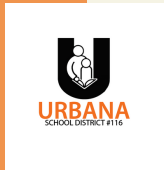


# Urbana School District 116

## Farm to School Planning Report and Action Plan



C-U Farm to School

Local Produce



School Gardens



Agriculture Education



## October 2021

Presented by the C-U Farm to School Leadership Team  
in coordination with Urbana School District 116  
and informed by the USD116 Farm to School Steering Committee



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With assistance from the USD116 Farm to School Steering Committee and others

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# Farm to School Team

## 1. Background

The Champaign-Urbana Farm to School Leadership Team (LT) was formed with staff from Sola Gratia Farm (SGF) and the Champaign-Urbana Health District (CUPHD) in late 2019 when funding was sought from the US Department of Agriculture Farm to School (USDA F2S) Program for a 12-month planning process for both the Urbana School District #116 (USD116) and Community Unit School District #4 (CUSD4). Funding was awarded in the Summer of 2020 after many changes rippled through both districts due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Leadership Team revised the proposed project scope and timeline in light of all schools in both districts closing in-person school and meal service and instead offering remote learning and take-home lunches. As a result, the LT opted to move forward with the 12-month planning process for the Urbana School District only, as the need is greater as evidenced by all schools qualifying for the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). The USD116 F2S Steering Committee (SC) was formed in Fall 2020 and met quarterly through the Summer of 2021. Subcommittees were formed and met more regularly in order to further inform and develop the Urbana School District Farm to School Action Plan (AP).

## 2. Members

Leadership Team:

Traci Barkley: Director, Sola Gratia Farm

Valerie Koress, MS, RDN: Community Nutrition Program Coordinator,  
Champaign-Urbana Public Health District

Fiona Munro: Outreach and Education Coordinator, Sola Gratia Farm

Jennifer Lotton, MS, RDN: Special Projects Coordinator, Champaign-Urbana  
Public Health District

Steering Committee:

Carol Baker, USD116 Chief Financial Officer

Kim Norton, USD116 Assistant Superintendent

Lara Orr, USD116 Board of Education Member and USD116 Parent

Randy Ashman, USD116 Director of Facilities Services

Sandy Davin, USD116 Director of Before and After School Child Care Programs

Thomas Magers, Thomas Paine (TP) School Principal

Jennifer Rohn, Gerber School Principal

Amanda Perez-Rosser, Urbana High School (UHS) Career and Technical  
Education Department Chair

Cheyenne Warman-Neal, UHS Culinary Arts Teacher

Dan Doeing, UHS Agriculture Education Instructor and Future Farmers of  
America (FFA) Advisor

Bob Jacobs, Urbana Middle School (UMS) Special Education Teacher

Cara Maurizi, King School Teacher  
Jodi Miller, Leal School Teacher  
Beth Satterthwaite, Leal School Teacher  
Jill Quisenberry, Wiley School Teacher  
Hannah Gibes, Yankee Ridge School Teacher  
Florence Mathieu, Yankee Ridge (YR) School Teacher  
Maggie Byrne, Dr. Williams (PW) School Teacher  
Nora Miller, Urbana Early Childhood (UEC) Teacher  
Oyatta Hanny, King School Family Liaison/Mentor and Community Involvement  
Coordinator  
Mitzy Maldonado, Dr. Williams (PW) Dual-Language Family Liaison  
Jada Lutterbach, Arbor Food Management, Inc. (Arbor) District Manager  
Jonathan Schmit, Arbor Food Management Operations Supervisor  
Staci Jordan, Arbor Food Management Operations Assistant  
Glenn Kratz, Central Illinois Produce Vice President of Sales  
Kelly Hill, C-U Schools Foundation Director  
Kelly Jo Lamb, Piato's Owner  
Ann Swanson, Hendrick House Farm Director  
Rebecca McBride, C-U City Farms Director  
Lorien Carsey, Blue Moon Farm Owner  
Matt Turino, University of Illinois (U of I) Sustainable Student Farm Manager  
Erin Harper, U of I Extension Local Food Systems and Small Farms Educator  
Stephanie Acevedo, U of I Extension SNAP-Ed Educator  
Mynda Tracy, U of I Extension 4 H Youth Development Educator  
Myla Munro, U of I Extension 4 H Youth Development Educator  
Melissa Prescott, Assistant Professor of School/Childhood Foods and Nutrition,  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
Cassidy Dellorto-Blackwell, The Land Connection Farmer Training Program  
Manager  
Jennifer Schroeder, C-UPHD Environmental Health Specialist  
Mary Hosier, Farm to School Advisor  
Jaimee Gleisner, USD116 Parent  
Jamie Minnaert-Grote, USD116 Parent  
Melissa Stone, USD116 Parent  
Tania Stori, USD116 Parent  
Sarah Scully, USD116 Parent  
Theo Johnson, USD116 Student

### **3. Structure**

The Steering Committee worked as a whole to discuss and develop the F2S Program vision statement, goals, strategies, and action items as well as steer the development and

distribution of USD116 community surveys. Three subcommittees were formed including Edible Grow Spaces, Curriculum, and Procurement to develop action items for relevant strategies as well as inform the development of the F2S Action Plan (AP). The LT anticipates the establishment of school-based subcommittees as portions of the AP are implemented, particularly the curriculum and edible grow space action items.

In July and August of 2021, Urbana High School teachers from the Agriculture and Family and Consumer Science Departments as well as the Operations Supervisor from Arbor Food Management for UHS joined members of the LT to participate in the Illinois Farm to School Network (IFSN) F2S Institute. Participants participated in 6 weeks of modules that both informed and spurred conversations regarding implementation and integration of fresh food production, preparation, consumption, and education into the classroom, extra-curricular, and dining activities.

#### **4. Needed Members and Advisors**

In order to sustain F2S work and to garner the necessary range of diverse perspectives on the needs for F2S implementation, it would be beneficial to develop the SC to include a wider membership base. Recommendations include:

- Engaged students from all district schools
- More non-native English speakers, individuals of diverse cultural backgrounds, and BIPOC community members
- Key USD personnel, including USD STEM Coordinator, USD Wellness Committee Member, USD Director of Curriculum and Student Learning

#### **5. Next Steps**

The Steering Committee will continue to meet quarterly, with adjustments to membership based on interest, representation, and current project needs, until the USD116 F2S program can be sustainable and equitably maintained without its guidance. In the immediate future, the SC intends to:

- Engage with each school's community in order to solicit further participation from needed members. This may include appearing at school events and communicating through classroom teachers to reach students.
- Welcome, and orient new staff hires within USD116 whose work connects to the project. Specifically, the SC anticipates a new USD116 CFO being hired in the school district as the current CFO will be retiring in the Spring of 2022. The SC also hopes to secure funds to support a dedicated F2S Coordinator within USD.
- Develop subcommittees focused around the implementation of this plan at each individual school, so as to best connect with each school's unique cultural and learning environment.
- Begin implementation of this plan at each school and within the broader district.

## **Vision, Goals, and Context**

### **1. Background and Progress to Date**

Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, food insecurity in the US had been at the lowest level in nearly 20 years, yet nearly 35 million people were food insecure, according to Feeding America. Current projections estimate that as many as 42 million people, including 13 million children, may experience food insecurity in 2021 and beyond, in part due to the impacts of COVID-19. Despite its reputation as having some of the best farmland in the world, Central Illinois is no stranger to this problem. According to Feeding America's Map the Meal Gap project, Champaign County suffers from a 13.3% overall food insecurity rate and a 15.4% food insecurity rate for children, a 32% increase since 2018. This translates to over 30,000 residents of Champaign County living in food insecurity. In 2020, the Champaign-Urbana Public Health District (CUPHD) conducted a community-wide needs assessment surveying community members (including low-income/limited-access families) and stakeholders to identify strengths and weaknesses within the community. The Community Health Status Assessment evaluated the basic demographics and health-related statistics of residents in Champaign County. Over 12% of participants responded that there were times when they ran out of food before they had the means to buy more. Many respondents also reported that diet-related diseases were of primary concern, such as obesity (34.7% of respondents), heart disease (29.02%), and diabetes (17.51%). One of the problems contributing to both hunger and obesity in central Illinois communities is poor access to healthy, affordable foods for families with low incomes.

In Champaign County, the Urbana School District 116 (USD116) serves schools with a high proportion of children who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. In fact, all USD116 schools participate in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) of the National School Lunch Program and each of the 9 schools has between 57 - 88% of children eligible for free or reduced-price meals. USD116 currently contracts with Arbor Food Management for all meal services.

Prior to the beginning of this project, the most recent Farm to School Census data available (2015) showed that USD116 replied “no” to participating in F2S in 2013-2014, though listed future benefits of F2S as “planning to enjoy greater community support for school meals”.

The intention of the SGF/CUPHD Leadership Team has been to work with USD116 on unique F2S program components. At the time of grant application, the LT's goals for this F2S project included:

- 1) Each child/student has the opportunity to try a wide variety of locally sourced foods in a variety of forms/recipes;



- 2) Each child/student has the opportunity to learn about food production and the significance of local food production in the greater economic and environmental food systems, and meet the people producing the food;
- 3) School meals not only contribute to equality (all children have access to balanced meals) but also equity (all students have access to locally sourced, healthy foods through the school lunch program).

Once formed, the Steering Committee worked as a whole to discuss and develop a comprehensive F2S Program vision statement, review and refine these goals and develop specific strategies and action items to achieve these goals.

## **2. Long-Term Vision**

The Steering Committee has developed and recommends for adoption by USD116 the following Long-term Vision Statement for the USD116 Farm to School (F2S) Program:

*The Urbana Farm to School Steering Committee envisions a Farm to School Program that supports students in establishing healthy eating habits, agriculture and food literacy, and a rich, personal connection to growing a sustainable food source. Program components will be equitable and support fresh, healthy food access for all Urbana students, promote collaboration between schools, and create connections to community resources such as gardens, farms, food processors, distributors, and farmers' markets.*

*On the scope of 5-10 years, with achievable benchmarks being met every year, success would be defined as:*

- *Adoption of a district-wide culture that supports Farm to School components as an integral part of the long-term learning environment*
- *Locally grown food from school gardens and local farms served to students as part of school snacks and meals*
- *Agriculture and nutrition education components are integrated into the curriculum at all age levels and in dual-language programming, as is appropriate for each school's pace of learning*
- *Onsite gardens/growing spaces and kitchens/cooking spaces established at every school, appropriately resourced and used to promote food production, food preparation, and learning*

## **3. Near-Term Goals and Strategies**

The near-term goals and strategies were developed to read as follows. Action items are included in the table below.

- **School meals and snacks will include locally sourced ingredients that contribute equitably not only to food security and quality for all students but also promote long-term healthy lifestyle habits.**
  - Identify, expand, or install certifiable food prep/kitchen spaces at each school so locally sourced and school-grown foods can be processed for student consumption
  - Develop a food safety plan for handling, storage, and preparation of school-grown produce, customized to each school food prep space
  - Provide staff training and resources on processing locally-sourced and school-grown foods for inclusion in meals and snacks
  - Create a clear and streamlined process for foodservice buyers, distributors, and producers to get locally sourced food into school dining services
  - Create a clear and streamlined process for teachers, support staff, families, and any other snack providers (outside of district food service) to procure locally sourced foods for school/classroom
  - Define “locally-sourced foods” in the USD116 Wellness Policy, and establish that production, preparation, and procurement of locally sourced food is a priority for USD116
  
- **All students will have the opportunity to participate in a sustainable farm-to-school program that is inclusive of a diverse community.**
  - **Edible growing spaces**
    - Install/develop ADA- and community-accessible edible grow spaces at every Urbana school
    - Develop a grounds/facility management plan for edible grow spaces at each school
    - Develop list of global edible crops that will maximize use of grow spaces, and represent the diverse palates of the school community
  - **Curriculum**
    - Collaborate with district administrators and teachers to build food, agriculture, and/or nutrition education into core subject curricula, utilizing a variety of experiential learning methods that can assist in meeting curriculum standards
    - Equip instructional and support staff with resources, supplies, training, and options to implement Farm to School activities inclusively and holistically
  - **Cross-component**
    - Translate all farm to school program materials and grow space signage into multiple languages
    - Integrate the Farm to School program into district-wide curriculum, policies, and culture

- Establish school-based and district F2S coordinators to handle the day-to-day maintenance of F2S activities, especially within the curriculum and edible grow spaces
- **The Urbana School District Farm to School Program will foster the growth of a connected, engaged, healthy, thriving community, and will be both mutually supportive and mutually beneficial to all participants in the local food system.**
  - Support local producers in becoming GAP certified, thereby meeting a significant requirement for their products to be served in schools
  - Provide opportunities for students to visit and/or learn about individuals, businesses, and organizations that are key players in the local food system
  - Provide opportunities for school district families and community members to participate in F2S activities
  - Maintain a robust and ongoing marketing campaign to ensure students, staff, and the community stay informed and engaged
- **The Urbana Farm to School Program is sustainable.**
  - Develop a budget and plan for varied, sustainable funding for all components of F2S program

A table of recommended action items and timeline is included at the end of this document.

[Jump to Action Plan Table](#)

#### **4. School Environment and Student Population**

Urbana School District 116 is located in east-central Illinois, within the twin cities of Champaign-Urbana, which are also home to the University of Illinois flagship campus. USD116 hosts roughly 4,400 students, of which 37% identify as black, 30% white, 16% Hispanic, 5% Asian, and 10% identify as two or more races. There are nine schools in the district, which includes Urbana High School (UHS), grades 9-12; Urbana Middle School (UMS), grades 6-8; Urbana Early Childhood School (UEC), a preschool; and six K-5 elementary schools, including Thomas Paine Elementary School (TP), Flossie Wiley Elementary School (Wiley), Dr. Preston L. Williams Jr. Elementary School (PW), Yankee Ridge Elementary School (YR), Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School (King), and Leal Elementary School (Leal).

The entire district participates in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) due to the high percentage of students who qualify for free and reduced-price lunch - over 70% across the district. USD116 also participates in the School Breakfast Program (SBP) (offering “breakfast in the

classroom”), Child and Adult Care Food Program (serving snacks and supper), Seamless Summer Option (SSO) breakfast, and lunch services, and the after school snack component of NSLP.

USD116 also includes the Winifred Gerber School (Gerber), which is not included in the nine schools described above but follows the USD116 curriculum and academic calendar. Gerber provides special education services to children & teens who participate in Cunningham Children’s Home residential treatment program. The school operates an internal food service program that is separate from the contracted meal service that the rest of the district receives, and therefore presents a unique opportunity for implementing farm-to-school components within their school.

## **5. Program Context**

The USD116 community and environment are well-equipped for fostering a comprehensive Farm to School program. USD116 is located in Champaign County, IL, which hosts over 1,200 farms and 580,000 acres of farmland. While some large farms produce a significant amount of corn and soybeans, a wide variety of small and specialty crops are grown locally as well. The City of Urbana is home to a robust farmers’ market, which has been in operation since 1979, and in the 2019 market season hosted 51 growers/producers, 23 value-added vendors, 12 food trucks, and 52 community groups.

In addition, the proximity of USD116 to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign lends itself to a variety of collaborative partnerships, and student and faculty support. Of particular value are those with backgrounds in nutrition and dietetics, agriculture, public health, community health, education, statistics, and others who have yet to be identified.

## **6. Policy Context**

### **a. Good Food Purchasing Policy**

In 2017, the City of Chicago passed a resolution to adopt the Good Food Purchasing Policy (GFPP) that transforms the ways agencies and institutions purchase food by promoting health, well-being, and strengthening the local food economy by guaranteeing that a percentage of food is purchased locally. Illinois Stewardship Alliance is working with a coalition of groups statewide to assess the current state of procurement and market opportunities by Illinois state agencies and institutions. Currently, the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) as it is currently administered under Illinois law requires school districts to select the lowest bidder from among those vendors who submit bids. In contrast, 48 other states that participate in the NSLP allow for a matrix format of evaluation, which awards points based on various criteria apart from just the lowest price. Criteria used in the Good Food Purchasing Program could help inform and improve future foods service provider contracts in Urbana.

### **b. Farm-Fresh Enterprise Development Cooperative**

The Farm-Fresh Enterprise Development Cooperative, or FarmFED Co-op, is a new facility that will bridge the gap between growers and eaters who want more access to local food. The first of its kind in Central Illinois, the FarmFED Co-op facility will be available for processing and freezing produce with a commercial kitchen and 4,000 square feet of cold storage. This operation will help farmers process bulk produce so they can sell it to larger buyers like schools, hospitals, and retail grocery stores.

### **c. Federal Nutrition Programs**

As described previously, the contracted meal service for USD116, which serves all but Gerber School, participates in the following child nutrition programs: NSLP, SBP, CACFP, and SSO. As such, all meals and snacks must follow each program's meal pattern requirements, respectively. This includes offering specific meal components (milk, fruit, vegetables, grains, and meat/meat alternates), and accounting for total fat, sodium, Calories, micronutrients, and portion sizes, as required by each program.

### **d. Contracted Meal Service**

USD116 food service contracts are awarded through the Competitive Sealed Bidding process, as defined by the USDA. A close review of previous contracts is underway so that recommendations can be made for future bid requests that include specifications for locally-grown produce, as well as incorporating other farm to school components into the school food service program.

### **e. District Wellness Policy**

The School Wellness section of the USD116 Board Policy Manual<sup>1</sup> describes the district's approach to ensuring that all students have ample opportunities to practice healthy eating and engage in regular physical activity. The wellness policy goals include ensuring students have access to healthy foods, and that students receive quality nutrition education, both of which can be met through farm to school programming. The policy also outlines the structures and meeting frequencies of a District Wellness Committee, and individual School Wellness Committees, and therefore provides an established opportunity for sustained discussion, review, and goal-setting of F2S program components.

### **f. Curriculum Standards**

The Curriculum Development policy, as outlined in the USD116 Board Policy Manual, states that district curriculum must meet the minimum requirements of state and federal law and regulations, including the Illinois Learning Standards and Common

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<sup>1</sup> [The School Wellness section of the USD116 Board Policy Manual](#)

Core Standards for English/Language Arts<sup>2</sup> and Mathematics<sup>3</sup>. The policy also requires the establishment of a curriculum review program to routinely suggest changes that: make the curriculum more effective; take advantage of improved teaching methods and materials; and are responsive to social change, student needs, and community expectations. The review program is strongly encouraged to include input from teachers, administrators, parents/caregivers, and students. Finally, the Curriculum Development policy provides the opportunity for the Superintendent to recommend experimental educational programs or pilot projects for Board consideration. Proposals must include goals, supply needs, anticipated expenses, and an evaluation process. As a whole, the Curriculum Development policy provides multiple opportunities for piloting and implementing farm to school curriculum and instruction.

## **7. Institutionalization**

The Leadership Team presented the F2S planning process goals to the Urbana School District Board on February 16, 2021. (A recording of the meeting can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/26eWb7nFsnU>.) Unanimous support was received from every board member, along with many in-depth comments regarding hopes for the project and signals of support. Superintendent Dr. Jennifer Ivory-Tatum voiced that she did not want the F2S program to be a few gardens at only some schools or limited lunchroom initiatives -- rather, in order for this to be successful it should be integrated district-wide and be part of the school “culture”.

The Steering Committee is in agreement that the following will be needed to achieve this:

- Creation of a full-time permanent F2S Coordinator position within USD116;
- Qualitative and quantitative goals for F2S program included in USD116 Wellness Policy;
- Contractual requirements of food service management company regarding integration of local produce in meals and shared use of kitchen space for preparation of school garden produce by teachers and students;
- Adoption of F2S curricula standards for every age group district-wide;
- Creation of grow space coordinator positions with compensation to facilitate grow space maintenance and communication in a sustainable way;
- Increased student/parental/neighborhood engagement in order to maintain the gardens in non-school months.

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<sup>2</sup> [Illinois Learning Standards English/language Arts](#)  
[Common Core State Standards English/Language Arts](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Illinois Learning Standards Mathematics](#)  
[Illinois Common Core State Standards Mathematics](#)

# Local Foods Procurement

## 1. Background

USD116 has contracted with food service providers to provide student meals for over 20 years, including Aramark and most recently, Arbor Food Management. According to the most recent Farm to School Census data available (2018-19), food service providers serving USD116 do not and have not procured local food to dining services.

Five of the six elementary schools (all except YR) have, in the past, been able to serve fresh fruits and vegetables through the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program offered through ISBE. The purpose of the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Grant is to increase fresh fruit and fresh vegetable consumption in elementary schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Priority is given to elementary schools based on free and reduced eligibility. Schools stopped participating in the program either because they were no longer qualified to apply or (in the case of PW and King) were qualified but did not have the staff and volunteers necessary to effectively administer the program.

## 2. Sourcing and Procurement

All school meals are prepared and provided by Arbor Food Management (AFM). AFM sources produce from Central Illinois Produce/What Chefs Want (CIP/WCW), and does not currently source directly from farmers. CIP/WCW does source from local and regional producers and note as such on their ordering sites. However, their requirements for considering a producer “local” or “regional” are not clear. USD116 also does not currently have a definition of “local” or “regional” that applies to their school meals or snacks. Definitions must be determined by F2S Program stakeholders and established in the USD116 Wellness Policy. A clear and transparent process for food service to procure produce that fits this definition must also be laid out in the Wellness Policy.

A common definition of “local” food is food that is produced within 100 miles of a particular location. The following products are available within 100 miles of USD116:

- Apples
- Beans and peas
- Berries
- Broccoli and cauliflower
- Celery
- Corn
- Cucumbers
- Eggplant
- Grains

- Fresh herbs
- Dairy
- Greens- salad and cooking
- Meat
- Melons
- Okra
- Onions and garlic
- Peppers
- Potatoes
- Roots including carrots, beets, turnips and radishes
- Stone fruits such as peaches, plums, apricots
- Summer Squash
- Sweet Potatoes
- Tomatoes
- Winter Squash

Some teachers, after-school staff, and other USD116 personnel have expressed interest in allowing students to connect directly with local food preparation and tasting in the classroom. On this smaller scale, school staff may be able to source directly from farmers or the school garden, perhaps even allowing students to grow/harvest the food themselves. Teachers and other staff who work full-time with students may also directly affect students' interest in, understanding of, and acceptance of local food. As such, the SC recommends pursuing this opportunity. However, the following steps need to be taken to allow non-food-service staff to procure and prepare local food with their students:

- Training in food handling, potential activities, and use of equipment must be made accessible to and encouraged for relevant staff;
- A clear and streamlined process for school staff to connect with and receive produce from local producers and distributors (or to order locally-grown produce through food service) must be developed;
- Food quantity and quality requirements that pertain to school/classroom snacks must be identified;
- A food safety plan must be developed for handling, storage, and preparation of school-grown produce;
- A food safety plan must be developed for handling, storage, and preparation of local produce in the classroom;
- Necessary facilities and equipment for outside-of-cafeteria food preparation must be identified and modified or installed at each school.



### **3. Delivery, Processing, and Storage**

Primary barriers to incorporating local produce in both food service and outside-of-cafeteria food preparation are lack of: equipment, training, and guidelines for delivery, processing, and storage of food.

For food service, delivery of locally-grown food should fit within existing procedures. For outside-of-cafeteria preparation, however, a set of guidelines must be developed for school staff and farmers/distributors to follow to ensure that delivery and receiving of local produce is performed in a food-safe fashion.

It is unclear exactly what equipment is available at each of the USD116 schools for preparation and processing as well as for storage of unprocessed foods, as each kitchen is equipped differently. In general, USD116 kitchens are not set up for scratch cooking or even to minimally process raw produce. A full inventory of all available equipment is an immediate goal of the SC. Once this is completed, plans can be made to purchase the equipment required and appropriate for each school's individual local food preparation goals. This may include knives, cutting boards, wedge makers, fruit preservers, food processors, mixers, mandolines, and refrigerators/coolers. Kitchen equipment, design, and storage needs will be reported to the USD116 school board in order to identify opportunities for development within future school upgrade plans.

Note that, if non-food-service staff and students are to be able to use the food service kitchen for outside-of-cafeteria food preparation, a clear system and plan must be created for enforcing food and kitchen safety among all groups and maintaining order within the kitchen. If non-food-service staff and students will not be able to use the food service kitchen, a separate food preparation space or toolkit must be set up with necessary equipment and its own food and equipment safety plan and guidelines for use. Training in proper use of this equipment and any relevant processing techniques must be incorporated into existing training schedules for every staff member (food service or otherwise) who will be assisting with local food preparation.

### **4. Menu Planning**

Local foods procured by food service will need to be incorporated into cafeteria meals through the menu planning process. At present, AFM uses standard NSLP guidelines and guidance from a staff dietitian to craft menus. In addition, the following factors related to the COVID-19 pandemic will impact menu planning over the next school year, and potentially beyond, and could have either positive or negative effects on USD116 F2S program goals:

- School districts have had to switch between NSLP and SSO meal patterns outside of their routine time frames;

- Many districts have had to implement “serve-only” meal service instead of “offer vs. serve”, which impacts plate waste and opportunities for students to try new foods;
- Supply chain and manufacturer issues are forcing many districts to shift to more onsite and scratch cooking, and/or find substitute food items;
- Menus are drafted and adjusted based on product availability, which is highly unstable at this time.

Menu planning for increased incorporation of locally-produced foods cannot be undertaken until a clear infrastructure for procuring and processing these foods is achieved. At that point, the contracted food service provider (AFM or otherwise) should have the tools necessary to begin adjusting the menu to support local procurement. Additionally, the food service contract should be adjusted to require a certain amount of local foods procurement in school food service, when and as local products are available. This will provide a solid foundation for further incorporation of local foods into schools, as determined through coordination with the school menu planning team. An early step in doing so might include incorporating “Harvest of the Month” programming into school meals.

The SC has few other recommendations at this time, as specific next steps will need to be determined once local food processing is possible within school kitchens. However, the following items will be important to consider in planning these next steps:

- Food service coordinators and menu planners should endeavor to work with school garden coordinators to identify ways that school garden produce may be used within cafeteria meals. This is a particularly important and promising aspect of local food procurement, as using school garden produce in school meals drastically reduces transportation, decreasing energy use and preserving nutrition, and gives students more ownership over their food.
- A marketing plan should be developed to promote local foods in school meals to students and families. This will encourage greater community involvement and student engagement in the F2S program, and hopefully lead to a more positive reception. This plan should be developed in coordination with the contracted food service provider, school administrators, garden coordinators, local Extension office, and other partners.

## **5. Key Players**

- a. Food Service Personnel, Arbor Food Management
  - i. Jada Lutterbach, District Manager
  - ii. Jonathan Schmit, Operations Supervisor
  - iii. Staci Jordan, Operations Assistant
- b. USD116 Food Service Personnel

- i. Carol Baker, USD116 Chief Financial Officer
  - ii. Sandy Davin, Director of Before & After School Child Care Program
- c. Local Food Producers
  - i. Sola Gratia Farm: Traci Barkley, Director; John Williams, Farm Manager
  - ii. Fowler Farm: Ann Swanson, Farm Manager
  - iii. Blue Moon Farm: Lorien Carsey, Owner/Operator
  - iv. Student Sustainable Farm: Matt Turino, Farm Manager
- d. Local/Regional Distributors
  - i. Central Illinois Produce/What Chefs Want
  - ii. Performance Food Group
- e. Local food safety regulators
  - i. Jennifer Schroeder, C-UPHD Environmental Health Specialist

# Food Safety

## 1. Background and Progress to Date

Food safety is critical at every step of the Farm to School process including production, harvest, handling, preparation, and service. Food safety plans must be accessible for reference and followed at the farm, in the garden, in the kitchen, and in the classroom.

## 2. State and Local Health Requirements

CUPHD Division of Environmental Health will monitor and inspect all school kitchens while enforcing the Illinois Food Code<sup>4</sup>. All producers must comply with the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA)<sup>5</sup> which is enforced by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in the State of Illinois.

## 3. Food Safety: Kitchen, Cafeteria, and Classrooms

Food safety in kitchens, cafeterias, and classrooms will strictly follow federal, state, and local regulations. In general, school-grown produce will be handled much in the same way as any other produce used by USD116. However, an explicit food safety plan for handling, storage, and preparation of school-grown produce will be developed to ensure overall safety, traceability, and quality control. Pertinent food safety training will be identified and made available to food service staff and teachers, as appropriate.

## 4. Food Safety in School Grow Spaces

Food safety in school grow spaces is of utmost importance. A comprehensive safety manual will be developed for use in school grow spaces, following federal, state, and local health code mandates, in collaboration with USD116 facilities management. At a minimum, this will include topics on food safety, physical safety, and environmental safety. Food safety components will address foodborne illness as well as chemical and physical contamination concerns, including: handwashing, personal protective equipment, and clear guidelines for illness exclusion from garden participation (including a symptom checklist and alternate activities for ill students to participate in). Guidelines for use of safe water and safe soil in the gardens will be established, including regular testing protocols for these elements. The plan will also include guidance for access, storage, use, and disposal of safe fertilizers and compost. A comprehensive pest management plan will also be developed.

A robust record-keeping system will be established for traceability purposes. Record-keeping will include a garden work/participation log for students, staff, and volunteers, as well as a harvest log that clearly identifies all pertinent information. Further details are outlined in the [Traceability](#) section below.

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<sup>4</sup> [Illinois Food Code](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Food Safety Modernization Act \(FSMA\)](#)

## **5. Food Safety on the Farm and During Transport**

Depending on the size and nature of the production farm, various aspects of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) will apply. Though a food safety plan is not technically required by FSMA, many growers need a written farm food safety plan in order to meet buyer demands for a third-party audit to verify produce safety practices are in place. In general, it is a good idea for all growers to develop a food safety plan and train all personnel to follow it.

Growers interested in selling products for use in USD116 foodservice will either be working with local distributors including Central Illinois Produce - What Chefs Want or selling directly to Arbor Food Management. Currently, all parties require GAP (Good Agricultural Practices) certification for all producers. The Leadership Team is working with The Land Connection and U of I Extension to develop a series of workshops and support tools to help local growers develop food safety plans, complete third-party audits, and become GAP certified.

## **6. Liability**

Verification of liability coverage for both potential injury and foodborne illness claims by USD116's insurance policy will need to be completed.

## **7. Traceability**

In the event of a foodborne illness, it is important to be able to trace records back to the source of produce and trace forward to when and whom/it was served to. Good traceability procedures will include 1) use of a harvest log at each garden site including the date, time, the products and varieties harvested, the destination for produce as well as the names of all persons involved in the harvesting; and 2) labeling of each box of produce with the date, product name, source, and destination. Produce originating from different sources (i.e. different gardens, farms, distributors, ) should be stored and labeled separately.

## **Promotion and Outreach**

### **1. Background and Progress to Date**

Community engagement in the 2020 F2S planning process for USD116 was the foremost goal of the project. The intention was that the community members who would be most involved with the day-to-day operation of the proposed F2S program, e.g. students, parents, and teachers, should have a significant role in designing the program. As such, students, parents, and staff throughout the district were invited to sit on the Steering Committee, with representation from all 9 of the schools in the district. To gather community opinion more broadly, a series of community meetings and focus groups were planned but were ultimately halted by the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, online surveys were developed and tailored to each of the stakeholder groups (students, parents, teaching staff, food service staff, and local food producers) and circulated throughout the community via social media, school e-newsletters and informational broadcasts, targeted communication through partner organizations (e.g., connecting with farmers through a local food co-op), tabling at community events, and coverage in local news media.

### **2. Reaching Students and Parents/Guardians**

Outreach to students and parents/guardians was primarily undertaken through the dissemination of the online F2S surveys. The surveys inquired about interest in the development of a Farm to School program at USD116 but also solicited parent/guardian and student invitations to the Steering Committee. Ultimately, 6 parents/guardians and 1 student joined the Steering Committee, representing only 4 of 9 USD116 schools. Students and parents/guardians were best reached through existing trusted connections with their schools. For instance, schools using classroom-to-home communication tools such as ClassTag had better response rates to surveys, as did classes and groups with close connections to their teachers or school liaisons. As such, further development of this program should focus on building accessible communication chains with school staff and leadership to encourage engagement with students and families. Such efforts will be undertaken to recruit a more diverse group of parents/guardians and students on the F2S Steering Committee, ideally achieving balanced representation across all 9 USD116 schools.

### **3. Reaching Teachers**

Teachers were very engaged with this project and many were excited to have the opportunity to develop an F2S program in their schools. Twelve district teachers participated in the Steering Committee. A variety of subject areas were represented, and at least one teacher from each school in the district was involved. Concerns were raised among the teachers engaged in the project and in survey responses about implementing a F2S program leading to an unsustainable increase in teacher workloads. Teachers expressed that significant support from administration and program leaders in

implementing a F2S program would encourage greater adoption. Collating F2S educational resources for teachers is currently underway, and further outreach to teachers should focus on providing them with the resources they need to make a F2S program relevant and useful within their existing teaching structure. In the long term, the school district should explore the possibility of hiring a F2S Coordinator to maintain the program on a day-to-day basis and provide for its sustainability and accessibility without burdening teachers.

#### **4. Reaching School Administrators and Board**

The project has so far received enthusiastic support from both the administration of USD116 and the USD116 Board of Education. Two district administrators sit on the Steering Committee and have been invaluable in supporting the project's efforts. Furthermore, a presentation to the Board of Education early in the planning process prompted many members to express their support and encouragement. The Board emphasized the importance of a Farm to School program for encouraging healthy eating, developing new skills, and providing personal growth and potential career opportunities for USD116 students, as well as a way for the district to respond to climate change. The Board also indicated their interest in continuing to expand the project and ensuring that it was fully adopted at each school or location according to that location's needs and goals. Considering the Board of Education and school administration's recommendations for the project moving forward, maintaining good communication with them is an important facet for project longevity.

#### **5. Reaching Food Producers**

Currently, four local farm leaders are serving on the Steering Committee and informing the Farm to School Action Plan. Each of these farms is a small vegetable farm following organic practices. Three of the farms are non-profit farms with goals to not only produce high-quality food to feed the community but also to address food insecurity, educate others about growing, preparing, and enjoying nutritious food, and also to help build community. To facilitate further engagement with food producers, these farms should be assisted in becoming GAP certified to make it possible for food services to procure products from them. Also, effective ways of connecting producers with students should be explored (e.g., farm tours, classroom visits, etc.). Once these steps are taken, other local producers should be recruited to expand the network.

#### **6. Reaching School Food Service Staff**

Meal services for USD116 are currently provided by foodservice management company Arbor Management, Inc. Multiple supervisors from Arbor Management sit on the Steering Committee and have provided guidance on their foodservice practices and the ways they have engaged with F2S programs at other schools they serve. The USD116 Steering Committee has also attempted to reach out to kitchen staff at all USD116

schools but was not able to make many connections due to severe COVID-related staffing shortages. Communication with food service staff at all levels is important to make procurement of local food in school cafeterias an achievable goal. Further engagement with foodservice leadership should help determine how a Farm to School program can fall within the organization's budget, infrastructure, and adherence to federal nutrition guidelines, while further engagement with in-kitchen staff should help clarify what training and labor needs may be necessary to make local food procurement possible in the kitchen.

## **7. Reaching Media and Community**

The wider Urbana community has expressed significant support for the project so far. At its inception, a press release was shared widely through local media networks, with many community members remarking on the timeliness of the effort. The Steering Committee currently includes 14 representatives from community organizations, including:

- C-U Schools Foundation
- C-U City Farms
- University of Illinois Extension
- Future Farmers of America
- The Land Connection
- Sola Gratia Farm
- C-U Public Health District

The F2S project also has its own Facebook and Instagram pages, used to share information and to generate support for the project. Responding to the community investment in the project, the Leadership Team took on a volunteer coordination role to connect parts of the project (e.g., individual school gardens, nutrition events or lessons, taste-testing events) with those in the community with time and skills to share. This coordination effort proved itself to be a significant need within the project, and future outreach should further this connection-building. Outreach should also focus on connecting with community members for whom there may be barriers to complete participation in the project -- for instance, low-income and non-native English speaking individuals. Development of a F2S Marketing Committee will be essential to reaching diverse stakeholder groups within the USD116 community in a sustainable manner.



## **School Gardens**

### **1. Background and Progress to Date**

A baseline assessment of school gardens performed during Fall 2020 revealed that 5 of the 9 USD116 schools have some kind of growing space with which students can engage. Three schools (UHS, TP, and Leal) have grow spaces in which they grew edible plants, one (Wiley) had an outdoor classroom space, three (UEC, TP, and Wiley) had pollinator gardens, and two (Leal and TP) had sensory gardens. Since the inception of the project, PW has begun a vegetable garden and the LT is currently working to revitalize an old pollinator garden at King. The UHS garden has also received improvements, including being moved to a sunnier and more visible location, hosting a greater diversity of plants, and developing the UHS FFA program with an eye toward greater student engagement in the gardens. UMS and YR do not currently have any garden spaces. It is the opinion of the Steering Committee that edible grow spaces should be established at all Urbana schools to support equitable, comprehensive Farm to School programming throughout the district.

Champaign-Urbana Public Health District, a partner agency with Sola Gratia Farm for this USDA Planning Grant, was awarded an Edible Gardens Turnkey Grant for the 2021 fiscal year to spearhead this effort. This grant will support the establishment of edible grow spaces at all Urbana schools to support equitable, comprehensive Farm to School programming throughout the district. Per Edible Gardens Turnkey Grant requirements, the following will be completed in the coming year:

- establish an edible gardens planning committee;
- establish a vision, goals, and objectives for the edible garden project;
- identify and comply with any applicable Federal, State, and/or local regulations;
- develop a garden food safety plan;
- determine how processing, storage, and ultimate use of school garden foods will take place;
- procure supplies for installing the edible gardens;
- install the edible gardens;
- develop a sustainability plan that identifies how activities will continue beyond the grant period of performance; and
- conduct an evaluation of the project.

Considering recent developments in edible grow spaces throughout the district, it will also be pertinent to take a thorough inventory of current grow spaces at Urbana schools during Fall 2021 to best direct time and resources moving forward.



**Figure 1.** Urbana High School (UHS) Gardens relocated to Race Street, which runs through downtown Urbana. CU Farm to School Leadership Team members, Fiona Munro (left) and Traci Barkley (right), teaching UHS students about seed-planting during a garden workday, April 2021.





**Figure 2.** Dan Doeing (UHS Teacher), Jennifer Lotton (CU Farm to School Leadership Team), and a UHS community volunteer spreading donated mulch at the UHS gardens, April 2021.

## **2. Getting Buy-In**

Community support for school gardens is what will allow them to be sustainable in the long term. The Steering Committee has worked with multiple current and former USD116 garden leaders to understand the barriers they have faced and understand that lack of buy-in is one of the foremost reasons that school gardens have failed. A lack of interest, awareness, and knowledge of the garden on the part of teachers and other school officials prevents it from being utilized for educational purposes and disincentivizes any work that is put in to maintain it. At the same time, a lack of effort, interest, and awareness of the garden from the larger community (parents, students, neighbors, etc.) means that essential garden maintenance is not carried out, as school staff cannot assume full care of the garden on top of their existing responsibilities, especially during the summer months which are vital for gardening but during which students are not at school.

A high percentage of local residents surveyed about F2S indicated their support for school gardens (see [Evaluation](#) section), which bodes well for increased development. The Steering Committee also has the following recommendations for achieving community buy-in for school gardens:

- Make gardens accessible to the neighborhood (e.g., not restricted to those affiliated with the school by fences or walls);
- Make gardens accessible to community members and students of all backgrounds and ability levels by making grounds ADA-accessible and include interpretive signage in all languages commonly spoken in the neighborhood;
- Use existing communication channels, such as local media outlets, school bulletins, school board meetings, neighborhood meetings, and social media to spread awareness of and generate excitement around garden programming and successes;
- Utilize community suggestions and knowledge in garden planning, including celebrating and making space for crops and techniques familiar to community members from diverse ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds; and
- Create garden coordinator positions with compensation to facilitate garden maintenance and communication in a sustainable way.

### **3. Planning and Design**

In order for edible grow spaces to have maximum utility to schools and the broader community, they should be individually planned to suit the needs of each site. Therefore, taking an inventory of current grow spaces will be a critical step moving forward. This inventory should determine what infrastructure, leadership, volunteer support, essential equipment, supplies, and storage will be needed for each grow space. Inventories should be developed via individual site visits and continued open discussion with existing grow space leaders and the edible grow space sub-committee.

Care will be taken to site all new grow spaces in sunny locations with access to water, and with drainage and soil quality taken into consideration. Student, staff, and community input will be gathered to inform the location of the grow space, type of space to be set up, what plants to grow, etc. This is an especially important part of the planning process, as the school and community should feel a strong sense of ownership over the grow spaces.

Diverse accessibility of edible grow spaces is also a foremost priority. This includes accessibility in terms of ability, culture, and community. As such, grow space signage should be posted in multiple languages (English, Spanish, and French) as appropriate for each school to accommodate the 3 dual-language elementary schools and the large non-native English speaking populations of the Urbana School District community. The need for additional languages will be explored and translators identified through the

USD116 network and the larger community. Crop selection and gardening techniques will also be inclusive to diverse cultures; input will be gathered from USD116 parents, students, staff, teachers, and school liaisons to guide selection. Edible grow spaces will also be developed in collaboration with Urbana School District facilities management following the Department of Justice Americans with Disabilities Act Standards for Accessible Design.

Since community engagement has been identified as a key objective for USD's Farm to School program, grow spaces will be located in community-accessible locations whenever possible, with specific locations being identified in collaboration with school administration and facilities management.

Schools that already have grow spaces will still go through a planning and design process to determine if the existing space fits the needs of the school community. Grow spaces may need to be relocated, have infrastructure added, or change in scope or focus.

#### **4. Funding**

Sustainable funding for garden supplies, maintenance, and staffing will be explored through various avenues: fundraising (community events, purchase of etched dedication bricks to be used in grow space designs, sale of CU Farm to School gear, student-run plant sales, etc.), grants (including recently awarded USDA Edible Gardens Turnkey Grant), donations (local organizations and donor groups, local businesses and cooperatives, nationwide businesses, etc.), and district-funding.

In addition to the 2021 fiscal year USDA Edible Gardens Turnkey Grant, the Leadership Team has compiled and shared a list of grants with the edible grow space sub-committee for collaborative contribution and coordination. Ultimately, the plan is to strategically coordinate grant applications so that schools are not competing against one another, thus maximizing grant funding throughout the district. In terms of local donors, the Executive Director of CU Schools Foundation is a member of the Steering Committee and wrote a letter of support for the Edible Gardens Turnkey Grant application, pledging financial assistance to the CU Farm to School program.

District-funding for gardens and staffing will be explored via proposals to, and from discussions with, school administrators and the school board, who have indicated strong support for the CU Farm to School program.

#### **5. Maintenance, Staffing, and Training**

Staffing to maintain edible grow spaces will be a combination of USD116 staff, USD116 students, and community volunteers. USD116 facilities management will play a key role in developing sustainable plans for school grow spaces (weed management, pest



management, compost management, and general maintenance). A flowchart for grow space roles and responsibilities will be developed to facilitate clear and comprehensive management of growing spaces, including detailed contact information for each party identified.

As mentioned above, a key objective developed by the Steering Committee is to establish edible grow space coordinators. The leadership team plans to explore the development of grow space coordinator positions, with one grow space coordinator at each school with oversight by a district-wide F2S Coordinator. These positions would coordinate all functions of each grow space, including staffing, training, supplies procurement, maintenance, etc. The district-wide position would systematically coordinate needs across all grow spaces to maximize efficiency, effectiveness, and buying power. Early discussions for these coordinator positions have already begun with the USD116 Chief Financial Officer, who wrote a letter of support for the Edible Gardens Turnkey Grant. To develop these coordinator positions the following steps will be taken: discuss positions with USD116 school board, administration, and wellness committee; write these positions into school policy; create job descriptions; establish stipend rates/salaries, and identify funds to support these positions.

Volunteers will be integral to staffing school grow spaces, both in terms of financial sustainability and building community around the USD116 Farm to School program. A list of volunteer activities will be developed, as well as a volunteer sign-up/tracking system to facilitate traceability for food safety purposes (see [Traceability](#) section above). Volunteer liability waivers will need to be signed and kept on file for all people visiting or working in any school gardens. Student and staff participation in school garden activities will need to be incorporated into the school enrollment consent process to make gardens fully integrated into school activities. Volunteer liability insurance will be addressed, as outlined in the [Liability](#) section above.

Pertinent grow space training will be identified/developed and made available to USD116 staff, USD116 students, and community volunteers. Training will be designated as required or optional based upon individual roles/responsibilities for the grow spaces. Training will include, but not be limited to basic gardening skills, garden safety, and food safety. Training will also present an opportunity to build sustainable community connections with the USD116 Farm to School program as they may be sourced via local institutions such as the University of Illinois Extension, 4-H, the Land Connection, and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Plans for summer use and maintenance of school grow spaces will be determined. At this juncture, many possibilities have been voiced: summer school programming,

summer camp programming, USD116 student internship or work opportunities, Future Farmers of America (FFA) student projects, community volunteer network, etc.

## **6. Using Grow Space Produce**

Grow space produce will be managed safely, following all local and federal health code mandates, as outlined in the [Food Safety](#) and [Traceability](#) sections above. Produce will likely be used in different ways, based upon the development of each grow space and individual harvest yield. Avenues for produce use include, but are not limited to: use in classrooms for education/cooking classes; use by food service to serve in cafeteria line, fruit and vegetable bars, and in-classroom snacks; use by FFA students to show produce at local fairs; and donation of produce to those in need in the larger USD116 community (pop-up mobile markets, food pantries, summer food service programs, etc.).

## **Education and Curriculum Integration**

Integration of F2S education and activities into every grade level will be essential in achieving the long-term vision for a district-wide F2S program. The goals for curriculum policy development are as follows:

- Locate sources of funds for compensating staff and materials for these various projects. This could include grants, fundraising, etc.
- Hire a district-wide F2S coordinator. This coordinator, in collaboration with teachers and support staff, would design equitable activities, field trips, and units that would integrate care of the garden with the scope and sequence of each school across all grade levels. This professional would also work with the curriculum review team at the district level to assist and support the cultivation of grow spaces truly integrated into the working and needs of each school.
- Acquire and maintain materials that would make the gardens accessible and supplementary to teachers and students. This would include but is not limited to “Kitchen Kits” for food preparation education and “Garden Kits” available for classrooms. It would also include units organized by grade level, the coordination of gardening times with teacher’s schedules, systematizing distribution of garden materials to students, and so forth. Designing training for staff and students who utilize these materials is also imperative.
- Establish a reservation system for each school garden so teachers and students can reserve time slots and space. This will be the responsibility of the F2S coordinator, teachers, secretaries, and in the case of upper-grade levels, the students.
- Develop a comprehensive resource library of F2S activities/lessons with learning outcomes and supply needs clearly identified, so that Farm to School can be integrated into the USD116 classrooms and culture in a manner that goes beyond garden-based learning.
- Connect schools within the district to each other as well as schools to educators in the surrounding community. The F2S program also aims to open mentoring and stewarding opportunities for older students to connect with younger students across USD116 schools. For example, encouraging high school students to organize school garden days where more experienced gardeners could teach techniques to younger students. Reaching out into the community, the goal would be to invite external educators to come and do special presentations and/or classes with and for students and possibly shepherd special projects throughout the school year.



# Evaluation

## 1. Progress to Date

### a. Background

COVID posed significant challenges during this planning grant year. The Leadership Team had planned to hold in-person focus groups for key stakeholders, in-person meetings open to the USD116 community, and multiple sampling events in schools to get input for the development of the Farm to School Action Plan. With everything going remote due to COVID, the LT had to change gears significantly. Surveys were developed to get baseline data and gauge specific interest in Farm to School programming at USD116, an informal bean counter survey was conducted at one school that had little to no response to the surveys, and a pilot taste testing event of locally-sourced salad was conducted during after-school programming in late Spring 2021.

### b. Baseline Surveys

#### i. Baseline Survey Development and Distribution

Baseline surveys were developed online (via Qualtrics platform) and were distributed to USD116 staff, teachers, administration, and food service management via USD116 internal listserv. Baseline surveys posed questions pertaining to: pre-existing Farm to School activities at each USD116 school (i.e. whether edible grow spaces were present, whether any locally-sourced foods were being served in the cafeteria, etc.), what specific Farm to School activities people would like to see at USD116, and what people foresaw as barriers to Farm to School implementation at USD116.

#### ii. Baseline Survey Results

Five out of ten schools reported having school gardens, but only three were being used to grow edible produce. Two elementary schools with edible grow spaces reported some classroom integrated agriculture education and tasting of grown produce. Otherwise, few Farm to School activities were reported, most of which were at the high school level: agriculture and nutrition education in the classroom, taste testing and cooking demos of local foods, and taking field trips to local farms. USD116 reported no locally sourced foods were served in any cafeterias across the district. At baseline, the most common perceived barriers to Farm to School implementation at USD116 were: time, cost, staffing, procurement difficulties, and district support.

### c. Planning Surveys

#### i. Development

Planning surveys were developed to solicit remote input from key stakeholders of the USD116 community and were customized to each group: USD116 students, parents/guardians of USD116 students, USD116 teachers, USD116 food service staff, and local farmers/producers. Surveys were developed based upon pre-existing Farm to

School planning surveys, with feedback from the CU Farm to School Steering Committee. Planning surveys posed questions regarding prior experience with Farm to School related activities (i.e. whether local farmers/producers had ever sold to a school institution, whether teachers had components of agriculture or nutrition education in their classroom, whether students had experience gardening, etc.), what Farm to School related activities they are interested in seeing at USD116 (i.e. kids learning about foods and gardening in class, food service staff preparing local foods as a part of the lunch menu, farmers hosting student field trips at their farms, etc.), and what they think about Farm to School activities potentially coming to USD116.

To maximize reach, planning surveys were offered in both online (via Qualtrics platform) and print formats. They were also translated to Spanish and French in an effort to reach the diverse USD116 community. To meet the needs of different family dynamics, three different surveys were offered: a parent/guardian only, a student only (for 5th-12th graders), and parent/guardian-led surveys (a combination of parent/guardian and student surveys that parents/guardians could complete with their child of any age, pre-K through 12th grade).

## **ii. Distribution**

The distribution of surveys was challenging due to COVID, but every effort was made to reach stakeholder groups in a variety of ways. Online surveys were distributed via CU Farm to School website, CU Farm to School Facebook page, three Urbana neighborhood listservs, USD116 teacher listserv, one Urbana elementary principal sent out survey links to their parent/guardian listserv (this was a voluntary effort, other principals chose not to do this), USD116 school liaisons reached out to Spanish and French-speaking families directly, Steering Committee members informally promoted surveys to colleagues and the USD116 community, and a local food cooperative sent survey links out to their listserv of local farmers/producers. Fliers were also posted throughout Urbana to promote surveys, directing people to the CU Farm to School website for survey access. Paper copies of surveys were distributed by: tabling at the Urbana Farmers' Market, food service management administering to their kitchen staff, and some teachers opted to make the survey an in-classroom activity for students (this was very limited, however, due to remote learning format for most classrooms).

Participation in surveys was incentivized via a raffle of Farm to School related items, including gardening supplies (tools, seeds, gift cards to plant sale at a local farm), cooking supplies (kitchen gear, recipe cards, local produce), and gift cards to a local food cooperative.

### **iii. Data Analysis**

A data analysis team was developed in collaboration with the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) and the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). The data team was headed by Melissa Prescott, Ph.D., RDN, who is a Professor of School/Childhood Foods and Nutrition at UIUC, and was composed of three Ph.D. graduate students in the Division of Nutritional Sciences at UIUC as well as a post-doctoral research associate at UIC. Having expertise in both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, the data team was well-suited to analyze the Farm to School planning surveys. Quantitative data were analyzed via R software and thematic analyses were performed for qualitative data.

### **iv. Participation**

Although surveys were offered in many formats and solicited in a variety of ways, responses were inherently biased as participants were self-selected to take the surveys. Generally, self-selection bias means that those who chose to take the Farm to School planning surveys likely have prior opinions about the subject (either positive or negative), so responses are not necessarily representative of the larger USD116 community. There may be other underlying factors that may have inhibited some USD116 community members from taking the planning survey, such as lack of free time to take the survey, lack of reliable internet access, language barrier, literacy barrier, or simply not knowing about the survey.

As such, planning surveys received over-representative feedback from Leal Elementary School (the school of highest socioeconomic status, whose principal emailed the surveys to their parent listserv) and little to no feedback from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School (the only school in USD116 that is in an opportunity zone). In total, 384 people took the survey: 121 students, 150 parents, 88 teachers, 14 farmers, and 11 food service staff.

### **v. Results**

#### Results: Prior Experience with Farm to School Activities

Planning survey data of pre-existing Farm to School activities within USD116 roughly aligned with the results from the Baseline Survey, with 3 schools having edible grow spaces and the majority of Farm to School activities happening at the high school level. Two elementary schools were revealed to have collaborated with outside partners (the University of Illinois Extension and a local farm) for nutrition and/or agricultural education components in the classroom.

Many of the local farmers/producers surveyed did report participation in Farm to School activities, most of which seem to be connected outside of USD116. Around half of the local farmers/producers stated that they had participated in agricultural education

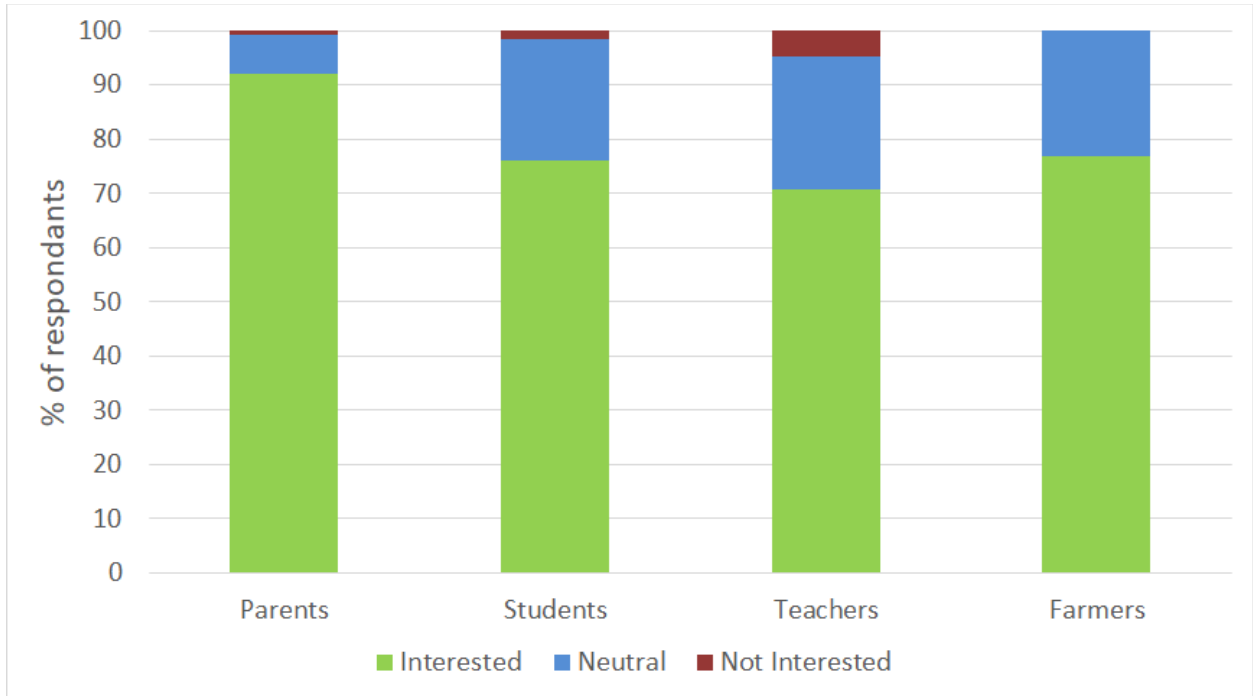
at a school, hosted school field trips, and assisted with gardening activities at schools. A third of respondents reported doing taste tests with students.

According to the baseline and planning survey results, locally sourced procurement for school institutions is almost non-existent in the Champaign-Urbana area. USD116 reported no locally-procured foods being served in the cafeteria and only one local farmer/producer reported selling goods to a school (a college in central Illinois). 91% of foodservice staff reported at least some experience with from-scratch cooking in prior food service jobs, suggesting they may already possess some of the skills required to process locally-grown produce.

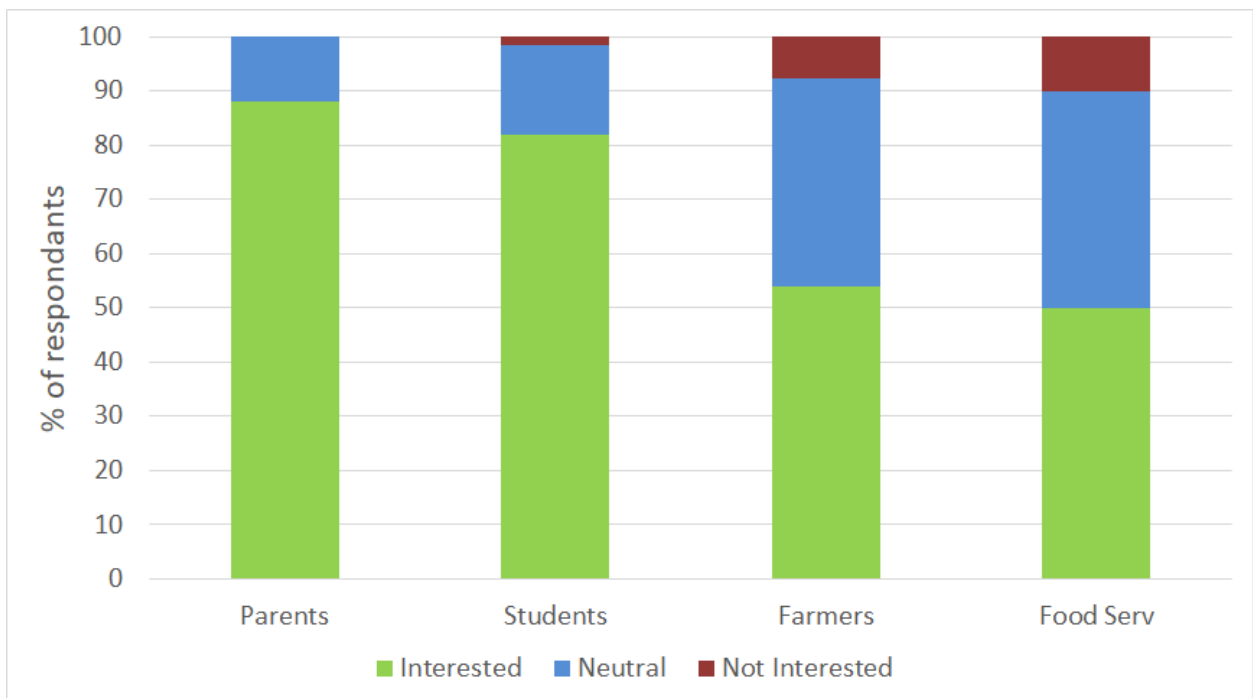
### Results: Overall Interest in Farm to School Activities

Surveys asked stakeholders if they were interested, felt neutral, or were not interested in different Farm to School activities. Overall, survey respondents from all stakeholder groups were supportive of Farm to School activities coming to USD116. At least half of all stakeholders stated they were interested in each Farm to School activity coming to USD116 and no more than 15% of respondents explicitly said they were *not interested* in any activity, with the rest feeling neutral.

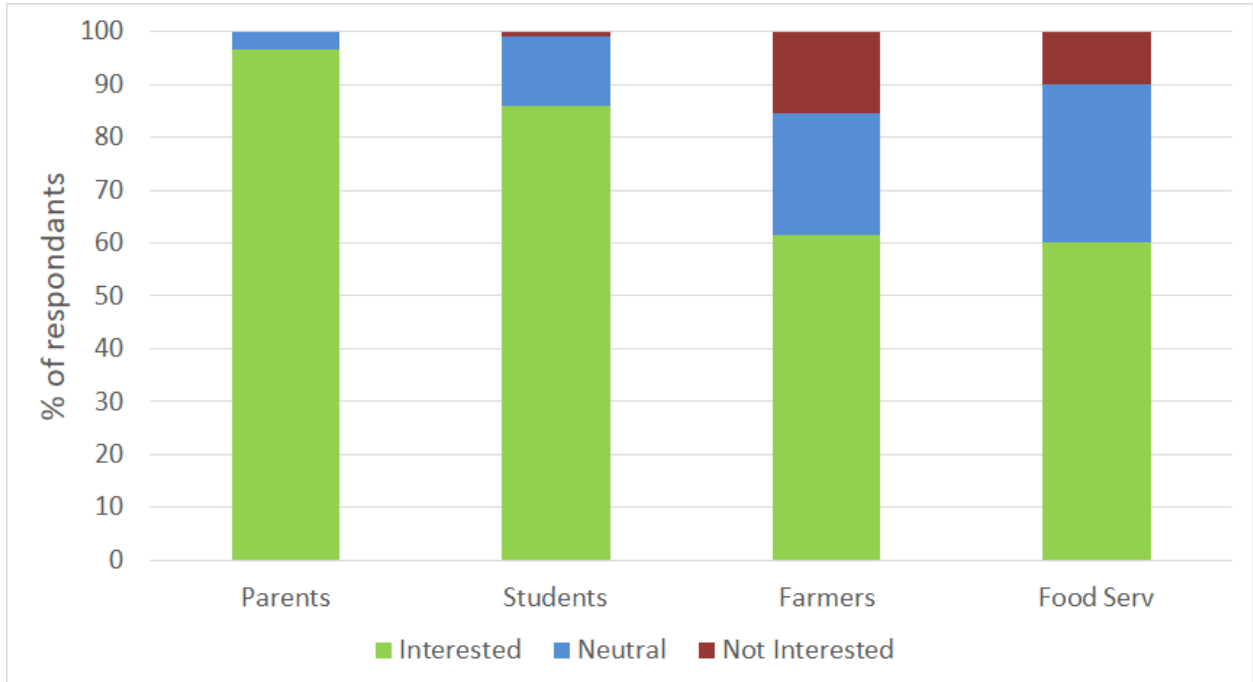
Students and parents/guardians showed the highest interest across all Farm to School activities, with at least 75% of students and at least 85% of parents being interested in each Farm to School activity. This is logical considering that students have the most to gain from Farm School activities. Interest in Farm to School activities was lesser amongst those stakeholders having to take on the bulk of the work for each respective activity, such as teachers incorporating nutrition and agriculture education in the classroom, farmers/food service staff serving locally-sourced foods into the cafeteria, and farmers hosting field trips. Figures 2-8 below outline individual stakeholder group interest in each Farm to School activity surveyed. It is important to note that not all Farm to School activities were posed to all stakeholder groups, as some were not directly applicable to each stakeholder group.



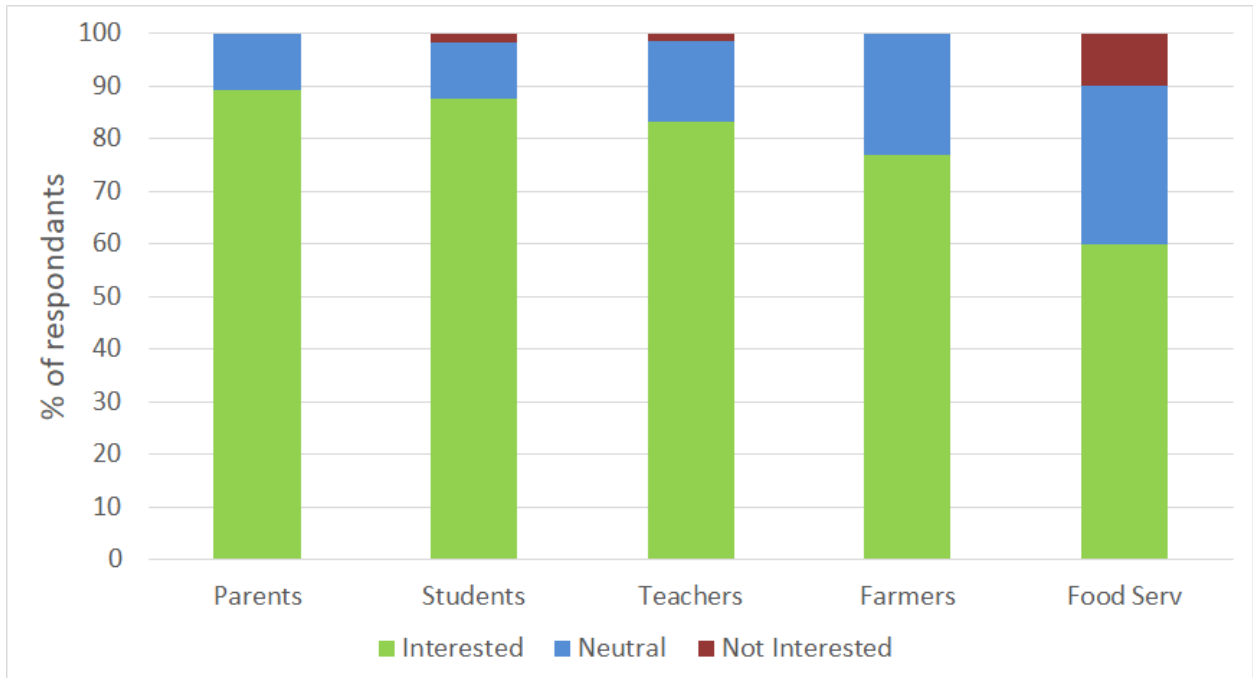
**Figure 3.** Stakeholder interest in nutrition and agricultural education at USD116



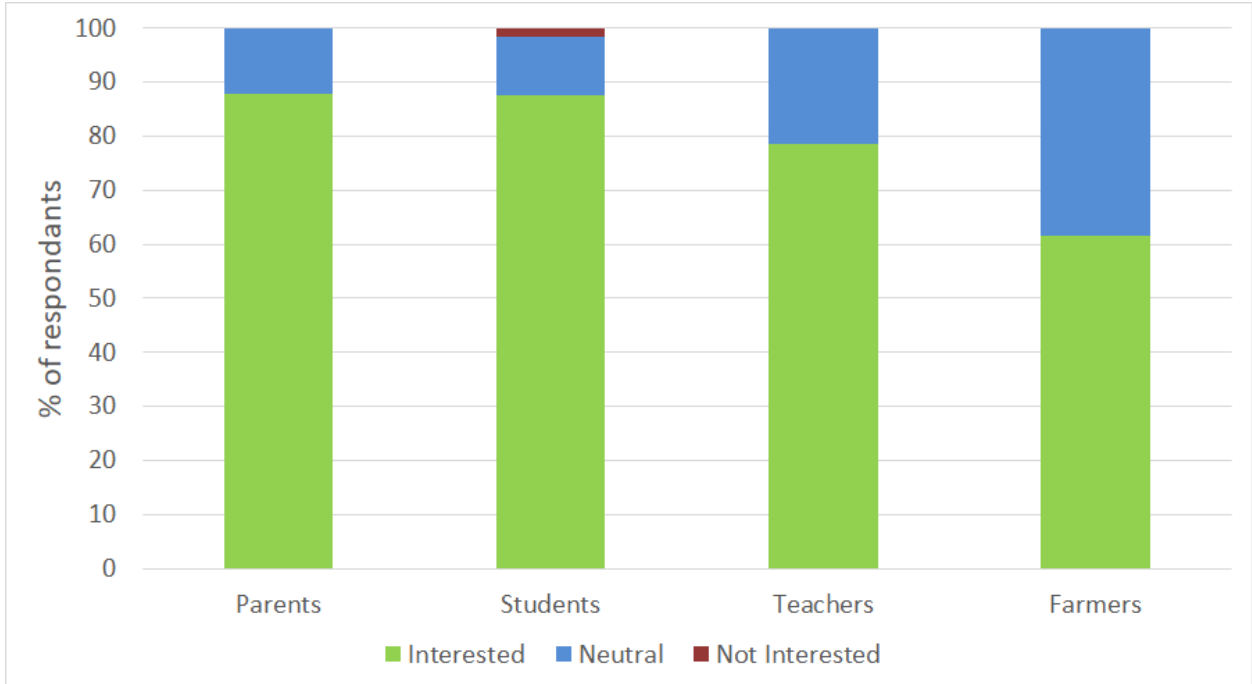
**Figure 4.** Stakeholder interest in cooking demos and taste tests of local foods USD116



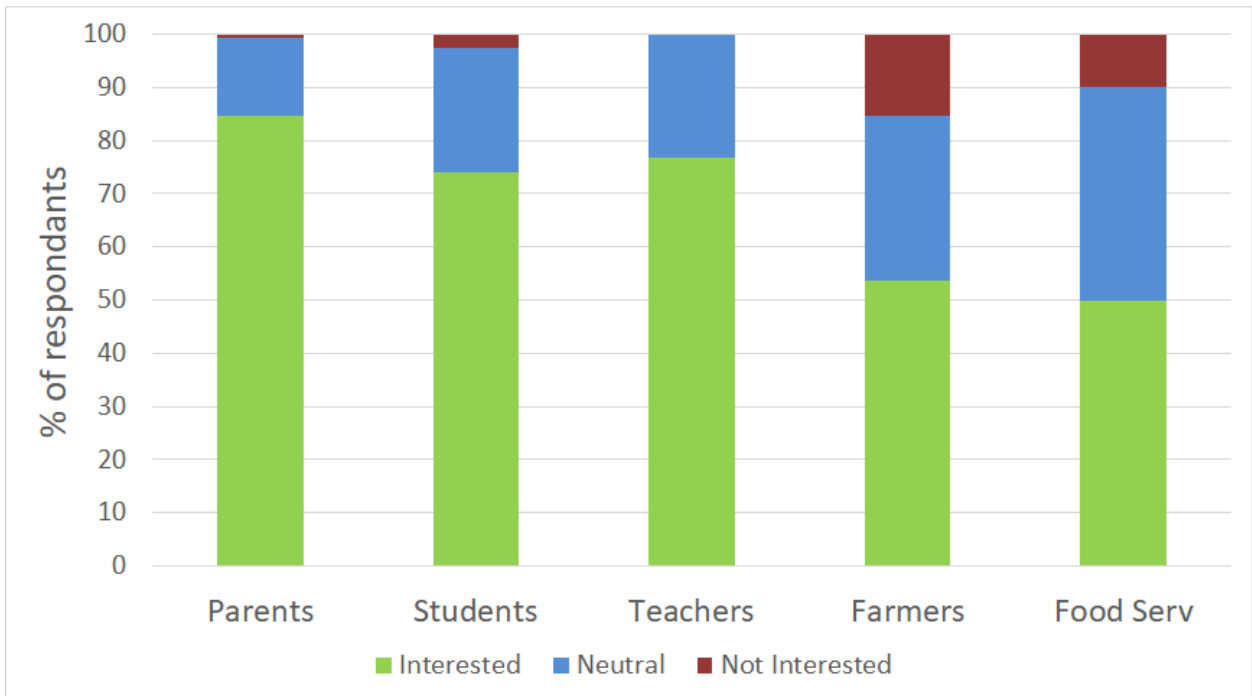
**Figure 5.** Stakeholder interest in fresh locally-grown foods being served in the cafeteria at USD116



**Figure 6.** Stakeholder interest in edible grow spaces at USD116



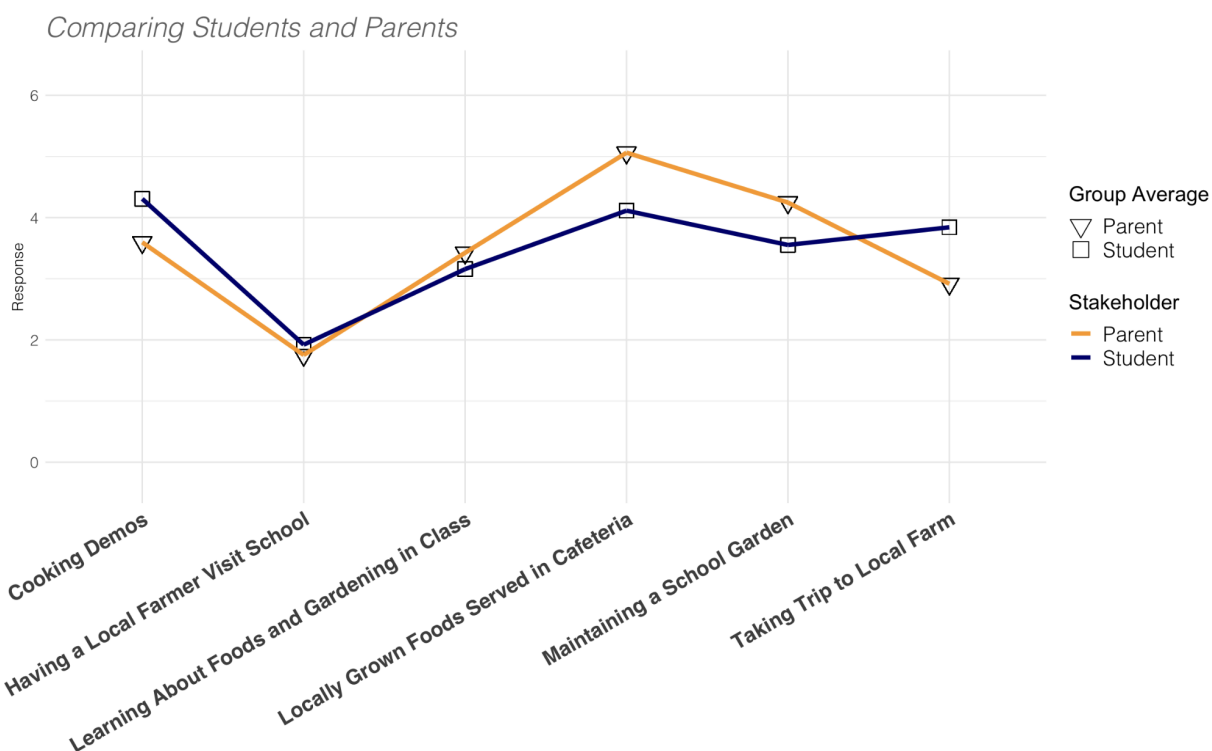
**Figure 7.** Stakeholder interest in field trips to local farms for USD116



**Figure 8.** Stakeholder interest in local farmers connecting directly with USD116 students and staff

### Results: Student and Parent Excitement for Farm to School Activities

To help prioritize development of Farm to School activities at USD116, students and parents/guardians were asked to rank their excitement for Farm to School activities, with 6 being most excited and 1 being least excited. Parents were most excited about the prospect of locally-grown foods being served in the cafeteria and the development of edible school grow spaces. Students were most excited about cooking demos of locally-sourced foods, field trips to local farms, and having locally-grown foods served in the cafeteria (though parents were *more* excited about this). Lowest excitement for both students and parents/guardians was for farmers visiting schools. Figure 9 below outlines these results.

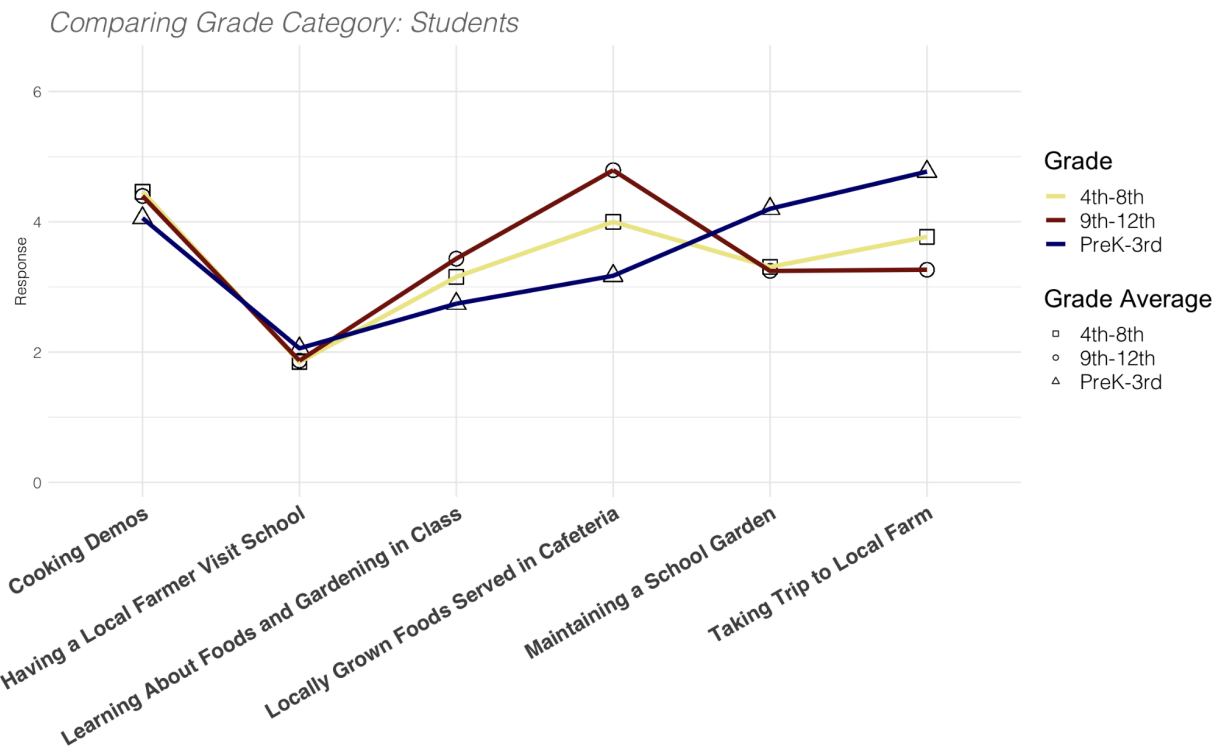


**Figure 9.** Average Level of Excitement for Farm to School Activities Amongst USD116 Parents/Guardians and Students

Level of excitement for Farm to School activities was disaggregated based upon age: young students (pre-K-3rd grade), mid-age students (4th-8th grade), and older students (9th-12th grade). Younger students were most excited about tactile, field-oriented activities, such as: taking a field trip to a local farm and maintaining a school garden. The parent of a 1st grader at Dr. Preston L. Williams Jr. Elementary said that her daughter “*would really like to visit the farm and see farm animals and how plants are grown.*” Contrarily, older students were more interested in health-oriented and life-skills related Farm to School activities, such as: having locally-grown foods served in

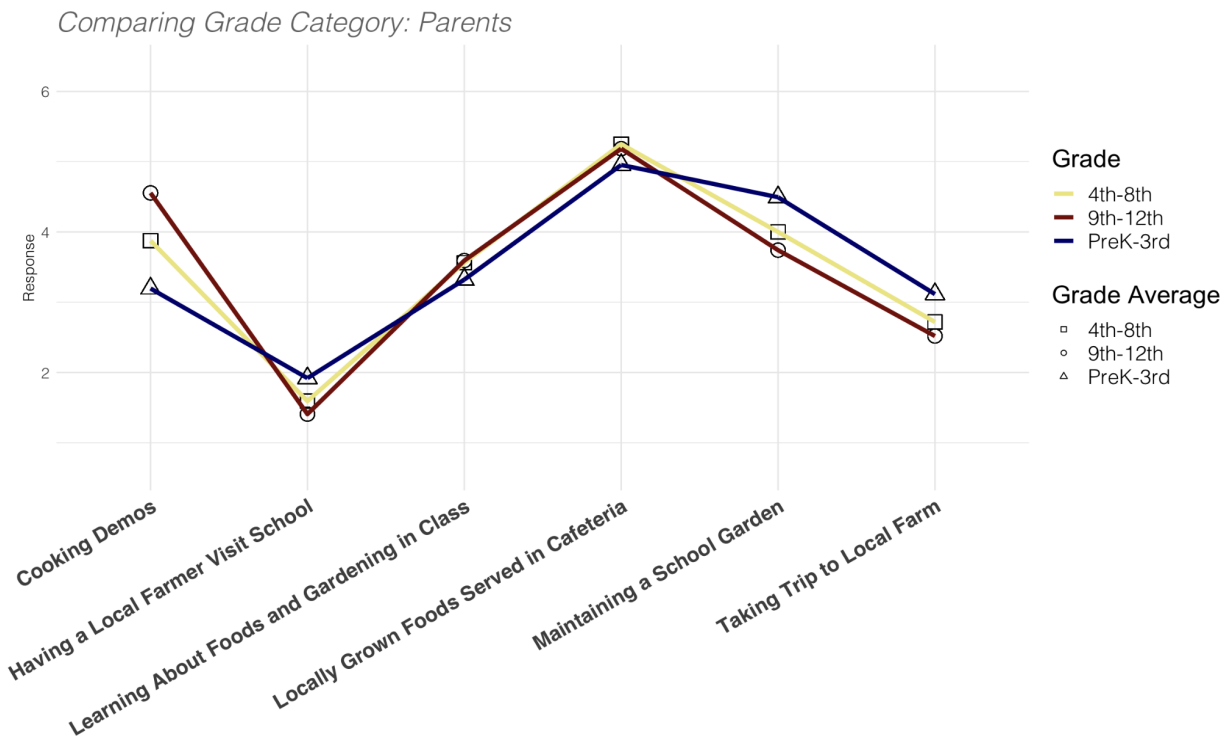


the cafeteria and learning about foods and gardening in class. This was supported by a High School Senior, who stated “*I think [Farm to School] would be amazing because it would give a real life experience.*” All students were very excited about cooking demos, which is logical considering that this is both a sensory-oriented and skill-building activity. Having a local farmer visit a school was least exciting to all students. See Figure 10 below.



**Figure 10.** Average Level of Excitement for Farm to School Activities Amongst USD116 Students, Disaggregated by Age Group

Parents/guardians of USD116 students followed similar trends, regardless of their child's age, with greatest excitement for locally-grown foods being served in the cafeteria and least excitement for local farmers visiting their child's school. Parents/guardians of younger children had slightly higher excitement for the same tactile, field-oriented activities their children were excited about: edible school grow spaces and taking trips to local farms. The most significant difference seen is that parents/guardians of older students (9th-12th grade) were more excited for their children to engage with cooking demos/taste-testing of local foods than were parents/guardians of younger students. This may reflect that parents/guardians hold this experiential, life-skills activity as important preparation for young adulthood. See Figure 11.



**Figure 11.** Average Level of Excitement for Farm to School Activities Amongst USD116 Parents/Guardians, Disaggregated by Student Age Group

**Results: Support for a Comprehensive Farm to School Program**

Strong interest across all Farm to School stakeholder groups for varied Farm to School activities ultimately supports the development of a comprehensive, integrated Farm to School program at USD116. When asked what people think of Farm to School coming to USD116, various stakeholders addressed this directly:

"Sería genial que nuestros hijos hagan estas actividades como parte del día escolar y no solamente como una actividad extracurricular." Translation: "It would be great if our children did these activities as part of the school day and not just as an extracurricular activity."

*-Urbana High School Parent/Guardian*

"While I think fresh food should be in the cafeteria, I think the food sources should be discussed, not just served to children. ...the people, process, and resources required to bring food to the table..."

*-Thomas Paine Elementary Parent/Guardian*

"I think it is a great idea. We live in a prime area for agricultural production but few of our students have much knowledge about it. Exposure to career and work options related to agriculture should start in the elementary years and go far

beyond 'farmer'. All ages would benefit from learning more about nutrition."  
*-Urbana High School Teacher*

"Teachers have so many curricular demands placed upon them, but if curriculum materials were created that blend with other subject matter, that may help."  
*-Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary Teacher*

"I think it would be great if all the pieces can be put together."  
*-Local Farmer/Producer*

"This is a valued program that can create community involvement while providing a fun environment for students to learn about the foods they are eating daily."  
*-USD116 Food Service Staff*

The USD116 community had so much enthusiasm for Farm to School efforts that they even came up with their own suggestions for content: agricultural education should include a variety of farming models (conventional western, traditional indigenous, and international), guest speakers should represent all areas of the food system (not just farmers, but also food scientists, food pantry workers, etc.), and environmental components should be integrated throughout the Farm to the School system at USD116.

Concerns about the specific content of Farm to School educational components were also mentioned by some parents:

"I do hope that the nutrition part of the curriculum does not involve shame-based good food/bad food paradigms, as that can set up negative eating patterns, as well as making students who don't eat in the ['good'] way... at home feel bad about their families..."  
*-Leal Elementary Parent/Guardian*

"Concerned if they give messages supported by the big food industries (e.g. Big Dairy or Meat industries)."  
*-Dr. Preston L. Williams Jr. Elementary School Parent/Guardian*

"I support this fully but I do hope that there will not be any negative messaging about conventional agriculture..."  
*-Leal Elementary Parent/Guardian*

### Results: Potential Barriers to Farm to School Implementation

Although survey respondents largely supported all Farm to School activities, some barriers and concerns relating to Farm to School implementation were expressed across all stakeholder groups. Those most commonly cited were: time and resources.

Time was most often cited in terms of staffing and burden:

“...it's going to be a challenge to figure out how to work with the cafeteria's equipment and amount of staff such that cafeterias aren't overburdened by fresh produce coming into the schools.”

*-Local Farmer/Producer*

“It's okay I guess, as long as it does not take away from my free time.”

*-Urbana Middle School Student*

"Interested but cautious. What will we take away, to add this in? These past few years have been intense, is this just more work?"

*-Flossie Wiley Elementary Teacher*

The need for additional resources was cited amongst those doing the work of Farm to School: teachers, food service staff, and local farmers/producers. 36% of teachers said that they had no resources available to them to pursue Farm to School activities currently, with the remaining 64% stating they had *some* resources but needed more. Similarly, only one farmer mentioned having enough resources to pursue Farm to School activities, with around half stating that they had no resources available to pursue Farm to School activities. Specific resource needs (listed in order of frequency cited) for each stakeholder group include:

#### *Teachers*

- Funding
- Supplies
- Professional development
- Curriculum development
- Staffing (including support staff)

#### *Local Farmers/Producers*

- Facilities development
- Funding
- GAP certification
- Staffing
- Legal assistance (liability insurance, food safety, site safety)
- Professional development

#### *Food Service Staff*

- Professional development
- Additional kitchen equipment
- Staffing

Logistics of local procurement was a shared concern amongst food service staff and farmers/producers. One farmer noted that having a “*small scale operation makes sustaining product lines for high volume (schools) consumers tough.*” Potential barriers to local procurement (listed in order of frequency cited), include:

*Local Farmers/Producers*

- Quantity (being able to fill specific quotas)
- Limited growing season
- System for tracing products
- Transportation of goods

*Food Service Staff*

- Quantity (difficulty in getting orders filled)
- Quality (inconsistency of size/shape of food)

**d. Bean Counter Survey for King Elementary School**

**i. Development and Implementation**

In order to solicit some feedback from the King School community, an informal bean counter survey was developed and implemented at the King School Street Fair in May 2021. In this informal survey, people were asked to vote for their favorite Farm to School activity that they would like to see implemented at King School by putting a dry bean in a mason jar. This survey had six mason jars with pictures of different Farm to School activities (taking a field trip to a local farm, having a local farmer visit King School, growing healthy foods in a school garden, learning about foods and gardening in class, cooking demos/taste tests of locally-grown foods, and serving locally-grown foods in the cafeteria) and five different types of dry beans labeled for different stakeholder groups. Stakeholder groups were modified slightly from those in the Planning Surveys based upon expected stakeholder attendance at the Street Fair (King students, King parents/guardians, King teachers/staff, non-King students, King community members). Participation was incentivized with prizes (flower seeds, vegetable seeds, and recipe cards).

**ii. Survey Results and King School Community Response**

In total, 111 people responded to the Bean Counter survey. Overall, the greatest interest was in the development of edible gardens (32%), students going on field trips to farms (23%), and taste tests/cooking demos of local foods at school (20%). The lowest interest across all stakeholder groups was for local farmers to visit King School (4%). Although only 11% of people voted for locally-grown foods being served in the cafeteria, nearly half of those respondents were King parents/guardians, showing that parents/guardians strongly support changes in the type of foods served to their children. King teachers, King students, and King community members all showed the greatest interest in edible gardens, and non-King students showed the greatest interest in field trips to farms and taste tests/cooking demos of locally-grown foods. King students also had a high interest in learning about foods and gardening in class, but it is important to note that this Farm to School activity was on a purple background and one young elementary student said

“purple is my favorite!” when they voted for this activity. As such, these informal survey results hold some biases that may be different from those from written survey responses: limited literacy for young children, background color of Farm to School activity, individuals being influenced by responses of others in their group, etc. may have all influenced responses. These factors will be taken into consideration for any future informal surveying of the USD116 community, especially for young children.

Overall, feedback from the community was very positive. Most people who stopped by the booth were overjoyed to talk about the prospect of Farm to School coming to King School. Comment cards were also available to the public, key feedback included:

“This is great! I would like to see my children grow plants in school and go to actual farms as field trips.”

*-King School Parent/Guardian*

“Students should learn about the whole process of making food. They should get to grow food and to feel ownership of what they've done, as well as learning how to take care of plants.”

*-King School Community Member*



**Figure 12.** Jennifer Lotton (CU Farm to School Leadership Team) surveying the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School community and spreading the word about Farm to School at the King School Street Fair, May 2021.

### **e. Pilot Taste Testing Event**

In May 2021, a taste testing event was held at the five Urbana elementary schools that have after-school programming (Yankee Ridge, Wiley, Thomas Paine, Leal, Dr. Preston Williams). Locally-grown kale and scratch-made ranch dressings (regular ranch and vegan ranch) featuring locally-grown chives, parsley, and green garlic were served. A nutrition and agriculture education talk was led by Sola Gratia Farm at each school while kids tasted their mini salads. Feedback was solicited via simple Smiley Face Surveys.

In total, 166 students tasted the kale salad. Of those, 39% said they *would* eat the kale salad again, 29% said they *might* eat it again, and 32% said they *would not* eat it again. Students and after-school staff were very enthused about the tasting event; whether kids liked the food or not, they were very excited to share their opinion with others. Students

asked lots of questions about the food and were excited to look at the bunches of local produce that were freshly harvested from Sola Gratia Farm.




After the event, a survey was sent to the after-school staff to solicit feedback to help guide future sampling events. Thirteen people responded to the survey, with over 75% stating they were satisfied or very satisfied with the event and 70% stating that the event was relevant for students. Constructive feedback included: that it was hard to hear the education piece so a microphone should be used next time; surveys should be made available in other languages (Spanish, French); smaller groups would make the event more engaging and customizable to students' ages; and that multiple items should be sampled. This feedback will certainly be taken into consideration for future sampling events.

**What grade are you in?** (circle one)

Kindergarten    1<sup>st</sup>    2<sup>nd</sup>    3<sup>rd</sup>    4<sup>th</sup>    5<sup>th</sup>

**Would you eat this again?** (circle one)

No way!    Maybe!    Yes!

**Figure 13.** Smiley Face surveys given to USD116 elementary students during Pilot Taste Testing event, May 2021.





**Figure 14.** Valerie Koress (CU Farm to School Leadership Team) teaching students at Leal Elementary School about locally-grown produce at Taste Testing event, May 2021.

## **2. Using Survey Results**

Overall, survey results and positive reception by the USD116 community strongly support the implementation of a comprehensive, integrated Farm to School program. As such, varied Farm to School components, including edible grow spaces, curriculum, and local-foods procurement will be pursued in the coming years. USD116 community feedback will help navigate these efforts moving forward, both in terms of specific Farm to School activities to prioritize and potential challenges to pursuing these activities. Sustainable funding for Farm to School activities and professional development opportunities for all key stakeholder groups will be crucial to achieving a successful Farm to School program at USD116.

Relative interest and identified barriers help pinpoint that some Farm to School activities will be much easier to achieve in the short-term (i.e. cooking demos/taste tests of locally-grown foods, edible grow spaces at schools, field trips to local farms) and some will be more long-term goals (i.e. integrated nutrition and agricultural education and serving locally-grown foods in the cafeteria). Survey results showed lower interest in specific Farm to School activities amongst those stakeholders taking on the hard work of those activities. As such, the development of these activities should work to minimize the burden whenever possible. Considering varied experience and interest amongst farmers/producers, giving them ample opportunities to opt-in to participate in different Farm to School activities may be a viable option for their involvement with USD116. Takeaways for each surveyed Farm to School activity are outlined below.

### **a. Cooking Demos and Taste Testing of Locally-Grown Foods**

High excitement amongst all students and parents/guardians of older students shows that cooking demos and taste-testing of locally-grown foods is worthwhile to pursue in the USD116 Farm to School program. However, farmers/producers and food service workers were less interested in this activity. As such, varied avenues should be explored to achieve this activity in a manner that will minimize the burden on those less interested parties: having local foods prepared by outside caterers and brought into schools for taste tests, performing taste tests and cooking demos in the classroom as a part of curricular activities or regular snack time, inviting outside groups to hold cooking demos and taste tests (including individual farmers/producers who may be interested), and providing opportunities for parents/guardians to assist with taste tests and cooking demos.

### **b. Integrated Nutrition and Agricultural Education**

Based upon stakeholder feedback, integrated nutrition and agricultural education should meet curricular standards whenever possible. Nutrition and agriculture education content should be well-rounded, inclusive, and age-appropriate. Education

for older students should be health-oriented and life-skills oriented while younger students should have more hands-on learning opportunities. Providing teachers with pre-made Farm to School curricular options, professional development opportunities, and partnering with outside groups to provide education to students should reduce the burden on teachers and help overcome many barriers identified in the surveys.

### **c. Fresh Locally-Grown Foods Served in the Cafeteria**

Strong support for the integration of locally-grown foods into the school lunch menu was seen in the surveys, however, many barriers were also identified, including lower interest among food service staff and farmers/producers. This speaks to the immense work that must be done to pursue this Farm to School activity, framing this as a longer-term goal for USD116. Within the schools: specific kitchen equipment needs should be assessed and updated; professional development opportunities should be provided to food service staff; and additional staffing should be explored (due to longer preparation times required for scratch preparation of locally-grown foods). Outside of the schools: work needs to be done to tackle the barriers local farmers/producers face in selling their goods to large institutions (e.g. supporting GAP certification for local farms).

Starting small may make changes more feasible at the beginning of this menu integration process. For example, the inclusion of locally-grown produce in the fruit and vegetable bar could allow the flexibility to work with small quantities of food that require minimal processing equipment. This would allow food service staff to develop their food preparation skills in dealing with potentially “imperfect” produce as well as allowing local farmers/producers to ramp up their production to meet larger school quotas over time. Higher excitement amongst older students to consume locally-grown foods in the cafeteria supports potentially piloting menu integration at Urbana High School and then expanding to the other schools thereafter.

### **d. Edible School Grow Spaces**

There was very strong support for edible school grow spaces across all student age groups and all stakeholder groups (though lower amongst food service staff). Pre-existing grow spaces at some schools and the recently awarded Edible Gardens Turnkey Grant for the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 make this a natural starting point for Farm to School activities at USD116. The Edible Gardens Turnkey Grant will help support the development of growing spaces at each USD116 school, though further funding should also be explored for sustainability.

Edible grow space activities should honor student age and interests, with older student participation being more focused on health and life skills and younger students having the opportunity for more tactile-oriented experiences. Lower interest amongst food

service staff directs initial efforts away from the integration of school-grown produce into the cafeteria at this juncture. Instead, school-grown produce could be used for classroom activities. Professional development for staff and ample community-based volunteer opportunities should be pursued to improve the likelihood of successful growth spaces and reduce the burden on teachers (especially with respect to time).

#### **e. Field Trips to Local Farms**

Strong interest in field trips was cited by students, parents/guardians, and teachers. This Farm to School activity should be prioritized amongst younger students who showed greater excitement than did older students. Some local farmers/producers had hosted field trips in the past and were interested in hosting more in the future, making this a relatively easy Farm to School activity to pursue as a near-term goal, so this would likely be an easy starting point for Farm to School activities. Reduction of the burden on farmers/producers and teachers would include support in navigating liability concerns and creating opportunities for parents/guardians to assist with field trips.

#### **f. Local Farmers Connecting Directly with Students/School Staff**

Based upon survey results, cooking demos/taste tests of locally-grown foods, edible school grow spaces, field trips to local farms, integrated nutrition and agricultural education, and serving locally-grown foods in the cafeteria should all be prioritized over bringing local farmers to USD116 schools as guest speakers.

### **3. Plans for Future Evaluation of Programming**

Quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods and indicators are outlined alongside corresponding action items in the [Action Plan Table](#). Indicators for each USD116 Farm to School Goal are as follows:

- Goal 1: School meals and snacks will include locally sourced ingredients that contribute equitably not only to food security and quality for all students but also promote long-term healthy lifestyle habits.
  - Determine the number of locally sourced foods in school meals pre-and post-implementation.
  - Determine the number of students participating in taste tests/meals/snacks that serve local foods.
  - Knowledge/Attitudes/Practices evaluation: changes in knowledge, attitudes, and practices pertaining to local foods and local foods consumption, such as:
    - Knowledge: of local foods available at school, identification of fruits/vegetables that grow locally, etc.
    - Attitudes: towards local foods, vegetable preferences, etc.

- Practices: plate waste study for students when local-foods are served, food frequency questionnaire or dietary recall pre-and post-implementation to see if fruit/veg or local foods intake has increased in terms of variety/frequency/quantity, or if any other "healthier" dietary patterns are noted, etc.
- Goal 2: All students will have the opportunity to participate in a sustainable farm-to-school program that is inclusive of a diverse community.
  - Determine the number of Farm to School curricular activities available.
  - Determine the number of students participating in Farm to School curricular activities and grow spaces.
  - Knowledge/Attitudes/Practices evaluation: changes in knowledge, attitudes, and practices pertaining to local foods, nutrition, and gardening/agriculture.
- Goal 3: The Urbana School District Farm to School Program will foster the growth of a connected, engaged, healthy, thriving community, and will be both mutually supportive and mutually beneficial to all participants in the local food system
  - Determine the number of events, participants, and partnerships formed.
  - Determine the number of marketing materials created, number of people reached.
  - Determine the number of producers prepared to provide local foods to schools.

This list is not comprehensive, as the evaluation of USD116 F2S programming will likely evolve as the program evolves. Potential collaborative partnerships for evaluation include the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) and the University of Illinois Extension, both of which are currently represented on the USD116 Farm to School Steering Committee.



# **Program Sustainability**

## **1. Background and Progress to Date**

Sola Gratia Farm and CUPHD secured funds in July 2020 through a USDA F2S Planning Grant to support a 12-month planning process including personnel, pilot project supplies, and costs associated with larger stakeholder meetings to inform the planning process. Investments in proper planning, execution, and study of this partnership have helped identify strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats that can inform future and broader efforts to address school communities' healthy food needs. Many of the components needed to support this community food project are being provided as in-kind contributions and will continue in the longer term. These include 1) SGF staff time and labor, tours, and farm resources including produce for pilot F2S activities; 2) CUPHD staff time (outreach and education) and meeting space; 3) USD116 staff time and meeting space; 3) Arbor Food Management, Inc. staff time on consulting; 4) University of Illinois Extension staff time on consulting, outreach and education; 5) Illinois Farm to School Network staff time on consulting, outreach and education.

The Leadership Team does anticipate applying for implementation funds at the end of the 12 month planning period. Once the partnerships and proposed program components are in place and refined, long-term funding needs will be supplemented because 1) key project partners are long-standing stable organizations, and 2) the right network and balance of producers, consumers, educators, and promoters will enable these proposed projects to be subsidized due to leveraged resources and targeted sales.

## **2. Funding**

In 2021, the Leadership Team received funding to support the development of edible growing spaces at 4 USD116 schools as well as personnel support for continued LT coordination. Additional funding and continued in-kind contributions will need to be sought on behalf of the USD116 Farm to School program to further implementation of the F2S Action Plan. Sola Gratia Farm and CUPHD intend to apply for USDA F2S Implementation Funds in winter 2021-2022. Longer-term, support of the F2S program will need to be written into the USD budget for perpetual funding. Additionally, fundraising opportunities will need to be explored and may include a school garden market, sale of value-added products (salsa, soups), and donation solicitations.

## **3. Partnerships**

The Farm to School Steering Committee has established many partnerships in order to inform a successful F2S program for USD116 including: within USD116 (School Board, Administrators, Faculty and Staff, Afterschool Childcare Program and Champaign-Urbana Schools Foundation); food service professionals (Arbor Food Management, Central Illinois Produce, Piato's Catering, and Hendrick House Catering);

public health officials (Champaign-Urbana Public Health District); academic resources (University of Illinois Extension and University of Illinois Crop Sciences and Nutritional Sciences Departments); local farms (Sola Gratia Farm, Student Sustainable Farm, Blue Moon Farm, and Fowler Farm as well as Champaign County Farm Bureau); and the Illinois Farm to School Network. Each of these partners brings a unique perspective and set of opportunities and skill sets for the SC to access. The SC is also interested in building further partnerships as opportunities arise.

#### **4. Community Engagement**

Community engagement is a major factor in ensuring the longevity of the USD116 Farm to School program. The program must address the authentic educational and recreational needs of the students and families of USD116. As such, community members must be involved in the whole of the planning and implementation process. The Champaign-Urbana Farm to School social media pages should be used to consistently communicate with the public, as well as other communication channels such as the local press, Board of Education meetings, and in-school bulletins.

Edible grow spaces can be used as a communication tool as well. Signage should be provided in gardens to help community members understand their purpose and use, and should be posted in multiple languages (with specific languages being chosen based on what is spoken in adjacent neighborhoods) to promote accessibility and cultural relevance. Community members should also be invited to enjoy and learn about garden spaces and the F2S program as a whole through garden “open houses” and other events.

Finally, taking steps to institutionalize the F2S program within each school now will help to maintain community engagement. Grow space coordinators at each school as well as a district-wide F2S Coordinator will provide first points of contact for community members to get involved with the F2S program when and as they are most able. Also, making information about F2S resources (grow spaces, kitchens or kitchen kits, etc.) and programming widely available and accessible will give community members clear ways to plug in to the F2S program as their skills and interests determine.

Goal	Strategy	Action Items	Key Players	Timeline	Evaluation Method / Indicators	Report Section Link	Legend
School meals and snacks will include locally sourced ingredients that contribute equitably not only to food security and quality for all students, but also promote long-term healthy lifestyle habits	Identify, expand, or install certifiable food prep/kitchen spaces at each school so locally-sourced and school-grown foods can be processed for student consumption	Create clear plan for food prep space by food service staff, students, and teachers at each school	Arbor Food Management staff, USD116 CFO, USD116 Curriculum Director, USD116 teachers	Year 1	Plan completed and shared with relevant parties	<a href="#">Institutionalization</a>	
		Identify existing food prep equipment at each school	Arbor Food Management staff	Year 1	Kitchen inventory completed at each school	<a href="#">Delivery, Processing, and Storage</a>	Blue - Procurement
		Determine equipment needed to reach desired processing capacity at each school	Arbor Food Management staff, F2S Steering Committee Procurement sub-committee	Year 1	surveys/ # of inventory items, total and per school, before and after purchase of additional equipment	<a href="#">Delivery, Processing, and Storage</a>	Green - Edible Grow Spaces
		Report kitchen equipment, design, and storage needs to school board and identify opportunities within future school upgrade plans	Arbor Food Management staff, F2S Steering Committee, USD116 School Board	Year 1-2	Report presented and discussed at BOE meeting	<a href="#">Delivery, Processing, and Storage</a>	Orange - Curriculum/Cross-Components
	Develop food safety plan for handling, storage, and preparation of school-grown produce, customized to each school food prep space	Identify relevant regulations pertinent to use of school-grown produce for student consumption, at the local, state, federal levels	Champaign-Urbana Public Health District Division of Environmental Health, University of Illinois Extension	Year 1	Review of relevant regulations completed	<a href="#">Food Safety</a>	Pink - Community Development
		Develop SOPs and HACCPs for use of school-grown produce, including pertinent traceability measures	Champaign-Urbana Public Health District Division of Environmental Health, USD 116 Food Service Management Company, University of Illinois Extension	Year 1	# of SOPs/HACCP developed, total and per school	<a href="#">Traceability</a>	Purple - Sustainable Funding
	Provide staff with training and resources on processing locally-sourced and school-grown foods for inclusion in meals and snacks	Identify ways to incorporate locally-grown produce into school meals and snacks	Local producers, Arbor Food Management staff, USD116 teachers and staff	Year 1-2	Review of relevant resources/ # pilot activities conducted, menu audit completed	<a href="#">Menu Planning</a>	
		Identify, plan, and schedule trainings needed by food service staff for processing locally-grown produce, including school-grown food	Arbor Food Management staff and leadership, University of Illinois Extension	Year 1-2	# of trainings made available, # of staff in attendance at each training	<a href="#">Sourcing and Procurement</a>	
		Identify, plan, and schedule trainings needed by teachers to be able to process local produce in the classroom, including school-grown food	USD116 teachers and administrators	Year 1-2	# of trainings made available, # of staff in attendance at each training	<a href="#">Food Safety: Kitchen, Cafeteria, and Classrooms</a>	
	Create a clear and streamlined process for food service buyers, distributors, and producers to get locally-sourced food into school dining services	Develop seasonal availability list with local producer contacts	Local producers, Arbor Food Management staff	Year 1-2	# of items and producers on list	<a href="#">Sourcing and Procurement</a>	
		Develop order, delivery, and payment procedure to encourage local procurement	Local producers, distributors, and processors, Arbor Food Management leadership and staff	Year 1-2		<a href="#">Sourcing and Procurement</a>	
		Develop food safety SOP for storage, preparation and use of locally-sourced foods		Year 1-2	# of SOPs/HACCP developed, total and per school	<a href="#">Delivery, Processing, and Storage</a>	
	Create a clear and streamlined process for teachers, support staff, families, and any other snack providers (outside of district food service) to procure locally-sourced foods for school/classroom	Develop seasonal availability list with producer contacts	Local producers	Year 1-2	# of items and producers on list	<a href="#">Sourcing and Procurement</a>	
		Identify local farms following desirable practices (e.g. certified organic, non-gmo seeds, etc)	Local producers, F2S Procurement sub-committee	Year 1-2		<a href="#">Sourcing and Procurement</a>	
		Develop clear order, delivery, and payment procedures accessible to non-food service professionals	Local producers, USD116 staff and teachers, F2S Procurement sub-committee	Year 1-2		<a href="#">Sourcing and Procurement</a>	
		Develop storage, preparation, and serving guidelines	Champaign-Urbana Public Health District Division of Environmental Health, USD116 administrators, staff, and teachers	Year 1-2		<a href="#">Food Safety: Kitchen, Cafeteria, and Classrooms</a>	
		Identify food quantity and quality requirements that pertain to school/classroom snacks	Champaign-Urbana Public Health District Division of Environmental Health, USD116 administrators, staff, and teachers	Year 1-2		<a href="#">Sourcing and Procurement</a>	
	Define "locally-sourced foods" in the USD 116 Wellness Policy, and establish that production, preparation, and procurement of locally sourced food is a priority for USD 116	Update USD 116 Wellness Policy to include language that prioritizes use of locally-sourced food, when available	USD116 CFO, USD116 School Board, F2S Procurement sub-committee	Year 1		<a href="#">Sourcing and Procurement</a>	
		Define "locally-sourced food" for USD 116	F2S Steering Committee	Year 1	"local" is defined in both Wellness Policy and food service bid	<a href="#">Sourcing and Procurement</a>	
		Include contractual commitment to locally-sourced food in the food service provider contract (when and as available)	USD116 CFO, USD116 School Board, F2S Steering Committee	Year 1-2	# of locally-sourced foods in school meals pre- and post- implementation	<a href="#">Menu Planning</a>	
	Evaluate progress towards goal	Determine number of locally-sourced foods in school meals pre- and post- implementation				<a href="#">Plans for Future Evaluation of Programming</a>	
		Determine number of students participating in taste tests/meals/snacks that serve local foods				<a href="#">Plans for Future Evaluation of Programming</a>	
		Knowledge/Attitudes/Practices evaluation: changes in knowledge, attitudes, and practices pertaining to local foods and local foods consumption				<a href="#">Plans for Future Evaluation of Programming</a>	
	Goal	Strategy	Action Items	Key Players	Timeline	Evaluation Method / Indicators	Report Section Link
All students will have the opportunity to participate in a sustainable farm to school program that is inclusive of a diverse community	Install/develop ADA- and community-accessible edible grow spaces at every Urbana school	Complete USDA Edible Gardens Turnkey Grant requirements	Steering Committee, Existing School Garden Leaders, USD 116 Director of Facilities Services	In Progress	Quantitative measure of edible grow spaces at each school, comparing pre- and post- edible gardens turnkey grant year implementation	<a href="#">Funding</a>	
		Locate grow spaces with access to full sun, water, good soil and with exterior access at each school for community members/volunteers, whenever possible	USD116 Director of Facilities Services, Principals at each USD 116 School	In Progress	# of edible grow spaces placed in ideal location and with exterior access	<a href="#">Background and Progress to Date</a>	
		Implement grow space accessibility requirements and design in collaboration with Urbana School District facilities management, following Department of Justice Americans with Disabilities Act Standards for Accessible Design	USD116 Director of Facilities Services	In Progress, Continuing in Year 1	# of edible grow spaces that meet ADA requirements	<a href="#">Planning and Design</a>	
		Establish storage space for gardening equipment at each grow space	USD116 Director of Facilities Services	In Progress, Continuing in Year 1-2	# of storage spaces established	<a href="#">Planning and Design</a>	



Goal	Strategy	Action Items	Key Players	Timeline	Evaluation Method / Indicators	Report Section Link
Develop a safety and management plan for edible grow spaces at each school		Develop comprehensive garden safety manual customized to each school, including: food safety, physical safety, and environmental safety components	Champaign-Urbana Public Health District Division of Environmental Health, University of Illinois Extension, USD116 Director of Facilities Services, Existing USD 116 School Grow Space Leaders, District-wide F2S Coordinator and School Grow Space Coordinators (once these positions are established)	In Progress, Continuing in Year 1-2	# of garden manuals completed (one per school)	<a href="#">Maintenance, Staffing, and Training</a>
		Develop robust record-keeping system for traceability purposes, including: grow space participation/work log, as well as a harvest log with information pertinent to traceability	Champaign-Urbana Public Health District Division of Environmental Health, University of Illinois Extension, USD116 Director of Facilities Services, Existing USD 116 School Grow Space Leaders, District-wide F2S Coordinator and School Grow Space Coordinators (once these positions are established)	In Progress, Continuing in Year 1-2	record-keeping system developed and implemented	<a href="#">Maintenance, Staffing, and Training</a>
		Develop pest-management plan, including: access, storage, use, and disposal of safe pesticides (if any are used)	Champaign-Urbana Public Health District Division of Environmental Health, University of Illinois Extension, 4-H, USD116 Director of Facilities Services, Existing USD 116 School Grow Space Leaders, District-wide F2S Coordinator and School Grow Space Coordinators (once these positions are established)	In Progress, Continuing in Year 1-2	management plan developed and implemented	<a href="#">Food Safety</a>
		Develop weed-management plan, including disposal of organic material	Champaign-Urbana Public Health District Division of Environmental Health, University of Illinois Extension, 4-H, USD116 Director of Facilities Services, Existing USD 116 School Grow Space Leaders, District-wide F2S Coordinator and School Grow Space Coordinators (once these positions are established)	In Progress, Continuing in Year 1-2	weed-management plan developed and implemented	<a href="#">Maintenance, Staffing, and Training</a>
		Develop soil management plan, including: regular soil testing schedule/protocol and guidance for access, storage, use, and disposal of safe fertilizers and compost	Champaign-Urbana Public Health District Division of Environmental Health, University of Illinois Extension, 4-H, USD116 Director of Facilities Services, Existing USD 116 School Grow Space Leaders, District-wide F2S Coordinator and School Grow Space Coordinators (once these positions are established)	In Progress, Continuing in Year 1-2	soil management plan developed and implemented	<a href="#">Food Safety</a> <a href="#">Maintenance, Staffing, and Training</a>
		Develop water management plan, including regular testing schedule and protocol	Champaign-Urbana Public Health District Division of Environmental Health, University of Illinois Extension, 4-H, USD116 Director of Facilities Services, Existing USD 116 School Grow Space Leaders, District-wide F2S Coordinator and School Grow Space Coordinators (once these positions are established)	In Progress, Continuing in Year 1-2	water management plan developed and implemented	<a href="#">Food Safety</a> <a href="#">Planning and Design</a>
		Develop grow space trainings for USD 116 staff, USD 116 students, and community volunteers; trainings will include, but not be limited to: basic gardening skills, garden safety, and food safety	Existing USD 116 School Grow Space Leaders, District-wide F2S Coordinator and School Grow Space Coordinators (once these positions are established), the Land Connection, University of Illinois Extension, 4-H, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Champaign-Urbana Public Health District Division of Environmental Health	Year 1-2	# of trainings available, # of attendees at each training	<a href="#">Maintenance, Staffing, and Training</a>
		Develop flow-chart and contact list for grow space management roles and responsibilities at each school	USD116 Director of Facilities Services, Existing USD 116 School Grow Space Leaders, District-wide F2S Coordinator and School Grow Space Coordinators (once these positions are established)	Year 1-2	chart and list developed and implemented	<a href="#">Maintenance, Staffing, and Training</a>

Goal	Strategy	Action Items	Key Players	Timeline	Evaluation Method / Indicators	Report Section Link
		Develop summer management plan for edible grow spaces, which could include: summer programming (summer school, summer camps, USD 116 student internship or work opportunities, Future Farmers of America student projects) and community volunteer opportunities	USD 116 Chief Financial Officer, USD 116 Assistant Superintendent, USD 116 School Board, Existing USD 116 School Grow Space Leaders, District-wide F2S Coordinator and School Grow Space Coordinators (once these positions are established), SPLASH After-School Program, University of Illinois Extension, 4-H, Future Farmers of America, Urbana Park District	In Progress, Continuing in Year 1-2	summer management plan developed and implemented, # of summer grow space programs/work/volunteer opportunities available	<a href="#">Maintenance, Staffing, and Training</a>
	Develop list of global edible crops that will maximize use of grow spaces, and represent the diverse palates of the school community	Identify global edible crops that will grow in Zone 5b, including identification of specific planting/harvest times that correspond with the school year and whether these crops meet USDA standards for inclusion in school meals/snacks	Local Farmers/Producers, University of Illinois Extension, Existing USD 116 School Garden Leaders, USD 116 Food Service Management Provider	Year 1-2	comprehensive list developed and shared, # of edible crops on list, # of "cultures"/regions/countries of origin represented in edible crops	<a href="#">Near-Term Goals and Strategies</a>
		Survey USD community (students, parents/guardians, staff) about specific edible crops they would like to be grown in the edible grow spaces	F2S Coordinating Team will create survey, with collaborative review by Grow Space Subcommittee and USD 116 School Liaisons	Year 1-2	# of people who took survey, broken down by stakeholder group; quantitative results for interest in each edible crop	<a href="#">Planning and Design</a>
	Collaborate with district administrators and teachers to build food, agriculture, and/or nutrition education into core subject curricula, utilizing a variety of experiential learning methods that can assist in meeting curriculum standards	Develop comprehensive resource library of F2S activities/lessons with learning outcomes and supply needs clearly identified	UHS Director of Curriculum and Student Learning, UHS teachers, F2S/garden coordinator(s)	Year 1-3	# of activities/lessons available, # of curricular standards met, total and average per activity/lesson	<a href="#">Education and Curriculum Integration</a>
		Develop curricular policy that supports integration of F2S activities into all grade levels, while allowing teachers autonomy to choose which F2S activities to incorporate	UHS Director of Curriculum and Student Learning, UHS teachers, F2S/garden coordinator(s)	Year 1-3	BOE Board Policy Manual updated to include support/requirement for F2S programming in regular instruction/curriculum	<a href="#">Education and Curriculum Integration</a>
		Provide opportunities that allow for student mentorship of Farm to School concepts within and across grades and schools	UHS Director of Curriculum and Student Learning, UHS teachers, F2S/garden coordinator(s)	Year 1-3	# of mentorship opportunities identified/available, # of students participating in mentorship program	<a href="#">Education and Curriculum Integration</a>
		Identify community educators that can assist in implementing farm to school lessons that meet curriculum standards	Extension, Common Ground, others that provide educational F2S lessons/programs for young students, Ericka/curriculum team, garden/F2S coordinator(s)	Year 1-3	# of community educators/partners, # of programs/lessons available through community partners	<a href="#">Education and Curriculum Integration</a>
		Incorporate participation in school grow space activities into the school enrollment consent process for students and staff, in order to make grow spaces fully integrated into school activities	USD 116 Assistant Superintendent, USD 116 School Board	Year 1		<a href="#">Maintenance, Staffing, and Training</a>
		Equip instructional and support staff with resources, supplies, trainings, and options to implement Farm to School activities inclusively and holistically	Identify relevant Farm to School professional development trainings	UHS Director of Professional Development, UIUC Extension, ISBE, Illinois Farm to School Network	Year 1-3	# of professional development trainings offered, # of staff in attendance at each training
	Develop F2S resource kits for teacher/staff use to implement F2S class-based and/or extracurricular activities (e.g. mobile kitchen kits, garden kits, etc.)		USD116 teachers and administrators	Year 1-2	# of design/planning meetings with teachers/school staff, # of kits/other resources made available	<a href="#">Education and Curriculum Integration</a>
	Translate all farm to school program materials and grow space signage into multiple languages	Identify individuals to translate written materials into languages relevant to USD 116 community, through the USD 116 network and larger community	USD116 Assistant Superintendent, USD 116 School Principals, USD 116 School Liaisons, Community Organizations (Refugee Centers, University of Illinois)	Year 1	# of translators, total and per language, % of materials translated	<a href="#">Planning and Design</a>
	Integrate the Farm to School program into district-wide curriculum, policies, and culture	Incorporate Farm to School into job descriptions and on-boarding process for the district	UHS CFO, UHS Assistant Superintendent of Student Learning, UHS BOE	Year 1		<a href="#">Maintenance, Staffing, and Training</a>
		Incorporate Farm to School components (local foods, nutrition education, agricultural education, etc.) into USD wellness policy	UHS CFO, F2S wellness policy subcommittee	Year 1	BOE Board Policy Manual updated to include support/requirement for F2S programming in regular instruction/curriculum	<a href="#">Institutionalization</a>
	Establish school-based and district F2S coordinators to handle day-to-day maintenance of F2S activities, especially within curriculum and edible grow spaces	Discuss establishment of these positions with administration, write into school policy	UHS CFO, UHS Assistant Superintendent of Student Learning, UHS BOE	Year 1-2		<a href="#">Maintenance, Staffing, and Training</a>
		Create job description for these positions	UHS CFO, UHS Assistant Superintendent of Student Learning, Edible Grow Space subcommittee	Year 1-2	# of positions created (% of goal)	<a href="#">Maintenance, Staffing, and Training</a>
		Establish stipend rates/salary for these positions	UHS CFO, UHS Assistant Superintendent of Student Learning, UHS BOE	Year 1-2	# of positions funded	<a href="#">Maintenance, Staffing, and Training</a>
		Determine number of Farm to School curricular activities available				<a href="#">Plans for Future Evaluation of Programming</a>

Goal	Strategy	Action Items	Key Players	Timeline	Evaluation Method / Indicators	Report Section Link	
	Evaluate progress towards goal	Determine number of students participating in Farm to School curricular activities and grow spaces				<a href="#">Plans for Future Evaluation of Programming</a>	
		Knowledge/Attitudes/Practices evaluation: changes in knowledge, attitudes, and practices pertaining to local foods, nutrition, and gardening/agriculture				<a href="#">Plans for Future Evaluation of Programming</a>	
Goal	Strategy	Action Items	Key Players	Timeline	Evaluation Method / Indicators	Report Section Link	
The Urbana School District Farm to School Program will foster the growth of a connected, engaged, healthy, thriving community, and will be both mutually supportive and mutually beneficial to all participants in the local food system	Support local producers in becoming GAP certified, thereby meeting a significant requirement for their products to be served in schools	Determine GAP certification and FSMA requirements for producers serving schools/institutions	USDA/FDA, UIUC Extension	Year 1	review of existing references/ required time, operational and infrastructure investments and funding	<a href="#">Food Safety on the Farm and During Transport</a>	
		Identify producers interested in providing produce to school system and existing barriers	Local farmers/producers	Year 1	surveys/ # of producers interested	<a href="#">Food Safety on the Farm and During Transport</a>	
		Identify and provide training and funding support for producers to overcome regulatory barriers	UIUC Extension/The Land Connection	Years 1-2	review of existing references/ # producers trained and supported to comply with GAP and FSMA	<a href="#">Food Safety on the Farm and During Transport</a>	
	Provide opportunities for students to visit and/or learn about individuals, businesses, and organizations that are key players in the local food system	Compile list of individuals/businesses/organizations that are key players in the local food system	F2S Steering Committee	Year 1	surveys/ # relevant community resources listed, district diversity represented by participants	<a href="#">Promotion and Outreach</a>	
		Compile curricular lessons that could connect with local individuals/businesses/organizations to fulfill curricular standards	USD teachers and administrators, University of Illinois Extension	Years 1-2	review of existing references/ # relevant lessons for every age group, # community resources linked to lessons	<a href="#">Promotion and Outreach</a>	
		Identify liability waiver templates and relevant legal assistance for local farmers/producers to facilitate their ability to host field trips	UIUC Extension/The Land Connection	Year 1	number of liability waiver templates and legal assistance organizations identified	<a href="#">Field Trips to Local Farms</a>	
	Provide opportunities for school district families and community members to participate in F2S activities	Establish procedure/school policy for volunteer/community member participation in F2S program, including volunteer liability waivers/insurance	USD 116 Administrators	Year 1	review of existing references/ acceptance by USD Admin	<a href="#">Maintenance, Staffing, and Training</a>	
		Develop list of volunteer activities as needed throughout entire F2S program, especially for school grow spaces	USD116 Administrators including Principals for each USD 116 School, District-wide F2S Coordinator and School Grow Space Coordinators (once these positions are established)	Year 1	complete as available/ # listed	<a href="#">Maintenance, Staffing, and Training</a>	
	Maintain a robust and ongoing marketing campaign to ensure students, staff, and the community stay informed and engaged	Develop volunteer tracking system for entire F2S program, inclusive of details pertinent to traceability to meet food safety requirements for volunteers assisting with school grow spaces	Existing USD 116 School Grow Space Leaders, District-wide F2S Coordinator and School Grow Space Coordinators (once these positions are established)	Years 1-2	review of existing references/ # of volunteer activities on list	<a href="#">Maintenance, Staffing, and Training</a>	
		Establish F2S Marketing subcommittee	Existing USD 116 School Grow Space Leaders, District-wide F2S Coordinator and School Grow Space Coordinators (once these positions are established), Champaign-Urbana Public Health District Division of Environmental Health	Years 2-3	surveys/ # listed, district diversity represented by participants	<a href="#">Reaching Media and Community</a>	
	Evaluate progress towards goal		Seek/maintain ongoing support from community partners, local businesses and organizations, and community members to support collaborative marketing strategies	SC members; HS students; F2S grow space coordinators	Years 2-3	surveys/ # listed, district diversity represented by participants, frequency of activity	<a href="#">Program Sustainability</a>
			Determine number of events, participants, and partnerships formed				<a href="#">Plans for Future Evaluation of Programming</a>
Determine number of marketing materials created, number of people reached						<a href="#">Plans for Future Evaluation of Programming</a>	
		Determine number of producers prepared to provide local foods to schools				<a href="#">Plans for Future Evaluation of Programming</a>	
		Goal	Strategy	Action Items	Key Players	Timeline	Evaluation Method / Indicators
The Urbana Farm to School Program will be sustainable	Develop a budget and plan for varied, sustainable funding for all components of F2S program	Explore various funding avenues: fundraising, grants, donations, and district-funding	USD116 Chief Financial Officer, USD116 Assistant Superintendent, USD 116 Director of Grant Based Programs, USD 116 School Board, CU Schools Foundation, USD116 Director of Facilities Services, District-wide F2S Coordinator and School Grow Space Coordinators (once these positions are established)	Year 1	# of funding sources, total \$ and per source	<a href="#">Funding</a>	
		Develop a shared, collaborative list of grants, organized based upon relevance to various F2S components (curriculum, kitchen equipment, edible grow spaces, marketing, etc.); this list would be shared with relevant stakeholders for collaborative contribution- strategic coordination of grant applications would maximize funding throughout the district	USD116 Chief Financial Officer, USD116 Assistant Superintendent, USD 116 Director of Grant Based Programs, USD 116 School Board, CU Schools Foundation, USD116 Director of Facilities Services, District-wide F2S Coordinator and School Grow Space Coordinators (once these positions are established)	Year 1-2	# of grants on list (total and per F2S component), # of collaborators	<a href="#">Funding</a>	
		Create clear donation process, including list of specific donation requests and donation forms/receipts for tax purposes	USD116 Chief Financial Officer, USD 116 School Board, CU Schools Foundation, USD116 Director of Facilities Services, Existing USD 116 Grow Space Leaders, District-wide F2S Coordinator and School Grow Space Coordinators (once these positions are established)	Year 1	# of items on donation request list, # of items received from donation list	<a href="#">Funding</a>	

