



School Garden Assessment Tool

Instructions:

The School Garden Assessment Tool should be used to identify and track areas of improvement in school garden programming. This Tool should be used by Programs who are currently implementing school garden projects and are ready to assess the current state of the garden in order to expand and/or improve garden-related programming, as well as to track efforts through reassessment.

Once you have completed the School Garden Assessment Tool, your data should be entered into the Excel document located on the CalFresh Healthy Living, University of California State Office's website - <https://uccalfresh.ucdavis.edu/initiatives/gardening>

The last tab of the Excel document, "Results and Planning" should be submitted to the State Office. Instructions for doing so are on the website at the above link.

Sections:

Site Information
Institutional Support and Partnerships
Garden Planning, Maintenance, and Support
Student Experience
Parent and Community Engagement and Support
Results and Planning

Assessment Lead:	Type your first and last name	
Position or job title:	Type your position or job title	
Assessment Collaborators:	Add name(s) and affiliation(s) of all who assisted in completing this assessment	
Date of assessment:	Month/Day/Year	
Site name:	Type site name	
Settings using garden Select all that apply	School	Notes
	Early Care and Education (ECE)	Notes
	Before/After School	Notes
	Other (please specify)	Specify "other"

Site Information		
	Mark "X" if applies	Add notes or further information, if applicable

1 In what ways is the garden used to support nutrition and physical activity at the site? Select all that apply	Used as an outdoor classroom	Notes
	Adults work in the garden as part of Worksite Wellness or parent education	Notes
	Showcased during Farm to School events	Notes
	Linkages made with the cafeteria	Notes
	Used to increase physical activity	Notes
	Excess food is donated to a food bank or food pantry	Notes
	Other, please specify	Notes
2 How long has your garden been operating? Choose the closest option.		Notes
3 During what months of the year is the garden active? i.e., the garden is being prepped, maintained, used for education or events, and/or harvested. Select all that apply	September	Notes
	October	Notes
	November	Notes
	December	Notes
	January	Notes
	February	Notes
	March	Notes
	April	Notes
	May	Notes
	June	Notes
July	Notes	
August	Notes	
4 What type of crops are grown in the garden?	Cold-season crops grown in the fall semester (e.g., plant September 1st and harvest crops by Thanksgiving or before winter break) Warm-season crops grown in the spring (e.g., plant April 15th and harvest some crops before school ends or during summer camp)	Notes Describe the types of plants that are grown
5 Is your garden on the school campus? If it is off the school campus, please describe the location.		Notes Describe the location if OFF campus

Site Information

Mark "X" if applies

Add notes or further information, if applicable

6 What type of garden is at this school site? Select all that apply.	In-ground bed(s)		Provide the number of areas	Provide the size of the plot (width and length)
	Raised bed(s)		Provide the number of beds	Provide the average size of the beds (width and length)
	Planters/Pots/Containers		Provide the number of planters and/or pots	Provide the average size of the planters/pots (diameter or width and length)
	Windowsill/Indoor garden		Provide the number of windowsill or indoor garden container types	Provide the average size of the containers (diameter or width and length)
	Other (please specify)		Provide the number/amount of the "other" type of garden	Provide the size of the "other" type of garden

7 Please describe the school garden. Provide relevant information that relates to the location, unique characteristics, or other details.	Please describe the school garden.
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SNAP-Ed allowable plant types

8 What types of plants are grown in your school garden? Select all that apply.	Vegetables		Specify number and type of varieties	Notes
	Herbs		Specify number and type of varieties	Notes
	Fruit plants		Specify number and type of varieties	Notes
	NON - SNAP-Ed allowable plant types (funded by school/outside support)			
	Fruit trees		Specify number and type of varieties	Notes
	Ornamentals		Specify number and type of varieties	Notes
	Nuts		Specify number and type of varieties	Notes
	California native plants		Specify number and type of varieties	Notes
	Wildlife habitat		Specify number and type of varieties	Notes
	Other (please specify)		Specify the "other" type of plant	Notes

9 What features does your garden have? Check all that apply.	Basic Features		
	Accessible water source		Notes
	Walkways		Notes
	Seating		Notes
	Signage		Notes
	Safety and Security		Notes
	Tool shed/storage area		Notes
	Compost area or system		Notes
	Other, please specify:		Notes Specify "other"
	Advanced Features		
	Sink(s)		Notes
	Food prep/Kitchen area		Notes
	Weather station		Notes
	Worm bins		Notes
	Outdoor teaching area (benches, tables, seated gatherin area, amphitheater, etc.)		Notes
	Theme gardens		Notes
	Rainwater harvesting		Notes
	Solar panels		Notes
	Pond or water feature		Notes
	Automated irrigation system		Notes
Greehouse		Notes	
Domestic animals (chickens, ducks, rabbits, etc.)		Notes	
Other, please specify:		Notes Specify "other"	

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Institutional Support and Partnerships

	Low	Mark "X" if applies	Intermediate	Mark "X" if applies	High	Mark "X" if applies	Points
1 Does the school administration provide support for the garden?	No		Yes AND they provide at least ONE of the following:		Yes AND they provide at least TWO OR MORE of the following:		
	They are aware of the garden but do not provide additional support		Promotion of school garden to teachers, students, and parents		Promotion of school garden to teachers, students, and parents		
			Professional development opportunities for teachers		Professional development opportunities for teachers		
			Resources or materials		Resources or materials		
			Maintenance/landscaping support (e.g., maintenance staff time)		Maintenance/landscaping support (e.g., maintenance staff time)		
			Other, please specify		Other, please specify		
Notes							
2 Is there a school garden committee to support the garden?	No There is no school garden committee.		Yes BUT it does not meet regularly		Yes AND it meets regularly		
	Notes Describe the school garden committee and its members						
3 Does the school garden have a written Vision and/or Mission Statement that aligns with that of the school?	No NEITHER a Vision or Mission statement exist		Yes BUT it is not included in any school policy or document -OR- It is included in a document other than the School Wellness Policy		Yes AND it is included in the School Wellness Policy		
	Notes Please write Vision and Mission statement or reference where it can be found						
4 Is there a designated school garden coordinator?	No There is no school garden coordinator -OR- The school garden coordinator is not integrated into the school (e.g., SNAP-Ed staff)		Yes AND the school garden coordinator is integrated into the school (e.g., a teacher, school staff, parent volunteer, Master Gardener) -BUT- They are not paid for this role.		Yes AND the school garden coordinator is integrated into the school (e.g., a teacher, school staff, parent volunteer, Master Gardener) -AND- They are paid for this role.		
	Notes Describe the school garden coordinator's role						
5 During this academic year, has your school garden received funds or in-kind material donations, beyond SNAP-Ed funding?	No No other funding was received		Yes Funding was received from an organization <i>outside</i> the school with the possibility of continuation e.g., individual donations, community or business donations, grants		Yes Funding was received from <i>school or district funds</i> , including PTA/PTO funds, and is integrated into the school budget or otherwise from a sustainable source.		
	Notes Describe the funding or donations received and what they were used for. e.g., seeds, plants, irrigation repairs, tools, compost (refresh beds each year), mulch (straw), fertilizer (basic slow-release vegetable fertilizer NPK 4-5-3 or 10-10-10), soil test kits and amendments if needed, season extenders (row cover and/or hoops with 6 mil plastic), prevention of predators (bird netting or row cover), etc.						

Institutional Support and Partnerships

Institutional Support and Partnerships						
	Low	Mark "X" if applies	Intermediate	Mark "X" if applies	High	Mark "X" if applies
	No		Yes		Yes	
<p>6 Besides CalFresh Healthy Living, University of California, do other organizations collaborate with the school to support the school garden? Include a brief description of their role.</p>	No other organizations collaborated with the school		Organizations collaborated with the school on a one-time or semi-regular basis without continued commitment		Organizations collaborated with the school on a regular basis with continued commitment	
	<p>Notes</p> <p>Describe the roles of collaborating organizations</p>					

	SCORE	0
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Garden Planning, Maintenance, and Support

	Low	Mark "X" if applies	Intermediate	Mark "X" if applies	High	Mark "X" if applies	Points
1 Is there a year-long maintenance plan for the garden?	No		Yes		Yes		
	-OR- It contains only ONE of the following:		AND it contains SOME (2-3) but NOT all) of the following:		AND it contains ALL of the following:		
	Assigned roles and responsibilities		Assigned roles and responsibilities		Assigned roles and responsibilities		
	Work tasks		Work tasks		Work tasks		
	Regularly scheduled work days		Regularly scheduled work days		Regularly scheduled work days		
	A timeline		A timeline		A timeline		
Other (please specify)		Other (please specify)		<i>Optional:</i> Other (please specify)			
Notes Describe the maintenance plan							
2 Is <u>preparation</u> of the physical garden a collaborative effort that is integrated into the school?	No		Yes		Yes		
	An outside organization or person does most of the work with little to no collaboration from the school.		Some students and teachers are involved -BUT- Little or no involvement from other members of the school, including staff, administrators, and parents -AND- A garden coordinator or other leader leads the effort.		Many different students and teachers are involved -AND- Other members of the school, including staff, administrators, and parents are involved -AND- A garden coordinator leads the effort.		
Notes							
3 Is <u>planting</u> of the garden a collaborative effort that is integrated into the school?	No		Yes		Yes		
	An outside organization or person does most of the work with little to no collaboration from the school.		Some students and teachers are involved -BUT- Little or no involvement from other members of the school, including staff, administrators, and parents -AND- A garden coordinator or other leader leads the effort.		Many different students and teachers are involved -AND- Other members of the school, including staff, administrators, and parents are involved -AND- A garden coordinator leads the effort.		
Notes							
4 Is <u>maintenance</u> of the garden a collaborative effort that is integrated into the school?	No		Yes		Yes		
	An outside organization or person does most of the work with little to no collaboration from the school.		Some students and teachers are involved -BUT- Little or no involvement from other members of the school, including staff, administrators, and parents -AND- A garden coordinator or other leader leads the effort.		Many different students and teachers are involved -AND- Other members of the school, including staff, administrators, and parents are involved -AND- A garden coordinator leads the effort.		
Notes Please specify "other"							

Garden Planning, Maintenance, and Support

Garden Planning, Maintenance, and Support							
	Low	Mark "X" if applies	Intermediate	Mark "X" if applies	High	Mark "X" if applies	Points
5 Is <u>harvesting</u> of the garden a collaborative effort that is integrated into the school?	No		Yes		Yes		
	An outside organization or person does most of the work with little to no collaboration from the school.		Some students and teachers are involved -BUT- Little or no involvement from other members of the school, including staff, administrators, and parents -AND- A garden coordinator or other leader leads the effort.		Many different students and teachers are involved -AND- Other members of the school, including staff, administrators, and parents are involved -AND- A garden coordinator leads the effort.		
Notes							
6 Does the garden have features of accessibility?	No		Yes		Yes		
	None or only ONE of the following:		AND it has MOST (2-3) of the following:		AND it has ALL of the following:		
	Ample space for current activities		Ample space for current activities		Ample space for current activities		
	Regular open hours		Regular open hours		Regular open hours		
	Accessibility for those with disabilities		Accessibility for those with disabilities		Accessibility for those with disabilities		
Other features (please specify)		Other features (please specify)		<i>Optional:</i> Other features (please specify)			
Notes							
SCORE						0	
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Student Experience							
	Low	Mark "X" if applies	Intermediate	Mark "X" if applies	High	Mark "X" if applies	Points
1 Is there a school garden club?	No		Yes		Yes		
	There is no school garden club.		BUT it does not meet regularly		AND it does meet regularly		
Notes							
2 Is the school garden used for academic instruction?	No		Yes		Yes		
	The school garden is not used for academic instruction		BUT on an inconsistent basis or for special events or circumstances only.		AND on a consistently scheduled basis in which the school garden is integrated into academic instruction.		
Notes							
Indicate which subjects are taught (Mathematics, English-Language Arts, History/Social Sciences, Science, and/or Other)							
AND							
Which grade level of students are taught.							
3 Is a garden-based curriculum used to teach in the garden?	No		Yes		Yes		
			BUT on an inconsistent basis or for special events or circumstances only.		AND on a consistently scheduled basis in which the garden-based curriculum is integrated into the school year.		
4 Is it SNAP-Ed approved?	A garden-based curriculum is not used to teach in the garden.		No		Yes		
5 Is the instructor from the school?			No		Yes		
			Organizations or individuals outside of the school teach the curriculum. (e.g., SNAP-Ed staff, nonprofit organizations, non-school community volunteers)		An individual or individuals linked or integrated into the school teach the curriculum. (e.g., parent volunteers, garden coordinator, teachers)		
Notes							
Indicate which grade level of students are taught.							
6 Outside of garden instruction or planned events, do <u>students</u> interact with the garden?	No		Yes		Yes		
	Students only use the garden during instruction or events.		Students are provided unstructured access to the garden to explore -BUT- few show interest.		Students are provided unstructured access to the garden to explore -AND- many show interest.		
Notes							
Indicate when students are allowed unstructured access to the garden (during recess, before school, after school, weekends, etc.)							
Also note if any efforts are made to encourage students to use the garden during these times.							
7 Is the garden connected to the cafeteria?	No		Yes		Yes		
			ONE or TWO of the following:		THREE or MORE of the following:		
			Garden signage is linked to foods served in the cafeteria		Garden signage is linked to foods served in the cafeteria		
			Produce from the garden is used in taste testings		Produce from the garden is used in taste testings		
			Produce from the garden is donated to families at the school or a food bank		Produce from the garden is donated to families at the school or a food bank		
			Produce from the garden is used in the school cafeteria		Produce from the garden is used in the school cafeteria		
The garden is NOT connected to the cafeteria in any formal way.		Other (Please specify)		Other (Please specify)			
Notes							
SCORE							0

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Parent and Community Engagement and Support

Parent and Community Engagement and Support							
	Low	Select "X" if applies	Intermediate	Select "X" if applies	High	Select "X" if applies	Points
1 Is the garden open to parents and/or neighborhood or community members? <small>Examples include fundraising, event planning, event support, garden work days, and more.</small>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	The garden is only open/available to students.		For specific events and/or work days only.		Regular open hours are maintained and posted.		
Notes							
2 Are parents and/or community members involved in supporting the garden? <small>Examples include fundraising, event planning, event support, garden work days, and more.</small>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Neither parents nor community members are involved in supporting the garden		BUT only on a semi-regular or inconsistent basis		AND on a regular and consistently scheduled basis		
Notes Please specify how parents/ community members support the garden.							
3 Is news about the school garden, including events and work days, as well as updates, communicated to <u>parents</u>?	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Communication about the school garden is not sent out or informal means of communication are relied upon.		BUT not in a consistent manner and/or for specific events and/or work days only.		AND information is communicated regularly as part of an established practice or process.		
Notes Please describe how news is communicated							
4 Is news about the school garden, including events and work days, as well as updates, communicated to <u>the community</u> (beyond parents)?	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Communication about the school garden is not sent out or informal means of communication are relied upon.		BUT not in a consistent manner and/or for specific events and/or work days only.		AND information is communicated regularly as part of an established practice or process.		
Notes Please describe how news is communicated							
SCORE							0

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Results and Planning

	Score		Possible Points		Level	Improvement Areas
INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT AND PARTNERSHIPS	0	/	60	=		Please briefly describe how you think you can improve in the following topical areas, if any.
GARDEN PLANNING, MAINTENANCE, AND SUPPORT	0	/	60	=		Please briefly describe how you think you can improve in the following topical areas, if any.
STUDENT EXPERIENCE	0	/	60	=		Please briefly describe how you think you can improve in the following topical areas, if any.
PARENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT	0	/	40	=		Please briefly describe how you think you can improve in the following topical areas, if any.
TOTAL SCORE	0	/	220	=		

GOALS for next academic year	Based on: your scores, what has the potential for improvement, and your plans for the upcoming year, please identify 1-3 goals for this school garden site. As appropriate, link to specific items in the assessment.	1
		2
		3
TECHNICAL SUPPORT NEEDED (SNAP-ED Staff Needs)	Indicate what type of technical support you need from the CalFresh Healthy Living, University of California State Office .	
TECHNICAL SUPPORT NEEDED (School/Site Needs)	Indicate what type of technical support the site needs from the CalFresh Healthy Living, University of California County Programs .	
CHALLENGES TO YOUR WORK AND THE SUCCESS OF THE GARDEN	Indicate challenges your work with this school garden faces. You may also include technical support needs beyond that which the CalFresh Healthy Living, University of California State Office can provide. <i>E.g., staffing, gardening knowledge, supplies, funding, space constraints, vandalism, time, etc.</i>	
FACILITATORS OF YOUR WORK AND THE SUCCESS OF THE GARDEN	Indicate what factors have facilitated your work with this school garden. <i>This information can be helpful to share out with other county offices as well as provide information to the CalFresh Healthy Living, University of California State Office team to determine continued support.</i>	

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