

Implementing Your Wellness Policy with School Gardens



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Overview

Wellness Policies: How to Creatively Implement Them

Gardens: How to Grow Them

Challenges: How to Overcome Them



How to Implement Wellness Policy Using School Gardens

 Nutrition Education

 Physical Activity





 Food Services

 Walking the Talk



Nutrition Education

California Education Code requires that nutrition education be taught in grades one through six

-  Garden instruction helps children to learn skills that they can apply to their personal behavior. (as required by the CEC)
-  It has been shown that experiential education helps children to retain what they learn.
-  Gardens can incorporate nutrition education into other subjects such as math, science, and language arts.
-  Structured garden-based nutrition education has been shown to increase students' consumption of fresh produce.

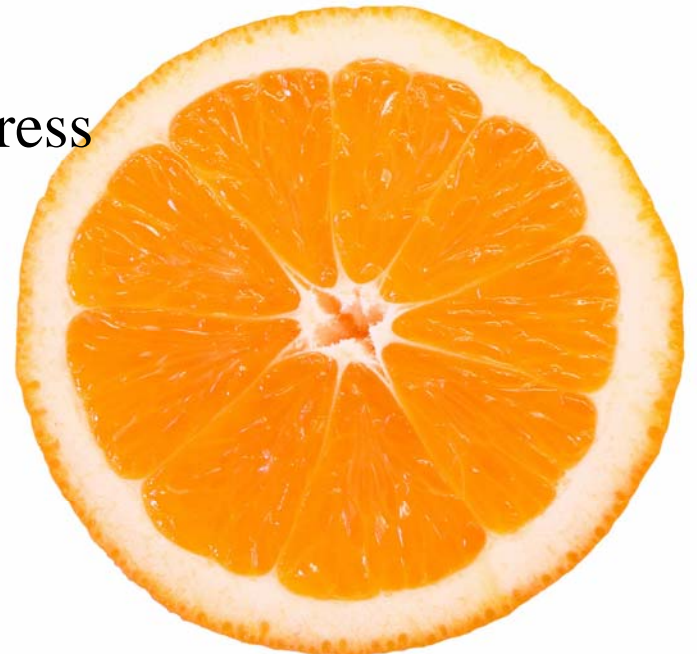


Physical Activity

 30 minutes of gardening burns 150 calories

 Gardens provide PA opportunities for students and teachers without disrupting instruction

 Gardens have been shown to reduce stress in teachers and students



SB12 & SB965 require that schools provide balanced and nutritious foods and beverages

Snack Program

fruits like berries, carrots, and melons from the garden make great afternoon snacks

Unique a la carte items

smoothies, fresh veggies and dip, fruit salad, etc.



Food Services (cont.)




Salad Bar

use leafy greens or add-ons (cucumbers, tomatoes, carrots) from the garden

Cafeteria Meal Plan

incorporate garden produce such as leafy greens, broccoli, and snap peas into meal planning

All of these options allow you to:

-  introduce students to new vegetables
-  give students the fresh and in season produce
-  possibly save funds by using garden produce



Walking the Talk

Making sure all school messages are encouraging wellness

- Use garden produce for healthy class parties
serve smoothies or fruit salad instead of pizza
- Healthy fundraising
sell flowers, seedlings, salsa, worm tea, cookbooks
start a small farmers market
- Incorporate the health lessons into school culture.

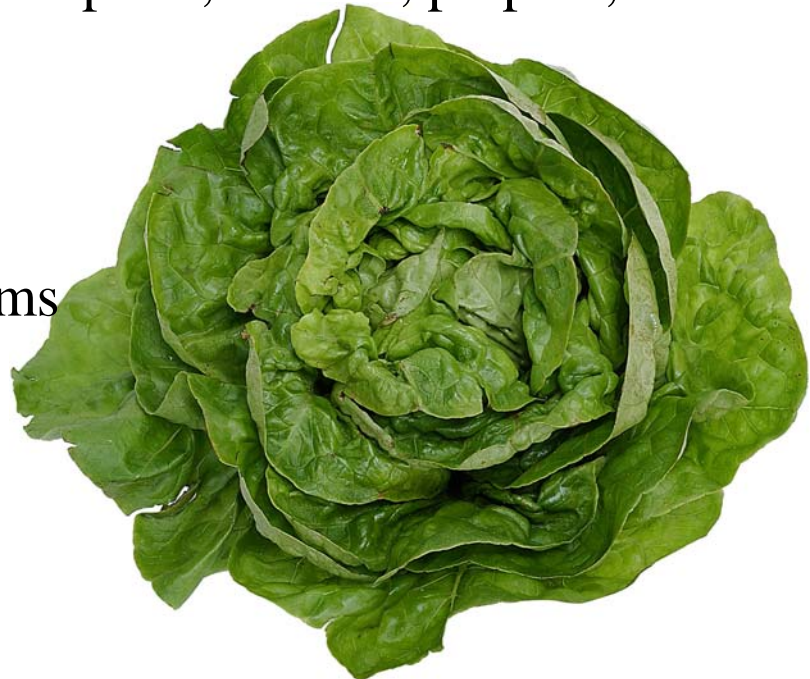


Examples of Wellness Policies using Gardens as an Implementation Tool

“Whenever possible foods will be...coordinated so that menus will align with...production in school gardens [and] reflect seasonality and local agriculture”

“Encourage School sites to develop organic school gardens, and use fruits and vegetables grown at the school in daily food service, thus providing students the opportunity to plant, harvest, prepare, cook, and eat food they have grown”

“District will integrate experiences in cafeterias with the nutrition education curriculum in the gardens and classrooms by:... students growing and harvesting garden produce for cafeterias”



Gardens: How to Grow Them

- **Designing Your Garden**
what will work for you?
- **Funding Your Garden**
where to look for garden grants
- **Sustaining Your Garden**
resources for creating, utilizing and sustaining your garden



Designing Your Garden

Things to Keep in Mind

- Location, location, location
Sun, Water, Soil, Space
- Size matters
Are you ready to start a school farm, or should you start with container gardening?
- What type of garden best meets your needs?
Container, Raised Beds, In Ground
- Devise a plan and timeline for your garden
Execute it!



Garden Funding Opportunities

California Department of Education

- 🌿 California Instructional School Garden Program (AB1535) allocates \$15 million for school gardens.
- 🌿 Up to \$5,000 per school (based on enrollment) for supplies and professional development
- 🌿 Who can apply:
 - School Districts
 - County Offices of Education
 - Charter Schools not under wither group
- 🌿 Application will be available shortly, you will have 8 weeks to complete them.



Garden Funding Opportunities

Western Growers Charitable Foundation

- Up to \$1,500, seed and teacher/student resources
- Must be used for fruit, vegetable and/or nut gardens
- Two deadlines each year:
June 1 and November 15
- Our website has many links to educational and garden resources

www.WesternGrowers.org
click on the school garden link



Garden Funding Opportunities

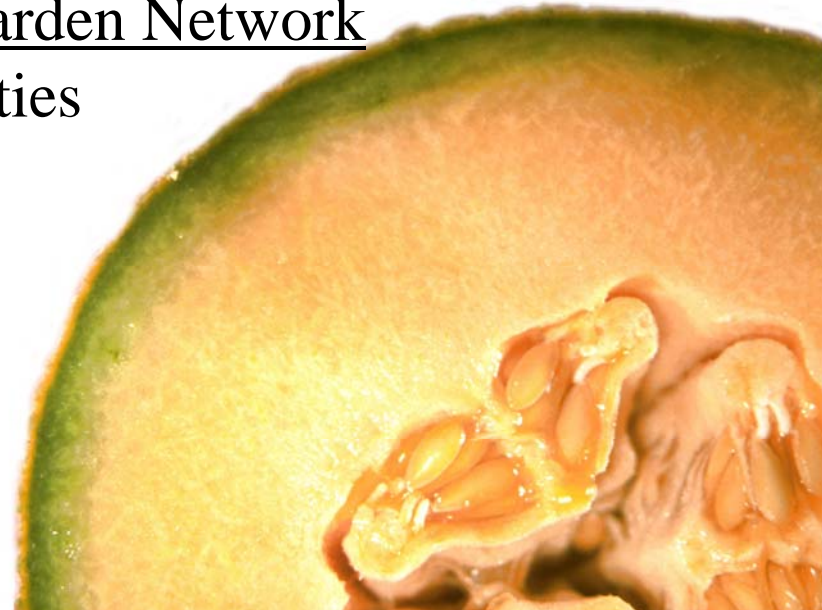
There are several other school garden grants available.

 California Fertilizer Foundation




 Lowe's

 National Gardening Association

 Visit the California School Garden Network
for more funding opportunities



California School Garden Network

-  Visit www.csgn.org for resources, training programs, events, grants, research and support
-  Sign up for the monthly e-newsletter that will bring new funding opportunities, gardening tips and news to your inbox.
-  *Gardens for Learning*, a practical guidebook for school gardens. These are available for free to California schools through the website.



Garden Resources

California Department of Education

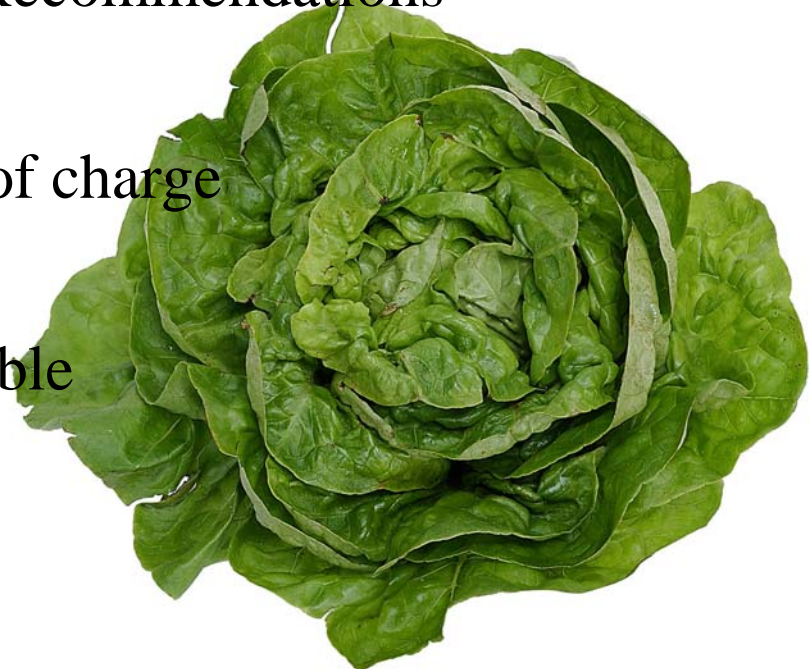
Free garden resource kits can be ordered by emailing dtamanna@cde.ca.gov

“School Nutrition...By Design”




See Design Principle 4 and Recommendations

A Child’s Garden of Standards
available for download free of charge

Several publications to support
garden-based learning available
for purchase



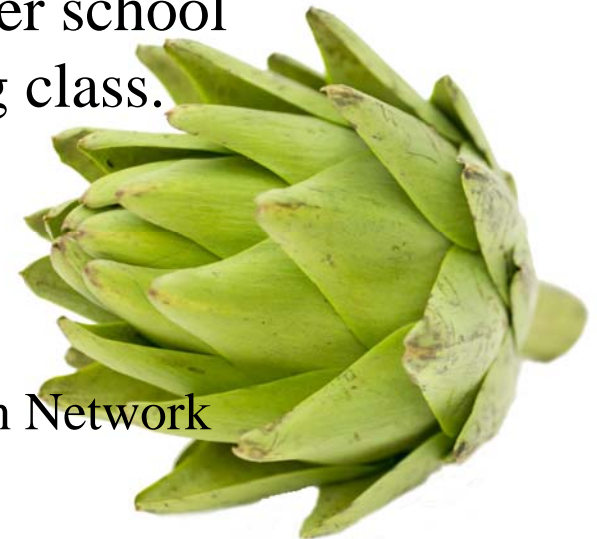
Nutrition Network

-  Professional development workshops.
Salary-point classes on gardening.
-  Some serve as garden supply distribution centers.
-  Use Nutrition Network funds to pay professional expert pay for a teacher to lead an after school gardening club or lunch-time cooking class.

For more information contact your local
Nutrition Network, or

Tonya Mandl

School Garden Coordinator for LAUSD Nutrition Network
tonya.mandl@lausd.net, (818) 345-4712



Your Community

Parents, senior centers, local service groups, scouts

Master Gardeners

These are highly trained gardeners who participate in community service gardening programs. 25 hours required per year in order to keep MG certification.

Local nurseries and garden supply centers



Challenges of School Gardens

- Other priorities take over
- Key decision makers don't see the garden's importance
- Garden Teams disband after the initial stage is complete
- One individual is responsible for the lion's share of work.



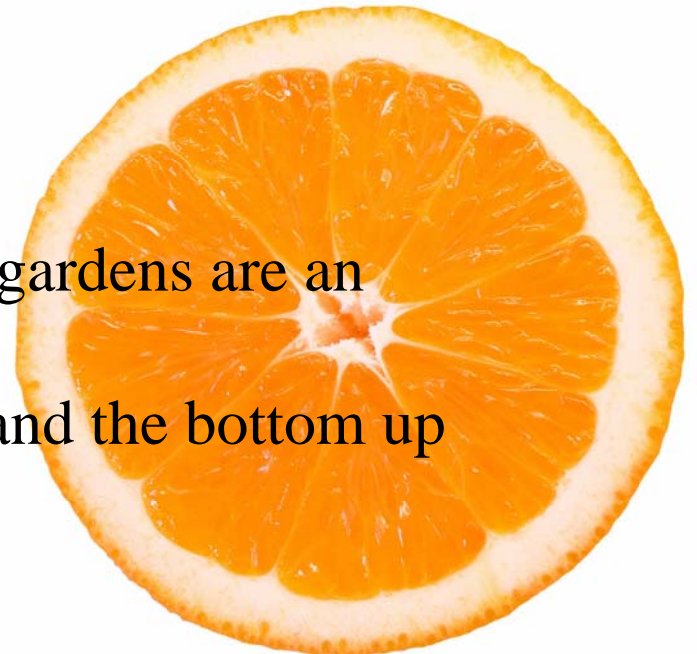
Overcoming Challenges

- ✎ Integrate it into the school
 - include it in the school newspaper, encourage teachers to use it for lessons other than nutrition
- ✎ Keep it front and center in the eyes of policy makers and the press
 - school gardens make excellent stories for local newspapers
- ✎ Stay positive and motivated by making sure the work is equally shared.
- ✎ Form a Garden Team to take responsibility



Overcoming Challenges

- 🌿 Clarify who is responsible for the garden
 - consider making it part of adjunct duties
- 🌿 Develop an action plan. Start slow and build the program
 - take into account funding, upkeep, harvesting, etc.
- 🌿 Involve the community.
- 🌿 Create a mindset in your district that gardens are an essential part of the school.
 - create buy-in from the top down, and the bottom up



Let's Review

- 🌿 Gardens can be a useful tool in fulfilling some wellness policy requirements.
- 🌿 Gardens can be many things... You decide!
Don't forget to reach out to all of the resources around you.
- 🌿 Be consistent, be successful!
The rule applies to gardens and wellness policies.





Thank you!

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