

# GARDEN TO CAFETERIA WEBINAR

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# GARDEN TO CAFETERIA: FRESH FROM THE SCHOOL GARDEN

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Jennifer Dietrich, West Michigan Academy  
of Environmental Science

Monica DeGarmo, Detroit Public Schools

Kaitlin Wojciak, MSU Extension



**MICHIGAN STATE**  
UNIVERSITY

Center for  
Regional Food Systems

# INTRODUCTIONS

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# WEST MICHIGAN ACADEMY OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE: JENNIFER DIETRICH

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Photo credit: Holly Orians



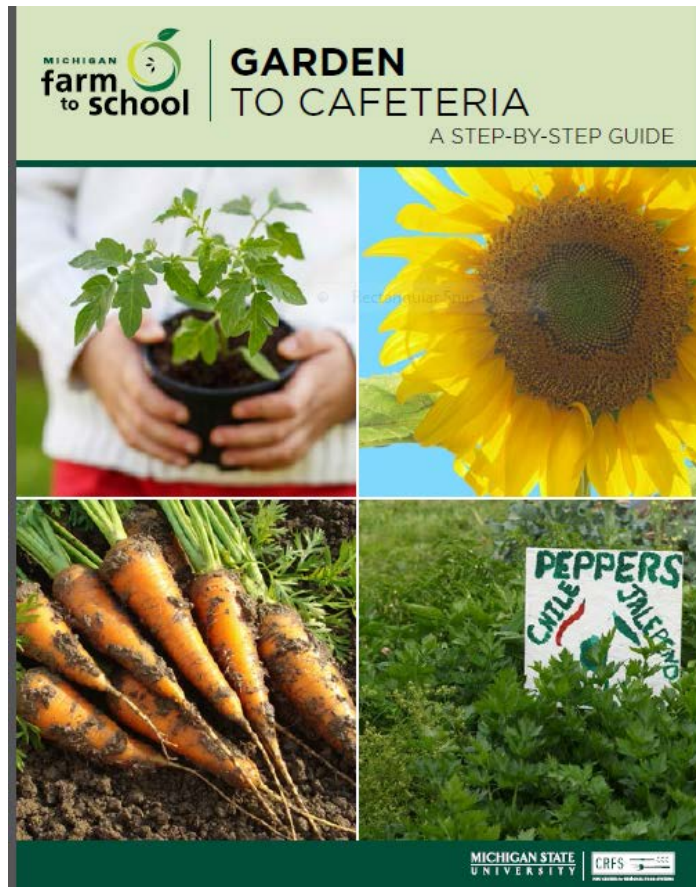
## **Monica DeGarmo**

- Established in 2011, DSGC is operated through the Detroit Public Schools Office of School Nutrition (OSN).
- Mission: to provide fresh, local, and healthy food to our students.
- 78 school gardens and one 3 acre production farm located at Drew Transition Center, an alternative education school for young adults with cognitive and physical special needs.



OSN Staff and students washing freshly harvested produce and preparing it for lunch.

# GARDEN TO CAFETERIA ROADMAP



# STEP ONE: GET STARTED



## GARDEN TO CAFETERIA A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

- **Figure out your assets**
- **Map your Garden to Cafeteria landscape**
- **Think through your goals**

### Step 1: Get Started

#### Garden to Cafeteria Assessment<sup>1</sup>

The following questions are designed to help determine your interest and ability in using school garden produce in your cafeteria. Many of these questions will require input from food service staff members or food service providers. If you are not in one of these roles, try to set up a meeting with these stakeholders to better understand the food service environment. The support and interest of your food service is essential for starting a garden to cafeteria program. This information is helpful when setting up your program and putting systems in place to ensure smooth planning.

#### 1. Food service type

Your food service is:

- Self-operated
- Contracted

Whose approval will you need to pursue a garden to cafeteria program?

- School district administrators
- Food service staff members
- Contracted food service company
- School staff members
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

How would you describe your food service operation?

- Scratch cooking
- Heat-and-serve
- Semi-prepared
- Combination of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Are there specific fresh fruits, vegetables or herbs currently being used in food service that could be easily substituted with school garden produce?

Are there products that could easily supplement the current menu?

Are these foods easy to order on short notice if the garden does not have an adequate supply or there is a crop failure?

# STEP ONE: GET STARTED

## DETROIT SCHOOL GARDEN COLLABORATIVE

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### School Gardens



### Drew Farms





# REGULATIONS

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- **USDA memo 1**
- **USDA memo update**
- **MDARD memo**
- **District or management company policies**

# PLAN FOR FOOD SAFETY

- Check out the tools in the guide: training checklist + planning guidelines
- USDA tip sheet
- Request teachers to attend food safety training



## Food Safety Tips for School Gardens

Schools across the nation are using gardens to help children discover where food comes from and to develop healthy eating habits. Gardens provide a way for children to grow, harvest, prepare, and ultimately taste new fruits and vegetables. When appropriate precautions are taken fruits and vegetables from school gardens can be served safely to students. Before starting a school garden, check with your local health department about their policies on serving food grown in gardens in school meals.

Potential food safety risks should be taken seriously. Produce grown in gardens can be contaminated during growth, harvest, transportation, preparation, or service and result in foodborne illness. The practices addressed in this document will help program operators enhance the safety of fruits and vegetables grown in school gardens.

Produce grown in school gardens may also be served in classrooms. These food safety tips are also applicable for produce served in classrooms. For additional tips, see *Handling Fresh Produce in Classrooms*.

### Site Selection, Materials, and Water Use

- Locate gardens away from potential contamination sources (garbage, utilities, animals, water runoff, flooding, septic systems, etc.).
- Contact the utility companies or call 811, the national "Call Before You Dig" number, a few days before digging to ensure that you avoid gas or electric lines.
- Identify soil history from all sources. Have soil tested to determine levels of contaminants such as chemicals, pesticides, lead, etc., especially if located near high-traffic zones. Contact your local Cooperative Extension Office for information on soil testing services available in your area.
- Create reasonable barriers to keep wild animals away from the garden. Examples include fencing or cages over produce items such as strawberries, leafy greens, etc.
- Consider purchasing soil that has been commercially packaged and labeled for growing food crops. Soil purchased from a commercial source ensures traceability.
- Use non-toxic, non-leaching materials for raised-bed gardens, containers, stakes, or trellises. Do not use pressure-treated wood, used tires, single use plastics, old railroad ties, etc.
- Select non-allergenic and non-toxic plants. Check with your local Cooperative Extension office if you need assistance determining plant safety or toxicity.



# PLAN WHAT TO GROW IN THE GARDEN

Sample Planting Schedule<sup>3</sup>

	March				April				May				June				July				August				September				October				November				Dec.						
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3				
1	DS	Scallions							H	H	H	50	TP	Cherry Tomato							H	H	H	60	DS	Salad Mix	H	H	28														
2	DS	Rad-ish	H	H	21					TP	Hot Pepper							H	H	80	DS	Spinach				H	H	H	H	40													
3				DS	Rad-ish	H	H	21					TP	Sweet Pepper							H	H	H	80	DS	Spinach				H	H	H	H	40									
4				DS	Red Beets				H	H	H	40	TP	Slicing Tomato							H	H	H	75	DS	Spinach				H	H	H	H	40									

Key:

DS - Direct seed	H - Harvest	21 - Days until mature	TP - Transplant	Resting time
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<sup>3</sup> Crop planning model provided courtesy of Rowan Bunce, Rock River Farm, LLC.

# PLAN WHAT TO GROW IN THE GARDEN

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## Consider this:

- Ease of growth
- Educational use
- Seasonality
- Ease of use in food service
- Food safety

# PLAN WHAT TO GROW IN THE GARDEN: OPPORTUNITIES



## Step 1: Get Started

### Michigan Produce Availability Chart

This chart depicts availability in the Lower Peninsula of Michigan. The Upper Peninsula's growing season, including season extension, runs from March through November. Product availability there may be up to a month behind what is shown in this chart.

### MICHIGAN PRODUCE AVAILABILITY\*

\*Availability may vary by variety and with weather conditions. The extended growing season in the Upper Peninsula typically runs from March to November. Fresh and extended season produce may be available two weeks or more later than is suggested below.

CROP	FIELD FRESH			EXTENDED SEASON				STORAGE				
	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Arugula												
Asian Greens (Mizuna, Pac Choi, Tatsol, etc.)												
Asparagus												
Beans, Fresh (Green, Wax, etc.)												
Beets												
Broccoli												
Brussels Sprouts												
Cabbage												
Carrots												
Cauliflower (inc. Romanesco)												
Celery												
Chard												
Corn												
Cucumbers												
Edamame (Green Soybeans)												
Eggplant												
Garlic												
Greens (Beet, Collard, Mustard, Turnip, etc.)												
Kale												
Kohlrabi												
Leeks												
Lettuce (Leaf, Iceberg, Romaine, Bibb, etc.)												
Mushrooms, Fresh												
Onions, Mature												

# STEP TWO: BUILDING COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

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**Building connections increases your likelihood of having a successful and long lasting program!**



# STEP TWO: BUILDING COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

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- **Garden to cafeteria planning meeting**
  - Get on the same page about purpose
  - Identify crop plans, who will be responsible, necessary equipment
  - Create a budget
- **Build a school garden team**
  - Think broadly about who can provide support to your program
- **Make a summer plan**
  - Suggested checklist from DPS
- **Reach out to other organizations for support**
  - Research (or check the guide) for potential partners in your area!

# STEP THREE: DEVELOP AN AGREEMENT

## Step 3: Develop an Agreement

### Harvest and Sales Logs

Recording your harvests helps maintain food traceability by allowing you to track your produce from harvest to when it is eaten. Keeping track of this information is a food safety precaution, in addition to helping you monitor how much you are producing. Numbering or naming your garden beds for use on harvest will assist with documenting traceability. Maintain permanent labels in the garden to assure that the correct information is entered on the log.

Recording the amount of produce going to food service as either sales or donations will allow you to track production, the impact on food services' sourcing, your program's income, and changes over time. This information can be used to support your program. Use the following tools to track your harvests and sales.

### Harvest

Date	Harvester(s)	Product	Bed(s) #	Units harvested (pounds/bunches)
7/14/ 2014	Stefan and Camila	Spinach	1,7,9	2.5 pounds
7/14/ 2014	Stefan and Camila	Basil	2	6 bunches



# STEP THREE: DEVELOP AN AGREEMENT – WMAES EXAMPLE

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**Communication is key!**

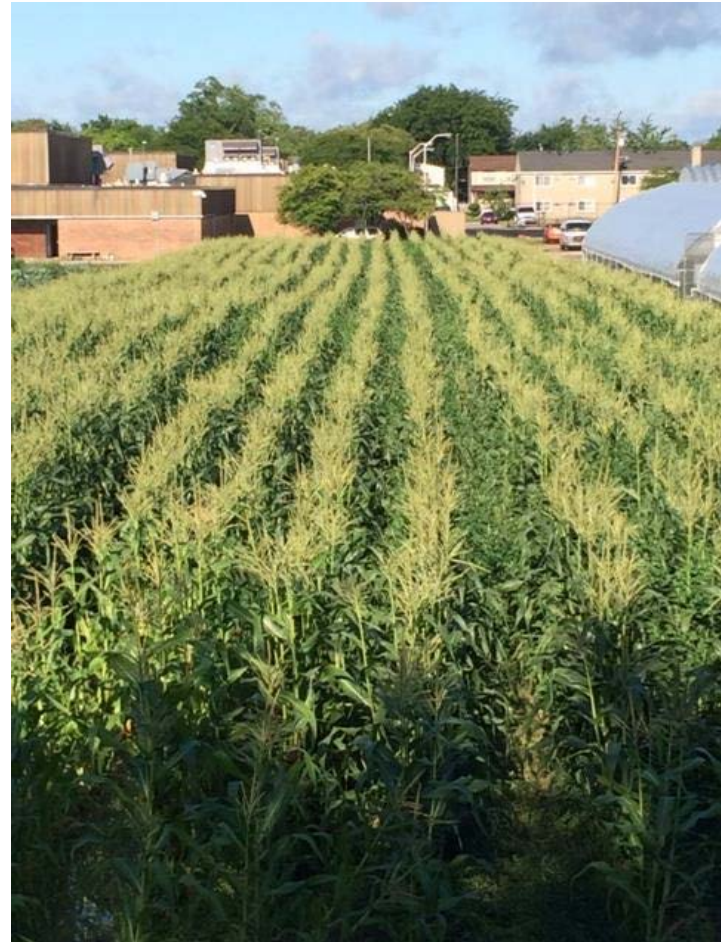
- **You can plan ahead, but expect that things will change**
- **Developing a communication system will assist with unexpected changes and help your program improve**

# STEP THREE: DEVELOP AN AGREEMENT – DPS EXAMPLE

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**Be clear on your goals!**

- **Transitioning into a financially sustainable program**
- **Having stated goals helps the team and stakeholders to work towards a common purpose**



# STEP FOUR: LINK TO GARDEN PRODUCE

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# LINK TO GARDEN PRODUCE

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Photo credit: Holly Orians

- **Garden to cafeteria programs bring school gardens full circle**
- **Summer program involvement**
- **Parent volunteers**
- **Transition away from grant funding**

# LINK TO GARDEN PRODUCE

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- **Building internal partnerships is essential**
- **Consider large and small scale grant opportunities**
- **Explore farmers market partnerships**
- **Get creative with programming possibilities**

# BENEFITS OF GARDEN TO CAFETERIA

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# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS: WMAES

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Photo credit: Holly Orians

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS: DPS

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# OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN MORE + GET INVOLVED!

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- **4-H Junior Master Gardener Workshop, Feb. 26<sup>th</sup> at MSU Tollgate Farm + Education Center**  
<http://events.anr.msu.edu/event.cfm?folder=JMGTeacherVolunteerTollgate>
- **MSU Extension Starting and Sustaining a School Garden in Jackson on February 24<sup>th</sup> and Novi on April 15<sup>th</sup>.** Email [hahnk@anr.msu.edu](mailto:hahnk@anr.msu.edu) for more information.
- **Join the Michigan Farm to School List Serv at**  
[http://foodsystems.msu.edu/activity/info/farm to school](http://foodsystems.msu.edu/activity/info/farm_to_school)  
under “Link to Local”
  - Includes monthly school garden newsletter
- **National Farm to Cafeteria Conference, June 2-4 in Madison, WI**
  - More information at <http://farmtocafeteriaconference.org/8/>



# QUESTIONS? KEEP IN TOUCH

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**Monica DeGarmo:**

**[monica.rischiotto@detroitk12.org](mailto:monica.rischiotto@detroitk12.org)**

**Jennifer Dietrich:**

**[jenniferdietrich@choiceschools.com](mailto:jenniferdietrich@choiceschools.com)**

**Kaitlin Wojciak:**

**[kaitwoj@anr.msu.edu](mailto:kaitwoj@anr.msu.edu)**

**Abby Harper:**

**[harperab@anr.msu.edu](mailto:harperab@anr.msu.edu)**