



# Pumpkins

## from seed to soup bowl

by Camilla Baker



Quarry Bank is a smallholding in a stunning location just outside of Redruth. Euan Mcphee and his wife Nona have created a haven for wildlife – and also for visiting families.

On two cloudless days in early June, groups of 10-15 participants of the Seeds, Soup and Sarnies programme visited the farm and got their hands dirty. Family members (aged from two to 60!) from the four Seeds courses came. Although many didn't know each other before, everyone made friends and mucked in to help collecting eggs, planting seeds and watering. The adults learnt a lot of practical tips on organic growing – covering beds with carpet, companion planting, anti-carrot fly measures to name a few.

As we toured about, meeting Whisp the new lamb, and watching Oscar the dog splashing in the quarry lake, Caitlin found a duck in a shed, hiding from the latest fox attack.

Euan and Nona tended our seeds as they grew – and when no shoots appeared, planted more – and let us know that the last week of August would be a good time to harvest.

On our return visit, we found very few of our pumpkins in the pig field had grown, and none of the sunflowers! It seems the mice enjoyed our seeds.

Luckily the veg bed proved a safe place to grow. Pushing back the big green leaves the boys discovered huge pumpkins – both yellow and green ones. Armed with knives and a couple of big pots, the harvesters became chefs. Under Nona's watchful eye they peeled and diced the pumpkins, making sure to save the seeds. Everyone took home pumpkin to cook, and seeds to dry and store. Next year, we will all be sure to plant them in pots indoors before transferring them out.

Euan is making his farm available for visits through the Let Nature Feed Your Senses project:  
[www.letnaturefeedyoursenses.org](http://www.letnaturefeedyoursenses.org)

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