water, if needed, to expand fully.

Step 2: Have the children mark the pot with a permanent marker or use an address label or sticker. They can write their name on the pot or label.

Step 3: Place the pellet in the pot. Make sure the open end of pellet is on top.

Step 4: Place one seed in the pellet and push them down slightly so the growing media covers the seed. Make sure the seed is covered by the growing media.

Step 5: Put all the seeded pots into a container where just enough water can be added to the bottom, and keep the pellets moist but not soaking wet.

It is helpful to use a piece of plastic wrap over the container to retain moisture. Place the container in a location that stays between 65–72 °F. A sunny window sill can work, or use a grow light. At these temperatures and moist conditions the seed will germinate in approximately 14 days. Because the Mammoth sunflower grows so large, they can be grown in these pellets until the roots of the seedling start to show on the side of the pellets. The seedling then can be planted outside in the garden after all danger of frost has passed.



Other Classroom Activities

Massachusetts Ag in the Classroom (www.aginclassroom.org) can provide more options for your classroom, from lesson plans incorporating crops grown in Massachusetts to mini grants for activities and school gardens. The association is always looking to help educators incorporate “ag in the classroom.” For more information, contact massaginclassroom@gmail.com.



Fun Facts About the Seed & Packet

Mammoth is an amazing giant heirloom sunflower with enormous blooms, up to 1 ft. across. The large yellow flowers with brown centers top plants 9-12 ft. tall and yield heavy loads of seeds. Fast and easy to grow, Mammoth sunflowers are great for creating a sunforest for kids, a tall annual hedge or screen. Edible seeds attract birds and make great snacks. To save seeds, cut the stem beneath flower heads when the backs of the flower heads turn yellow. Hang upside down and let dry in a cool, dry place for about a month. Cover with netting or a paper sack with holes to keep seeds from falling. But watch out for squirrels! *Certified organic seed.*

The Powerful Plants™ app by Burpee can be downloaded through the Apple App Store or Google Play. An augmented reality experience provides a fun new way to learn about plants and their importance to the human condition. Launch the app on your phone, point it at the seed packet, and watch it come to life!

Important: To receive this kit, please fill out the short questionnaire below and return it to us.

Email the information by April 10, 2019. You will also be contacted for a brief survey by June 1, 2019.

Name of teacher _____

Teacher email address _____

Name of school _____

School mailing address _____

If you know of other teachers in your school that would like to receive a kit, list their names and email addresses below:

Name of teacher _____

Teacher email address _____

Name of teacher _____

Teacher email address _____

Please email this information to massaginclassroom@gmail.com or massflowergrowers@gmail.com. The form may also be faxed to 781.275.8668.