



School Gardens Help Wisconsin Grow

Wisconsin is a leader in garden-based education. School gardens are an innovative way to improve student health and wellbeing and provide nutrition education, hands-on curricular activities, and outdoor opportunities for students of all ages. In many parts of Wisconsin, school gardens are a curricular mainstay to provide hands-on experience that will prepare students for future careers. Learn more about how garden-based education can strengthen schools and communities below and at www.wischoolgardens.org.

WHY ARE SCHOOL GARDENS A POWERFUL TOOL FOR EDUCATORS?

- School gardens are a space for students to develop the critical thinking and problem-solving skills they will need for future careers in science, technology, education, agriculture, engineering, and more.
- School gardens are the perfect settings for hands-on learning, which is proven to improve students' learning outcomes (1). With hundreds of lessons that link to Common Core Curriculum and Next Generation Science Standards, gardens are a place for in-depth and ongoing STEM education.
- Garden-based education provides our youth with opportunities to see how food grows and develop an appreciation for eating fresh fruits and vegetables (2).

HOW DO SCHOOL GARDENS STRENGTHEN WISCONSIN COMMUNITIES?

- School gardens are a place for school communities to connect with the broader community and to promote intergenerational and cross-cultural learning through the sharing of experiences, stories, and food and agricultural traditions (3).
- School and youth gardens promote Wisconsin traditions such as land stewardship, outdoor recreation, and agriculture by providing places to explore and learn through hands-on education that connects with educational standards.
- Because of the well-documented health and academic benefits of garden-based education, youth gardens are a point of collaboration for schools, hospitals and wellness centers, nature centers, universities, community centers, retirement communities, restaurants, faith-based organizations, and nonprofits.

(1) Smith, L. L., & Motsenbocker, C.E. (2005). Impact of hands-on science through school gardening in Louisiana public elementary schools. *Hort Technology*, 15(3), 439-443.

(2) Gatto, N., Ventura, E., Cook, L., Gyllenhammer, L., & Davis, J. (2012). LA Sprouts: A garden-based nutrition intervention pilot program influences motivation and preferences for fruits and vegetables in Latino youth. *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*, 112(6), 913-920.

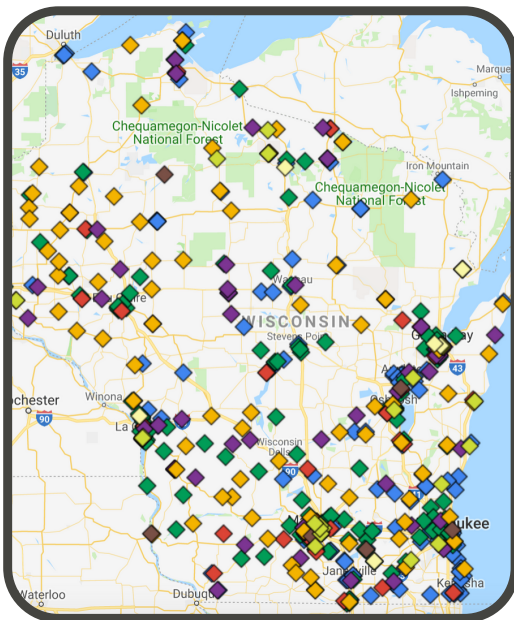
McAleese, J.D., & Rankin, L. L. (2007). Garden-based nutrition education affects fruit and vegetable consumption in sixth-grade adolescents. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, 107(4), 662-665.

(3) Blair, D. (2009). The child in the garden: An evaluative review of the benefits of school gardening. *Journal of Environmental Education*, 40(2), 15-38.

HOW CAN YOU START A SCHOOL GARDEN?

Starting a school garden program takes time, teamwork, and commitment. However, students don't need the picture-perfect garden to reap the benefits. Here are some tips to get you started. You can find dozens of free resources on starting, maintaining, sustaining, and funding a youth garden at www.wischoolgardens.org.

- **Start small.** Classroom seed germination and some potted plants can yield creative STEM lessons and gives students opportunities for collaboration and creativity.
- **Build a garden team** of educators, administrators, parents, students, and communities to help with planning and implementation. The more essential stakeholders you have on board at the beginning, the better equipped you'll be to get a functional garden up and running.
- **Learn from each other.** You can find other gardens in your area on the Wisconsin School Garden Network Map. Your colleagues and neighbors may have already dealt with many of the same questions and hurdles that you face.
- **Call us!** We're here to help. Find out more at www.wischoolgardens.org.



With more than 600 documented youth educational gardens, Wisconsin is a leader in garden-based education nationwide.

The Wisconsin School Garden Network is dedicated to achieving greater inclusion and creating equal opportunity for good quality garden-based education to all Wisconsin children. Established in 2015, expert staff provide free resources, workshops, on-site assistance, and funding information to help Wisconsin citizens give children access to innovative educational opportunities. Through the Wisconsin School Garden Network Map and regional in-person networking, the Wisconsin School Garden Network is building a community of support for educators across the state to connect with and learn from each other. To learn more about the Wisconsin School Garden Network, visit www.wischoolgardens.org.