

The National Gardening Association surveyed the 2011 Welch's Harvest Garden Grant recipients to capture quantitative and qualitative data on the program's impact. The following is a summary of the results.

Grant package:

Ninety-five recipients received a \$500 award package containing garden materials and education resources from the National Gardening Association. Five recipients received a \$1,000 prize package also containing garden materials from the Gardening with Kids Catalog.

Number of applicants 6,737
 Number of recipients 100
 Number of evaluation respondents..... 67
33 winners requested an extension to the report deadline

The following is a summary of the highlights from those responses.

Total number of program participants:

Ages 2-5 (preschool-K) 19%
 Ages 6-8 (grades 1-3) 34%
 Ages 9-11 (grades 4-6) 32%
 Ages 12-13 (grades 7-8) 15%
 Total participants 12,352



“Students planted vegetables that will soon be used to make more nutritious meals, teaching them that healthy eating can start in your own backyard.”

— Teacher
 Barclay Elementary
 Maryland



Cultural Demographics

European American	51%
African American	18%
Latino	13%
Native American	4%
Asian	1%
Other	2%
No Response	11%

Eligible for free or reduced lunch program (average):

42% of the participants in the garden program receive free/reduced lunch

Hours per week a participating child/youth was involved in gardening activities:

Average time 3.5 hours / week

Months of the year respondents conducted gardening programs:

Average time 7 months / year

Type of organizations responding:

Public school	72%
Private schools	12%
Charter schools	10%
Nonprofit agency	3%
Alternative schools	3%

Types of audiences participating in these programs:

In-school	94%
After-school	57%
Special needs	37%
Summer program / Camp	37%
Gifted and talented	31%

Community gardeners	22%
Preschool / Head start	16%
Youth Club	16%
Intergenerational	12%
Other	7%

Location classification of winners responding:

Suburban	40%
Urban	39%
Rural	21%

Publicity of these gardening programs in the media:

Newsletter articles	60%
Newspaper articles	52%
Features on websites	45%
Features on TV	45%
Features on radio	1%

Program continuation:

100% of respondents indicating they plan to continue their program next year.

Reported evidence documenting the effectiveness of these gardening programs:

Positive responses from participants	97%
Positive responses from family members	85%
Positive responses from administrators	85%
Positive community responses	64%
Donations and financial support	58%
Decrease in disciplinary actions	28%
Positive survey results	22%
Improvement in attendance rates	19%
Improvement in test scores	19%

Subjects taught through the gardening programs:

Science	93%
Health and nutrition	84%
Math	60%
Community service	55%
Arts	37%
English	36%
Social studies	33%
Cultural studies / Issues	33%
Intra / Interpersonal relationships	27%
Interdisciplinary	27%
History	25%
Physical education	22%

Program leaders noted participant improvements in these characteristics:

Environmental attitudes	99%
Attitude towards school	94%
Social skills	85%
Self confidence	85%
Community spirit	84%
Nutritional attitudes	83%
Leadership skills	82%
Volunteerism	79%
Scholastic achievement	64%
Motor skills	61%

Percentage of time spent on different instructional techniques:

Adult-led investigation/hands-on activities	30%
Student-led investigation/hands-on activities	24%
Collaborative project work	23%
Independent Learning	12%
Lecture	10%



“All of the food we produced from the garden was used in our daily snack program or in our weekly soup fundraiser. Students did all the harvesting and preparation of the produce. Students participated in a week-long locavore challenge, during which they learned about food security, carbon footprints, and eating locally-produced foods.”

— Teacher
Hilltop Montessori School
Brattleboro, Vermont



Curriculum used by the gardening programs:

Developed a curriculum by combining resources and activities from numerous sources	67%
Curriculum from a nonprofit organization (such as 4-H or JMG)	34%
Curriculum written by state education department	18%
Curriculum written by state education department	18%
Curriculum written by school district	10%
Curriculum from a for profit organization	1%

Compliance with State and National Education Standards:

81% of respondents said they connected their gardening program to State and National Education Standards.

Importance of linking to the standards for respondents:

Mandatory	16%
Very important	25%
Important	25%
Somewhat important	13%
Not important	13%
Responded n/a	6%

Approximate amount of money spent on these gardening programs:

Less than \$250	18%
\$251 to \$500	25%
\$501 to \$1000	12%
\$1001 to \$1500	9%
\$1501 to \$2000	7%
\$2001 to \$2500	7%
Over \$2501	21%

Approximate value of in-kind donations of these gardening programs:

Less than \$250	22%
Between \$251 to \$500	21%
Between \$501 to \$1000	16%
Between \$1001 to \$1500	12%
Between \$1501 to \$2000	9%
Between \$2001 to \$2500	7%
Over \$2501	12%

Average percentage of funding these programs received from other sources:

Grants	47%
Donations	16%
Instructor's pocket	9%
School or School District Funds	9%
Parent or Volunteer Organizations	7%
Fund Raising	7%
Other	4%





“Students are learning about the sustainability of our garden through class activities. Students learned to care for the garden with their families during a Family Garden Night. Health and wellness are now incorporated into all garden lessons and activities. Students and families working together to care for the garden, fundraise, and learn about health and sustainable agriculture.”

– Teacher
Linford Elementary School
Wyoming



“ We discussed the importance of eating fruits and vegetables and encouraged all the students to try new foods as we cooked. We developed a positive peer culture around trying new foods and eating vegetables. Children became proud of being adventurous eaters and eating veggies. We talked about the importance of not being wasteful and of finding ways to reduce our output of trash by turning some of it into containers for growing seedlings. In the garden, we didn't use any pesticides or fertilizer that would be damaging to the environment. We also raised butterflies from caterpillars to demonstrate how everything in nature serves a purpose.”

- Teacher
Jubilee JumpStart
Washington, D.C.