

# Celebrating Earth Day by Planting Your Own Seeds

Courtesy of The Garden Spot

a full Service Garden and Wild Bird Center  
(just a few minutes from the L.I. Game Farm)

## Growing and Harvesting

When you get home water the seeds right away and put them in direct sunlight. Sunflowers will pop out of the soil in a week to two weeks, and will start out slowly. Transplant outdoors or into a larger container. If you notice birds bothering the little seedlings you can tent a piece of chicken wire, or a milk jug with the top and bottom cut off or something similar to protect them. They will pick up speed in their growing process, and the children can be responsible for watching them, watering them, and placing cut up leaves or another type of mulch carefully around the bottoms of each plant.

After you take your photo for the growing competition you can harvest your sunflower or leave the seeds for the birds. The children can record which birds come to the plants and how many, as an extra project.

When the seed heads start to turn brown, they can be cut with 2 inches of the stem and hung to dry in a ventilated place such as a garage or attic. When they are dry, simply rub them together to loosen, soak over night in salted water and then drain. Spread them on baking sheets and roast for three hours at 200 degrees until dry. These can be stored in a container for eating. Be sure to save some seeds out before this process, place in envelopes and label for planting next year. Store them in a dry cool place until spring.

Growing sunflowers can be a unique, family project. So much can be learned about nature and the growing process, as well as teaching children patience. The end result will be something they will always remember and treasure

## Grow the Tallest Sunflower Competition

How to enter:

- When your sunflower gets REALLY tall or around the middle of September, have someone take a picture of yourself standing next to the sunflower you planted here on Earth Day.
- Submit your photo by the deadline date of Sept. 25th via email to: [info@longislandgamefarm.com](mailto:info@longislandgamefarm.com), attn: Tallest Sunflower Competition.
- Include height of sunflower, your name, plants name if it has one ☺, address, email, telephone number & any interesting things that you may have learned by growing your own plant.
- Some of the prizes you could win are: Family Season Pass to the L.I. Game Farm, Your Photo posted on [www.lifun4kids.com](http://www.lifun4kids.com), Tickets to The Garden Spot Fall Harvest Festival and Haunted House and more.
- Winners will be notified by September 30, 2008.
- Good luck and Be Good to the Earth!



[www.longislandgamefarm.com](http://www.longislandgamefarm.com)

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