

SCHOOL GARDEN AND EDUCATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Administered by



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Sponsored by
The South Carolina Department of Education
and South Carolina Farm to School



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Information and Instructions

The S.C. Department of Education's Office of Health and Nutrition recognizes the importance of educating students about agriculture, nutrition and making healthier food choices. There is a strong interest among school districts and communities to incorporate locally produced farm foods into school nutrition programs as well as incorporate agriculture and nutrition education through school gardens. Our office supports Farm to School efforts through a number of initiatives and continues to look for ways to help facilitate this important connection.

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) is pleased to announce a new assistance program, School Garden and Education Instruction, administered by Clemson Extension's School Gardening for SC Educators. The goal of the program is to introduce children to hands on agriculture and nutrition education as well as encourage public schools to use locally grown South Carolina produce in their school menus. The effort will support better health outcomes for children and economic opportunities for our local farmers.

School Gardening for SC Educators is a program offered and facilitated by the Clemson University Extension.

Eligible Entities:

- All South Carolina public schools currently participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or School Breakfast Program (SBP) are eligible to apply.
- Only three (3) schools awarded per district. Schools previously awarded are not eligible.

Purpose Statement:

By sponsoring the School Gardening for SC Educators program, the South Carolina Department of Education intends to support the capacity of schools and school districts in South Carolina to implement and expand agriculture and nutrition education through school gardening.

Program Outcomes:

- Building or enhancing of school gardens and related educational opportunities
- Maintaining a raised garden in the school environment over a two-year period

Program Overview:

- Each awarded school will receive:
 - An all-inclusive school garden kit to be delivered to the school for the purpose of growing fruits, vegetables and/or flowers.
 - A hands-on training workshop for the awardee's garden team as well as an online training course. (Required)
 - *The Garden Stem: Curriculum for your Garden Classroom* (K-8 agriculture and nutrition based lesson plans customized to South Carolina state teaching standards)
 - *Seasonal Planting Guide and Calendar for School Gardens*

Application and Timeline:

Application Open	Tuesday, October 1, 2024
Application Deadline	Friday, December 6, 2024 at 5pm EST
Announcement of Awards	Mid-February 2025
Mandatory Training Date (Required)	TBD February / March 2025
Project Duration	February 2025 – February 2026
Mid-Point Survey	TBD September 2025
Final Survey	TBD February 2026

How to Apply:

- Complete application is on the South Carolina Department of Education website. <https://ed.sc.gov/districts-schools/health-and-nutrition/>
- Submit application by the due date, Friday, December 6, 2024 at 5pm EST.

If awarded, the following activities are required. Please be sure to read and acknowledge these responsibilities:

- Representatives (1 required) from the school garden team must attend a one-day, in person (or virtual) training workshop.
- Three teachers/staff serving on the garden team must complete an on-line course before receiving the award. Each teacher completing the course will receive the included textbook with curriculum, ***The Garden STEM.***
- The school must implement and maintain the raised bed provided. The bed and gardening materials will be furnished along with soil for the raised bed. The school agrees to install the bed, plant vegetables, use the bed as an outside laboratory for students and teach them about where their food comes from by using the garden as part of the education process. The school must maintain the raised bed for two years during the school year.
- Complete two surveys to provide project information by September 2025 and February 2026. The on-line surveys will take approximately 30 minutes each to complete.
- Ensure compliance with providing signed publicity releases as needed for media mentions and photo use (to be provided).
- Complete project implementation by February, 2026.
- Allow program administrators and/or sponsors to periodically perform site visits.

Need assistance?

Email SCDE staff at schoolgardens@ed.sc.gov with any questions regarding the program and application.

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Checklist for Application Completion

To successfully complete the application process:

- ☐ Read the application packet in its entirety.
- ☐ Select your garden team consisting of at least the following – Three (3) teachers and the school food service director or representative.
- ☐ Complete ALL items on the application form.
- ☐ Obtain all required signatures.
- ☐ Three teachers must plan to complete the on-line course before receiving the award.
- ☐ Appropriate team members complete the required training in February / March 2025 to receive the award supplies.
- ☐ Deadline to apply is Friday December 6, 2024 at 5pm EST.

Submit the completed application by email to schoolgardens@ed.sc.gov.

