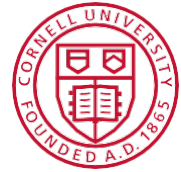


# Cornell Cooperative Extension Cornell Garden-Based Learning



## The Top 5 Things to Consider When Planning Your School Garden Program

### Start small

- It's better to start with a garden the size of a postage stamp and do it well then to start with something too big and overwhelming to handle. It's easier to expand than to downsize.

### Partnerships are key

- Partnerships will strengthen the garden project and expand the variety of skills on hand. Be sure to be clear of what is expected from partners before the project begins and that all parties have agreed to hold up their end of the bargain.

### The importance of inclusion and communication

- Many successful community gardeners will say "gardening is the easy part;" it is the effective engagement and inclusion of community partners that can be easily overlooked. However, this is one of the most important pieces of any community project.
- The more people who are excited about the garden project, the longer the garden will be sustained and the more hands there are to distribute labor.
- Keeping everyone in the loop will help individuals feel ownership over the garden project. Share information about garden maintenance, events, the needs of the garden and volunteer opportunities. Most importantly, share appreciation for those who have helped!

### Effective youth engagement

- Include youth every step of the way: planning, designing, maintaining and celebrating. As a school garden project, much of the decision-making should be youth driven.
- Incorporate opportunities for mastery, empowerment, generosity and belonging in the garden. Even though we are interested in horticulture, try to stretch towards what constitutes an ideal experience for all gardeners – not just the garden content, but also the life skills gained through the experience.

### Fundraising

- Regardless of the scope or audience of your garden project, at some point you will likely have to raise funds or secure in-kind donations to support the creation and maintenance of the garden, or to advance facets of the garden program. There are many strategies, ranging from grassroots approaches, that involve lots of people while garnering relatively fewer funds, to grants that can provide significant dollars, but require writing skill. Improve your chances of success by employing several approaches.



Learn More: <http://gardening.cals.cornell.edu/program-tools/>

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