Georgia School Nutrition Association
School Garden Grant - $500

The glory of gardening: hands in the dirt, head in the sun, heart with nature. To nurture a garden is to feed not just the body, but the soul.
Alfred Austin

Why should we have school garden?

- Successful school gardens demonstrate real life scenarios and encourage children to learn science, social skills, arts, math, writing, nutrition and reading - taught through the hands-on work of a garden.
- Children get back to nature and straight to the source of our healthiest foods: fruits and vegetables! Exposure to these learning opportunities is important for child development and understanding of farm to plate.
- School gardens teach children, families and communities how to grow vegetables together and shape united community.
- The school cafeterias can be supplemented with healthy, self-grown food.

What determines eligibility and does my school qualify to apply?

- Must be a new garden or new addition to existing garden
- Must have a School Nutrition Professional, that is a member of Georgia School Nutrition Association, as an advisor (does not have to be the project lead or the School Nutrition Manager)
- Must be willing to submit: time line of garden, before and after photos with description of harvest(s)

What type of garden should your school plant?

Depending upon the interests of teachers and school administrators and the resources of your school (space, time for student instruction, funding, etc.), a schoolyard garden can take on many forms. Here are some different gardening techniques to think about when planning your garden. These techniques can be combined to create a successful project, and your garden can evolve from season to season to include a variety of these techniques.

Communal Plots: Garden space and plants shared among all participants. Communal plots allow for crops that require more space, such as corn or pumpkins. Responsibility for the garden and the daily workload are spread among all participants.

Individual Plots: Garden space divided up and assigned to groups/classes. This allows individual groups or classes to design and care for their assigned space. Responsibilities for care are clearly and easily defined.

Direct Planting: Where the layout of the schoolyard and the soil conditions allow, a part of the schoolyard can be turned over for planting directly into the ground. The soil can be prepared by hand, with shovels and digging forks, or by a power tiller that can be rented from most large hardware stores.

Raised Beds: If the soil in the designated garden lacks nutrients, is too tightly compacted to turn over, or contains lead or other contaminants, gardeners will often build raised beds to make the gardening easier, safer and more productive. In a raised bed system, gardeners use wooden boards (NOT boards treated with arsenic or creosote!) or other barriers to build a square or rectangular frame that is placed on the garden site, creating a box about 6" to 10" high. The box is then filled with soil or compost, and seeds and plants can be grown directly in this bed. Both soil and compost can be purchased at hardware stores or from garden centers.

Container Gardening: If your schoolyard has little or no open, unpaved space, or if the soil is unsuitable for gardening, consider starting a garden in containers. Pots, barrels, and buckets made of plastic, clay, or wood can be placed outside in a designated gardening area. A wide variety of plants can be grown in containers, depending on the depth of the container. Container gardening is a practical way to garden when planting into the ground may not be an option.

Indoor Gardening: Many schools have developed successful gardening projects that are located entirely within the walls of students' classrooms. Indoor gardening projects can vary from plants in containers situated in a sunny windowsill, to more elaborate configurations involving grow lights and planting trays. An indoor garden can also be a way to raise plants that will soon be planted outdoors. It can also be a way to give students the experience of working with plants before an outdoor gardening space is established. An indoor garden can also be used with a science program to explore important concepts in life science and scientific experimentation.

Hydroponic Gardening The growth rate is 30 to 50% faster than soil grown plants under same circumstances. Hydroponic Gardening is a subset of hydroculture, the method of growing plants without soil, using mineral nutrient solutions in a water solvent. Terrestrial plants may be grown with only their roots exposed to the mineral solution, or the roots may be supported by an inert medium, such as perlite or gravel. If you have limited space and time this may be the type of garden, you consider.

Aquaponic Gardening: Aquaponic Gardening is scalable to fit most sizes and budgets, from a small countertop herb system to backyard gardens to full scale farms. Aquaponics is the combination of aquaculture (raising fish) and hydroponics (the soil-less growing of plants) that grows fish and plants together in one integrated system.

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Application

Send your Garden Grant application form to GSNA (2372 Main St., Tucker, GA 30084) by **January 10, 2025.**
Phone: 770-934-8890 FAX: 770-934-8917 E-mail: info@georgiaschoolnutrition.com

School Name:

School Nutrition Manager Name: **Principal Name:**

GSNA Membership Number:

School Address:

City: **Zip**:

Name of Person Submitting Entry:

Job Title: **Phone Number:**

1. Does your school have an existing school garden: ☐Yes ☐No
   If yes, how will your current garden be expanded?

2. Has the school's administrative staff or principal been made aware of this project and approved of plans to apply for this grant? ☐Yes ☐No - If no, you are ineligible for a grant.

3. Please attach a very brief statement of support from an administrative professional or teacher at the school demonstrating:
   ☐ Their intention to integrate with educational programming
   ☐ Their intention to support the success of the garden over time
   ☐ Their interest in the garden

4. What are your plans to integrate the garden with curriculum or educational programming? Include brief description:

5. On average, how many students will be involved in the garden? Estimation:

6. Will your school garden be located on your school campus?
   ☐ Yes ☐ No - If no, where?

7. Describe your plan to utilize grant funding and sustain the garden throughout the year? Include brief description and itemized budget:

8. Do you have other financial supporters in the community or through another grant?
   ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, a brief description and amounts:

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Garden Plan (900 total characters for all of the following questions)

- Considering seasonal care, irrigation, summer break, etc., describe what steps you have taken or will take to ensure your garden has the resources and care it needs.

- Describe your plan for personnel management, including designated staff, roles, etc.

- Why would your school and students benefit from a garden more than others?

- **How will the yield from your school garden be incorporated into school meals?**

Is there anything else you would like to share about your school or plans for this garden?

If you are selected to receive this grant you, will be required to send two progress reports with pictures. (Including the before picture)

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