

Garden Planning Checklist

Please use this checklist to plan a safe and sustainable school gardening program.

School Name:	
Define the Project:	
Does this site already have a garden?	
Who is your target audience?	
How many participants will use the garden?	
What curriculum is being used?	
When will programming take place?	
How many gardens are needed? (Include container and indoor gardens)	
Planning the Garden:	
During which months will the garden be used?	
Have you researched the frost/freeze dates for Fall and Spring for your area?	
What type of garden will be planted? (Raised bed , salad box , salad table , containers , etc.)	
If planting a raised bed or garden in the ground, has a soil test been taken? (See http://extension.umd.edu/hgic/soils/soil-testing for more information)	
Who will plant and maintain the garden? Container Planting and Maintenance	
Are the materials being used to build the garden safe? (Use only un-treated lumber or pre-made raised bed kits for raised beds)	
If making garden containers using recycled materials, make sure they are food-grade. (No buckets that once container paint or chemicals, only use plastic egg cartons that have been washed, no tires, no railroad ties)	
Is the site for the garden on level ground?	
Is the site for the garden located away from potential contamination sources? (Dumpsters, bird feeders, bird houses, bat houses, or water runoff from parking lots, roads, or agricultural areas)	
If this is an in-ground garden, call MISS Utility 800-257-7777, before digging to mark any utilities.	

Is there a potable (safe to drink) water source nearby? (No rain barrels!)	
Soil, Compost, and Fertilizer:	
Use commercially made growing medium with commercially prepared (MDA certified) compost at a 1:1 ratio for container gardens.	
Use commercially made garden soil with commercially prepared (MDA certified) compost at a 1:1 ratio for raised beds or in-ground gardens.	
Do not use animal products in the garden.	
Fertilizer may be used, but must not be applied by children and must be stored in a sealed container, kept out of the reach of children. (Many potting and garden soils have slow-release fertilizer added.)	
Pest Control:	
Floating row cover can be used to prevent insects, birds and wildlife, and to prevent sun or frost damage to plants.	
No pesticides can be used in gardens – no weed killer, insecticide, or fungicide.	
Mulch, straw, newspaper, and weed barriers can be used to prevent weeds around a garden.	
Temporary fencing and netting can be purchased for preventing wildlife in the garden.	
Human Resources	
Who will teach the nutrition education lessons?	
Who will provide gardening expertise and training? (Possibly a Master Gardener)	
What are the training needs for this project?	
Have you secured the support of administrators, community leaders, or other authority figures at the site?	
Is the site maintenance team on board with this project?	
Who is on the garden team? (Staff, volunteers, participants, Master Gardeners, local garden club members, other community programs)	
Who will be maintaining and harvesting the garden?	
Do you have a watering and maintenance schedule?	

<p>Who will be building and planting the garden? (Don't be afraid to ask your collaborator to recruit volunteers)</p>	
<p>If power tools are needed, such as saws or drills, where will they come from? (We cannot purchase these items, so they will need to be borrowed.)</p>	
<p>Additional Garden Items to Consider</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garden tools, such as shovels, hoes, trowels, pruners, and scissors may be needed. • Garden gloves can be used, but are not required – hands must be washed after gardening and should be washed before and after harvesting. • Hoses, hose reels, timers, soaker hoses, and watering cans can be used. • Trellises and plant supports, stakes, and plant markers can be used. • Containers include Earthboxes, planting containers, grow bags, salad boxes, salad tables, seed starter kits, or recycled food-grade containers. • Indoor light stands using shop lights, chain, and pvc pipe can be purchased. • Storage containers and bins are allowed, but no sheds or permanent structures. 	