

FRESH from the Garden

Save the Date

Mark your calendar now! The PHHI School Garden Summer Institute will be August 14-15. We're still working out the programming details, but expect topics like vermiculture (That's worm farming!), hydroponics, GAPS certification (Could your garden produce be served in the cafeteria?), fundraising, garden clubs, and of course how to teach standards in the garden.



Field Trip!

Doug and Amy traveled to LifeLab in Santa Cruz, California, in mid-January to attend the School Garden Support Organization Conference, sponsored by Whole Kids Foundation of Whole Foods. They were excited about the opportunity to network with other School Garden champions and came back energized and inspired to further facilitate education through this unique outdoor learning space.

Doug's take-aways:

- Establish a peer-to-peer communication platform for teachers to share school garden information, questions, etc.
- Help local schools establish onsite school garden educators.
- Promote the importance of teachers being more connected to the nationwide movement of school gardens. Assisting teachers in finding out about and attending nationwide trainings (like those offered through LifeLab).
- Share the usefulness of school Farmer's Markets.

Amy's take-aways:

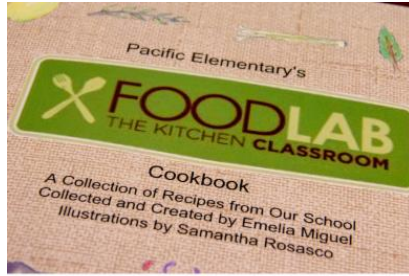
- Continue to build new gardens but concentrate on depth over breadth.



- Focus on helping our students expand their garden programs by working with the county to establish more professional development options, a school garden PLC, and peer-to-peer networking opportunities.
- Develop UbD plans.
- Identify barriers to teaching in the school garden and provide tools to overcome barriers.
- Reach out to non-teaching staff members who could utilize the garden such as school nurses and counselors.

Bonus:

One of Amy's favorite experiences of the week was visiting Pacific Elementary School where all students not only work in the garden weekly, but the 5th and 6th graders also prepare and cook lunch for grades 3-6 DAILY in what they call FoodLab. Each day of the week a different group of students prepares lunch from scratch: preparing fresh vegetables, making homemade bread, setting the table, menu planning and plating. They do all this, while taking into consideration federal My Plate guidelines as well as individual food restrictions and allergies. The students, with the help of only two adults, prepared our lunch of barbecue sandwiches with homemade rolls, roasted Brussels sprouts and potatoes, kale salad and apples. Amy said, "It was one of the best meals I had all week; but just imagine how much those students are learning and they are only out of the classroom two hours a week." Read more about FoodLab [here](#) and [here](#).



February Lunch Menu

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
February Wellness Challenge 1) Consume every one of your class's items. 2) Make your own items this year, such as homemade croutons, or friendship bracelets. 3) Get your heart pumping - run, jump, dance, play hard.	Chinese New Year Steamed Dumplings Egg Drop Soup Chicken or Tofu Stir Fry with Garlic Sauce Noodles	Purke or Veggie Potato Wedges Roasted Root Veggies Garden Salad Seasonal Fruit Milk	The Clean Challenge Cook-On 100% Barley, February 100% Canned in the Beans and more for Seasonal Fruit Milk	Shells to Cheese Portico Grilled Corn Caramel Salad Seasonal Fruit Milk
Chickadee Chicken Pizza w/ Roll Roast Garden Salad Seasonal Veggie Seasonal Fruit Milk	Chinese New Year Steamed Dumplings Egg Drop Soup Chicken or Tofu Stir Fry with Garlic Sauce Noodles	Purke or Veggie Potato Wedges Roasted Root Veggies Garden Salad Seasonal Fruit Milk	The Clean Challenge Cook-On 100% Barley, February 100% Canned in the Beans and more for Seasonal Fruit Milk	Shells to Cheese Portico Grilled Corn Caramel Salad Seasonal Fruit Milk
Heavenly Grilled Chicken Banana Split Caramel Salad	Asian Chicken or Veggie Salad WW Noodles	BBQ Pork or Tofu Sandwich Coleslaw	Valentine's Day Black Bean Tostitos Empanada or Macaroni	No School PRESIDENTS



Fiskars Project Orange Thumb Grant

In order to be eligible for a [Project Orange Thumb grant](#), the garden initiative must be for a not-for-profit or 501(c)(3) organization within North America that has not received a Project Orange Thumb grant in the past. The Project Orange Thumb team looks for organizations committed to the long-term success of gardens that will promote healthy and sustainable food sources, community collaboration and neighborhood beautification. Thirty winners will receive \$2,500 in gift cards and tools to help support their goals of neighborhood beautification and horticulture education.



[Applications](#) are due March 4.



In the Garden Now



Plant

It's time to plant! Check out the [Vegetable Planting Guide](#) for NC-specific planting tips (planting window, spacing, days to harvest, etc). Planting season can start with many crops around February 15. Remember two reasons for following an early planting schedule is to prevent bolting of several different crops and to be certain your harvest happens while school is still in session.

Harvest

February is a slow harvest month; you might still have some kale, collards or other leafy green vegetables carrying over from fall. You are only a month or so away from harvesting your first crop of radishes and lettuce once you get these crops planted.

Maintenance

Once you plant, irrigation is key. The first week of February had temps in the mid-70s! That can dry out young seedlings with thin, shallow roots very quickly. Take care to train those watering with a hose so that they do not wash out the young seedlings with too much force or flooding in the bed. Watch for hard freezes or frost warnings that may require beds to be covered with season extenders. Season extenders can also accumulate a lot of heat if left closed on a sunny (though chilly) day. Take care not to “burn” young seedlings.



Remind App



If you would like to receive messages about local weather (Cabarrus County) or reminders to cover your beds to prevent frost damage, sign up for the Remind app on your smartphone. You can receive push notifications or text message alerts. Here's a [quick guide](#) on how to sign up.

Find more School Garden Resources on our website:

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Questions? Contact us!

Amy Bowman • asbowman@ncsu.edu

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