



CULTIVATING NUTRITION & LEARNING  
THROUGH IDAHO SCHOOL GARDENS



## Introduction to School Gardening

A school garden allows educators to incorporate hands-on learning, allowing students to become active participants in the learning process. School gardens come in all shapes and sizes. A school garden may be as small as a few pots on a windowsill or as large as an acre plot of vegetables in a schoolyard. A garden program can fit the diverse needs and resources of any school.

The Idaho State Department of Education, Child Nutrition Programs provided ten Idaho schools with School Garden Grants to enhance classroom curriculum, nutrition education, and increase students' interest and understanding of healthy foods. The Garden Grant schools had the option of either expanding current school garden programs or implementing a new school garden program with the funding.

To kick off this project, the Child Nutrition Programs and the Idaho Department of Agriculture partnered with Idaho Ag in the Classroom to teach 74 teachers throughout the state how to implement school gardens. Teachers at this workshop learned how to teach nutrition and other school curriculum through hands-on learning in school gardens.

Every teacher left the workshop with his or her own salad garden in a bucket to practice gardening skills during the summer and prepare for implementing school gardens the

next school year.

The ten School Garden Grant sites implemented successful school gardening programs in their own unique way. These school garden sites each have wonderful stories to share about the positive effects the school gardens had on student learning. All ten gardens are featured in this book to provide schools throughout Idaho examples of successful techniques for implementing a school garden program. The School Garden key contact from each site is listed along with their tips and advice for other schools.

Successful school garden programs engage students in their development and design, have the support of school leadership, and are integrated with academic goals. The State Department of Education encourages schools throughout the state to implement school gardens to engage students in active learning and a healthy lifestyle.

