

# HEALTHY SPROUTS AWARD WINNERS Evaluation Summary – 2008



The National Gardening Association surveyed the 2008 Healthy Sprouts Award recipients to capture quantitative and qualitative data on the grant's impact. The following is a summary of results.

**Award package:** Five \$500 and 15 \$200 gift certificates to Gardener's Supply Company; curriculum package from NGA

**Number of applicants:** 364

**Number of recipients:** 20

**Number of evaluation respondents:** 17

Following is a summary of the highlights from those responses.

### Number of participants in Healthy Sprouts award-winning programs:

Age 2-5 (preschool-K).....	1,023
Ages 6-8 (grades 1-3).....	1,494
Ages 9-11 (grades 4-6).....	473
Ages 12-13 (grades 7-8).....	142
Ages 14-18 (grades 9-12).....	351
Adults (18+) .....	413
<b>Total participants .....</b>	<b>3,896</b>

### Demographic information

Anglo American .....	45%
Latino .....	26%
African American .....	16%
Native American .....	6%
Asian.....	4%
Other .....	3%

Female.....	67%
Male.....	33%

Eligible for free or reduced lunch program .....	62%
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### Months of the year respondents conducted gardening programs:

Average.....	7 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> months/year
Range .....	3–12 months/year

### Hours per week a participant was involved in gardening activities:

Average .....	3 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> hours/week
Range.....	2 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> –15 hours/week

### Program continuation:

Respondents indicating they plan to continue their program next year .....	100%
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### Type of audience participating in these programs:

After-school.....	76%
Summer program/camp .....	65%
Community gardeners .....	53%
In-school .....	41%
Special needs .....	41%
Preschool/Head Start.....	41%
Intergenerational .....	24%
Church/youth group.....	18%
Youth club .....	12%
Home school .....	12%

### Program leaders noted participant improvements in these characteristics:

Nutritional attitude .....	100%
Environmental attitudes .....	100%
Self-confidence .....	100%
Social skills .....	100%
Community spirit.....	100%
Leadership skills.....	94%
Attitude toward school .....	76%
Scholastic achievement .....	76%
Volunteerism .....	65%
Motor skills .....	65%

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*Our garden program fostered excellent community involvement, provided nutritious produce for distribution at the food pantry, encouraged youth and adult interaction, increased participants' physical activity and awareness of the nutritional value of fresh fruits and vegetables, and distributed fruits and vegetables to hundreds of families.*

— Cammie Younger  
University of Missouri Extension,  
MO



\*Winners failing to submit an evaluation are ineligible to apply for future grants.

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**Reported evidence documenting effectiveness of programs:**

Positive feedback from participants.....	100%
Positive community feedback.....	100%
Positive feedback from family members.....	88%
Positive feedback from administrators.....	76%
Funding and donations.....	76%
Decreased disciplinary actions.....	47%
Improved attendance rates.....	41%
Awards and recognition.....	35%
Positive survey results.....	24%
Improved test scores.....	6%

**Subjects taught through these programs:**

Health and nutrition.....	100%
Science.....	94%
Community service.....	76%
Intra/interpersonal relationships.....	71%
Physical education.....	71%
Cultural studies/issues.....	53%
Math.....	47%
Arts.....	47%
English.....	47%
Interdisciplinary.....	24%
History.....	24%
Social studies.....	18%

**Compliance with State and National Education Standards:**

Programs connected to State and National Education Standards.....	65%
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**Importance of linking program to education standards:**

Mandatory.....	0%
Very important.....	29%
Important.....	18%
Somewhat important.....	23.5%
Not important.....	23.5%
N/A.....	6%

**Percentage of time spent on instructional techniques (note: this is the average of all the responses for each technique):**

Adult-led investigation/hands-on activities.....	30%
Collaborative project work.....	26%
Student-led investigation/hands-on activities.....	18%
Independent Learning.....	15%
Lecture.....	11%

**Source of curriculum used by gardening programs:**

Combined materials from numerous sources.....	94%
Original material.....	53%
Cooperative Extension (e.g., 4-H or JMG).....	35%
Nonprofit organization (e.g., NGA or Life Lab).....	29%
State education department.....	12%

**Approximate amount of money spent on these programs:**

Less than \$250.....	0%
\$251 to \$500.....	5.5%
\$501 to \$1,000.....	23.5%
\$1,001 to \$1,500.....	12%
\$1,501 to \$2,000.....	23.5%
\$2,001 to \$2,500.....	12%
More than \$2,500.....	23.5%

**Percentage of funding received from other sources (note: the average of all the responses for each source):**

Grants.....	29%
Donations.....	25%
Other.....	10%
Instructor's pocket.....	7%
Parent or Volunteer Organizations.....	4%
School or School District Funds.....	3%
Fundraising.....	3%



*Children are excited about gardening. Our garden has been a wonderful supplement to our curriculum. The kids have enjoyed the process from seed to harvest, and we shared our vegetables with other kids in our school. Another impact: teachers continue to see improvement in bag lunches — there's less junk food and more fruits and vegetables.*

— Erica Sherman  
Wood County Health  
Department, WI

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**Approximate value of in-kind donations to gardening programs:**

Less than \$250 .....	0%
\$251 to \$500 .....	5.5%
\$501 to \$1,000 .....	18%
\$1,001 to \$1,500 .....	12%
\$1,501 to \$2,000 .....	5.5%
\$2,001 to \$2,500 .....	12%
More than \$2,500 .....	47%

**Type of organizations responding:**

Nonprofit agency .....	53%
Other .....	23%
Public school .....	12%
Community garden .....	6%
Alternative school .....	6%

**Location of winners responding:**

Rural .....	41%
Urban .....	35%
Suburban .....	24%

**Publicity received by programs:**

Newsletter articles .....	31
Newspaper articles .....	30
Web site features .....	20
TV features .....	20
Radio features .....	24

**Community interaction and additional impacts noted by respondents:**

Our program is at a public housing complex. Staff notice less youth vandalism at the complex while the program is in operation. Participating youth earned almost \$100 each by selling their produce at a farmers market. Several participants asked their teachers to start a garden club at school and one teacher has! One participant, who struggles with English in school, wrote about her gardening experience for an essay contest. Our healthy cooking classes motivated an obese youth to seek

weight-loss help from a dietician, and now she shares what she is learning with other children. To help fund additional meals for children, we used the USDA’s Summer Food Service Program. We were rated “excellent” by our first reviewer, who noted that our program of teaching gardening and healthy eating could be a model for other summer food service sites!

— Liz Shaw, Community Food Initiatives, Ohio



Since planting in April, the refugee community at Avalon Trace Apartments has grown many vegetables, including linga linga (an African peanut). Many of the children came from refugee camps, where their parents had never been able to demonstrate their farming knowledge. After participating in the program, children were excited to try new foods, and were delighted to eat raw vegetables straight out of the garden.

— Alison Tynes, Center for New North Carolinians, NC



“This project has provided families with food for their tables in poor economic times.

Families are working together in a positive manner, and children are learning to give back to the community. Children are eating more vegetables, and getting more exercise.”

— Renetta Williams, Healthvisions of Fort Wayne, IN

*This was the first year our teen group gardened in their own garden space, rather than sharing space with others. Their investment and interest in it was remarkable. They immediately adopted the plants as their “babies” and showered them with affection and care. Each time they entered the garden they surveyed the plants carefully. They did such a good job of tending their garden space that we will expand it next year, so we can increase the variety of produce they take home or sell at markets.*

— Molly McCullagh, Earthworks Urban Farm/ Capuchin Soup Kitchen, MI



“Our project was a huge success. Every student was involved every step of the way, from preparing the beds to sampling the harvest. Teachers taught literature and science in the garden; we served lettuce and spinach in the cafeteria; ran counseling groups in the garden; had garden poetry and art contests; made a garden calendar to raise money for the local food pantry; did a garden and nutrition workshop for homeless families; and gave away hundreds of seeds to students’ families to grow at home to alleviate hunger in our community and get students interested in eating more healthy foods. We offered nutrition information and sent families a bilingual newsletter offering gardening tips. We are so grateful for your support.”

— Sally Scholle, Siler City Elementary School/Chatham Co Schools, NC



This program gave 17 families their own community plots to enhance their food security. Our after-school program taught gardening and cooking skills to youth. Our Food and Family program involved youth in the whole process of producing food, from preparing the soil to eating at the table. We helped a local school and a detention center to start their own gardens. Our neighborhood association selected the garden to be its entry in the “Neighborhood of the Year” contest sponsored by NUSA.

— Robert Lyons, Community Church Without Walls, AL



Our children struggle with severe emotional disabilities that impact every aspect of their lives — school, interpersonal relationships, self-confidence, etc. Our gardening project



is a hands-on experience that lets them know they are helping to create something. It blends in perfectly with our emphasis on improved nutrition and physical activity.

— David Short, Maryhurst, Inc., KY



“United Front Homes is in a dense urban area of high poverty and crime. Children and youth had no experience with gardening or the natural world. Adults were negative about the project, claiming “A garden won’t last a week here!” We put a planter of pansies and cool-weather vegetables in view of a security camera. The children were thrilled as they watched the plants grow; the adults were amazed they weren’t destroyed. A month later, we put a second planter of warm-weather flowers and vegetables in a prominent spot with no video surveillance. All the residents eagerly identified and cultivated the plants, and some donated seedlings of ethnic specialties to a new garden dug by adult and youth volunteers. This level of community participation, pride, and responsibility continues unabated.”

— Donna Howard  
United Front Homes, MA



“The junior community garden is centrally located and very visible. We focused on youth this year, brought in Extension Master Gardeners for direct program support, and maximized our resources to make this a solid program for all ages. Even though our target audience is youth, we saw increased volunteerism, particularly among the elderly, and we are positive this networking will have future benefits. We give the food we raise to families in need, and the Extension programs are offering canning and preserving classes to recipients.”

— Kim Olson, Lemhi’s After School Promise, ID



“This program was the first time most students had ever watched a plant grow. They were so excited by the produce that resulted from their hard work. I used the garden as a tool to open up conversation with many students suffering from various issues such as grief/loss, anger management, etc. It truly was a healing place and a dream for high school counselors.”

— Tina Boudreaux, Jeff Davis Parish School Board, LA