

How to Sprout an Avocado Tree

Modified from: Centralia School District Nutrition Network, State Preschool Programs

Avocadoes are easy to sprout from seeds. It is an engaging activity as classes can watch the sprout grow and the measure the growth of the plant. If your school has a garden, the sprouted plant can be transplanted into soil and grown into a tree.

Things You'll Need

Avocado seeds, clean and dry
Wide mouth jar per seed
Toothpicks, 3 per seed
Water

Instructions

1. Stick the toothpicks into the seed. Place them about halfway from the top to the bottom and space them evenly around the seed.
2. With the small end of the seed pointing up, suspend the seed over the mouth of the jar.
3. Fill the jar with water, allowing about a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of the seed to remain out of the water.
4. Place the jar in a well-lit area, but not in direct sunlight.
5. As water evaporates from jar, refill to the proper level.
6. Wait for the seed to sprout. This will take 5 to 45 days.

Notes on sprouting

1. The class can watch the seedling sprout the roots and measure the growth of the plant. The seed will begin to sprout in 5 to 45 days which may be beyond your existing time for your school year, but begin the process so the class can witness the first stages.
2. Watch for the seed to crack open, then a root will grow out from the bottom. Soon a tiny stem will appear from the top of the seed and leaves will grow from the stem. If the seed has not begun to crack and grow within 45 days, discard it and start over.
3. When there are 2 big leaves growing well, you will see tiny new leaves begin to grow from the center of the stem. Pinch off the new growth, leaving only the two big leaves. This will encourage the stem to branch and it will grow stronger.
4. When there are at least 5 leaves, pinch out the new center growth again. This will encourage the plant to grow fuller. The roots should be growing well, coiling around the bottom of the jar.
5. When the plant is about 7-8 inches tall, has well-formed leaves and the jar is thick with roots, it is time to transplant the seedling.

Notes on Growing a Tree

1. In you have an in-ground or container garden, transplant the seedling in an 8-10 inch pot.
2. Layer about 1 inch of crushed rock into the bottom of a pot. Top the crushed rock with about 2 inches of good-quality potting soil. Gently spread the roots of the seedling over the soil. Fill the pot with soil, allowing about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of seed to remain above the top of the soil. Water the seedling well, and set the pot in a sunny location.
3. As the tree grows, continue to pinch out some of the new leaves. This will encourage bushy growth.