

# **Lesson: Animal Health And Safety**

A fun and safe way to introduce students to the realities of handling live animals and their pathogens, like a real vet.

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# **Lesson: Animal Evolution Body Puzzle**

Lesson identifying different parts of three distinct species of animal and finding commonalities and needs among them.

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# **Lesson: Basic Sanitation 101**

Sanitation is a critical skillset on an urban farm. This lesson introduces students to the basics of sanitation and pathology.

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# **Lesson: Water – Friend or Foe**

Students will explore water as both a critical solvent and as a source of life-giving moisture and hydration. Focus on Biochemical analysis.

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## **Lesson: Animal Holding Area**

Students must quickly brainstorm and collaborate to determine the best system to build that will safely house and secure animals.

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## **Lesson: Building a Mobile BioLab**

Proper care and exams of the animals is a necessity, but with a camp of kids, the vet counter in the coops is not enough.

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## **The Perfect Cover Crop for Unsightly Chain Link Fence**

When we started building Mezzacello, we first needed to secure Mezzacello. The perimeter is 360 linear feet. The front elevation that fronts North 20th Street came pre-fenced with a wrought iron fence circa sometime in the 20th Century and still highly functional. The west elevation had a 36" high and 70' long chain link fence from late in the 20th Century. The west fence was missing a 10' section, probably opening onto a driveway or garage at some point. Mezzacello was a property with some fences but with big missing gaps. Like a toothless

insecure smile.

Our immediate problems were that people were driving their cars through the property. Homeless transients were pitching camp on the grounds. Drug addicts were using the bushes for getting high. Neighbors were walking (and relieving their dog's waste) randomly through the yard. And most distressing and immediate, we had no security, privacy or safety from the south facing Broad Street elevation. Many times when we first moved in, we had people brazenly walk from the COTA (The local Bus line in Columbus, OH) bus stop (we called it the party stop) or from the run down "Chips-n-Go" gas station, across the parking lot to the south of the property and right into the yard to ask us for money or some of our food.

Now if another human soul ever asks me for food, they will get it. That is a baseline of human dignity. But if they ask me for money, they need to accept no, or be willing to work for it. The strangers walking across our yard (and through our plantings and visits with guests) were too erratic. We needed a barrier. We had a 150' stretch that needed a fence. And a replacement 10' span where the back gate once stood. Wrought iron was right out as it would have been too expensive. There was already a span of chain link on the western edge. Chain link it was.

For the past two years, Rick has been trying to conceal the chain link behind a cover of hearty Manhattan Euonymus which he has all been grown entirely from cuttings. He inherited the clippings from our neighbors on Miami Avenue to the west of us, Joshua Snyder-Hill and Steve Snyder-Hill. This method of propagating Euonymus was taught to us by our neighbor, Ms. Elizabeth Pryor. Sadly, Ms. Elizabeth passed away just last year. She was a great promoter of all things Mezzacello, and a great neighbor.

All the plants at Mezzacello are clones of those initial clippings (#AppliedSTEM). For the most part it has worked

well. Each winter we run into a problem with euonymus dying because the lot attendants of the parking lot just to the south of us choose to pile all the snow onto our fence line and this kills the euonymus in the process. Rick is seriously considering planting some 6' steel poles 4' deep with 2' sticking out (like you see at Walmart or Target to discourage people from driving their cars into the store front). But the city has rules about who can construct barriers right up on a city right-of-way...

So Rick just keeps plugging cuttings into the ground and I keep occasionally watering and fertilizing them. We do have one problem area. On the southwest corner of the lot, there was apparently a garage and an apron drive that emptied into Avon Alley. Nothing will grow back there with the exception of vines and scrub weeds. We may have to excavate that driveway at some point. Another project, another time.