



Farm to Early Care and Education Learning Collaboratives **Gardening Resource Guide**

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We also would like to acknowledge the Alabama Farm to ECE Coalition and their efforts to develop and implement Farm to ECE learning collaboratives since 2020. The Alabama resources were a catalyst and starting point for this project. Additionally, a compilation of resources from many states are included in this learning collaborative content. We are grateful for the many organizations across the United States that are working to advance Farm to ECE efforts and to increase nutrition security and physical activity of young children and their families.

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Welcome to the Learning Collaborative

You are joining a group of Early Care and Education (ECE) providers that are committed to supporting and promoting the health and development of young children through Farm to Early Care and Education (ECE) strategies. We look forward to supporting your ECE program through this process of change as you integrate policies and practices that encourage healthy habits for your children, families, and program staff through Farm to ECE. Your work will have an important impact on your program and the lives of the children and families you serve.

Overview

Learning Collaboratives bring together staff from different ECE programs to increase knowledge and make policy, practice, and environment changes to promote healthy habits. They provide an opportunity for programs to share experiences with each other, try out new strategies, and equip participants to engage all ECE program staff in the process.

The Farm to ECE Learning Collaborative Curriculum includes content on three topic areas: **Gardening**, **Food and Farming Education**, and **Local Food Purchasing**. Your Learning Collaborative will focus on one or more of these areas and will include various types of activities and tasks you will complete. ECE program staff will participate in Learning Sessions where discussions and activities enhance learning. Learning Sessions are followed by Action Periods, a period of time between the Learning Sessions where ECE programs assess current activities using a self-assessment, educate fellow staff on their learning, and lead staff through a process of change to increase healthy habits. Throughout the Learning Collaborative, connections are made to show how Farm to ECE activities contribute to all domains of children's development.

Resource Guide:

This Resource Guide was created to share information, tools, and resources to help you incorporate Farm to ECE recommended practices into your ECE program policies, practices, and environments. Additional materials will be shared during the Learning Sessions. The activities and resources found in this Resource Guide are available as individual PDF documents. Your coach can provide you with any of the resources you would like to share with other staff members and families. It is important to connect with local and state partners and to highlight any state-specific gardening and Farm to ECE resources or materials. We hope this guide is a useful tool on your journey of discovery to improve the health and wellness of children, families, and program staff through Farm to ECE.

Please, take time to review this resource, and please reach out to us if you have any questions or need any support. Throughout this Learning Collaborative, your coach is here to answer questions and provide you with support.

My Coach

Name:

Organization:

E-mail address:

Phone number:

Assessment Tool Information

Website:

Username:

Password:

Farm to Early Care and Education

This series of Learning Collaboratives focuses on Farm to ECE practices and strategies for ECE programs. Farm to ECE is a set of strategies and activities that increase: gardening opportunities, access to healthy, local foods, and food and farming education. Farm to ECE is applicable to children ages birth to five and adapts to all ECE settings.



Farm to ECE uniquely includes many opportunities to partner with different types of industries that few other early childhood activities do. These potential partnerships include organizations and institutions focused on public health, education, economic development, and the environment. Farm to ECE provides a triple win: 1) Kids who participate in Farm to ECE eat more servings of fruit and vegetables, 2) by shortening supply chains, farmers keep a bigger share of the dollar, and 3) communities win when farmers reinvest in their local communities and kids take what they learn home with them.

The chart below provides more information about the specific topics that are covered.

Gardening	Food and Farming Education	Local Food Purchasing
Teaching children about how food and plants are grown and giving them the opportunity to experience growing themselves.	Teaching children about food, where our food comes from, how it is grown, how farms and gardens work, and other concepts.	Purchasing local foods, such as fruits, vegetables, proteins, dairy, and grains, from a local farmer or producer and serving these items in meals and snacks.

What are the sources for the Recommended Practices?

The recommended practices found in the Learning Collaboratives align with several reputable sources, including:

- [Caring for Our Children, 4th Edition](#),
- [Child and Adult Care Food Program meal requirements and recommended practices](#),
- [“Farm to Early Care and Education Self-Assessment” published by ASPHN \(Association of Public Health Nutritionists\) and the National Farm to School Network \(NFSN\)](#), and
- [The Nemours Children’s Health Wellness Workbook for Early Care and Education](#).

Learning Collaborative Components

Learning Collaboratives combine a few primary elements that work together to walk ECE programs through a process of change. These components are below.

Leadership Teams

Center-based and school-based ECE programs identify two to three staff members to form a Leadership Team. This team approach allows for greater buy-in and feedback from staff that play a variety of roles and have many skillsets. Leadership Teams should include the center or program director, as well as teaching staff and anyone involved in the content area being covered.

For family child care home (FCCH) programs, most often run by an individual, usually only the owner/director attends the Learning Sessions. However, FCCHs are welcome to invite other staff to participate if it meets the needs of the program. This might be a family member of an enrolled child or a second staff member.

The Leadership Team attends the Learning Sessions, completes the Action Period tasks, including self-assessments, and facilitates change in the ECE program.

Learning Sessions

Learning Sessions are hands-on and interactive trainings focused on fostering a supportive, adult learning environment that encourages trust and relationship building between staff of ECE programs.

Each Learning Session highlights the recommended practices and strategies for Leadership Teams to consider implementing in their programs while showcasing state/local initiatives. The Learning Sessions include large group presentations, small group activities, and breakout sessions to facilitate learning.

Learning Sessions offer opportunities for Leadership Team members to:

- Increase their knowledge on how Farm to ECE impacts children’s health and why the ECE setting is an important place to focus on healthy habits through Farm to ECE strategies.
- Receive support for ECE programs to implement recommended practices in specific content areas.
- Participate in peer networking and learning opportunities.
- Explore strategies for overcoming common challenges.
- Access helpful resources created specifically for ECE programs.

Leadership Team Model



Action Periods

Between each Learning Session, Leadership Teams engage in Action Periods. During this time, the Leadership Team shares what they learned at the Learning Sessions with program staff and families, and they complete specific tasks. Each Action Period also includes a technical assistance meeting with a coach.

During Action Periods, Leadership Teams will:

- Complete self-assessments.
- Review self-assessment results to determine current practices and opportunities for improvement.
- Receive support from coaches to develop action plans and to implement new strategies.
- Share information with other staff and families.
- Work on areas of improvement by completing action plan steps.

Technical Assistance (TA)

Coaches provide on-going customized support and TA to participating ECE programs throughout the Learning Collaborative. This support may include TA through site visits, virtual meetings, phone calls, emails, and texts. Coaches also support ECE programs by providing resources to use when making program improvements and connecting ECE programs to community resources.

Why is the Learning Collaborative Model Effective?

Learning Collaboratives are effective because they:

- Bring together a community of learners.
- Create a network for sharing ideas and building mutual support.
- Offer evidence-based guidance about ECE practices and policies.
- Offer opportunities to build important knowledge and skills: being leaders and champions of change, nurturing collaboration among ECE program staff, and implementing recommended practices successfully.
- Support long-term, sustainable improvements by engaging ECE programs and families as partners in support of children's health, development, and well-being.
- Provide a model for ECE programs to examine current practices and implement changes that can be used after the Learning Collaborative.

Action Period Guide

Action Periods include specific tasks for Leadership Teams to complete as they walk through the process of planning and implementing changes in their ECE program. This Action Period Guide will help you understand tasks and components that are typically included in the Learning Collaborative framework.

<p>Self-assessment</p>	<p>Leadership Teams complete an assigned self-assessment. Completion of a self-assessment provides an opportunity for Leadership Teams to reflect on their current practices.</p> <p>Leadership Teams repeat the self-assessment after the final Learning Session so they can evaluate their progress and celebrate their accomplishments.</p>
<p>Action Planning</p>	<p>After completing the assigned self-assessment, Leadership Teams select goals and develop Action Plans. Draft Action Plans will be provided for Leadership Teams to customize to fit their needs and available resources. These Action Plans provide step-by-step guidance to make healthy changes.</p>
<p>Engaging Staff</p>	<p>Following each Learning Session, Leadership Teams share what they learned with the staff in their program. Key Learnings handouts and relevant resources are provided to support these discussions. It is important to share this information with all staff since everyone will be involved in implementing goals. This is needed to make and sustain healthy change.</p>
<p>Identifying Resources</p>	<p>To help put the plans into action, Leadership Teams can review resources shared throughout the Learning Collaborative and in this Resource Guide.</p>
<p>Storyboards</p>	<p>To document the process of change, Leadership Teams create and present a Storyboard to share their program’s successes and progress made to implement action plans. Other Leadership Teams, along with the staff and families in their program, learn about the Learning Collaborative experience, both challenges and successes, through the Storyboards. Often, the sharing of Storyboards inspires additional healthy change in other ECE programs. Storyboards can be presented in a variety of formats, and coaches and Leadership Teams should decide together how this information should be documented and presented.</p>

Engaging Staff

Share information with teachers and staff using the Key Learnings handouts and other resources found in this Resource Guide. Review the information ahead of time with the Leadership Team to decide on key points to discuss during a staff meeting.

Setting the Stage

To encourage engagement of all staff, create a supportive and fun environment for learning. Consider the following tips:

- Be organized. Bring all needed materials and plan ahead so you can ensure all staff can participate and benefit from this experience.
- Be engaging. Smile, look people in the eyes, and be positive while helping them to learn.
- Initially, allow time to brainstorm. Encourage staff to share their ideas. Be open to new ideas and suggestions. Determine the feasibility of ideas later when you are refining your plans. This two-step process is a great way to share ideas as your staff works together collaboratively.
- Have fun!

Engaging Staff in Discussions

To help engage program staff, try these discussion prompts and ideas:

- Use open-ended questions to encourage conversation. These types of questions require more than just a yes or no response.
 - What goals/changes would you be most motivated to work on?
 - What would you like to learn more about?
 - How could we further engage children and families in our program?
- Give staff time to share their ideas. After asking a question, pause and don't talk for 30 seconds. It may feel a bit uncomfortable at first, but it provides time for staff to collect their thoughts before sharing.
 - When program staff share ideas, record them on chart paper or a white board. It shows that you are listening, and staff can immediately correct any misunderstandings.
- Respond positively when program staff share their ideas.
- Provide a small reward for the first person who shares an idea as a way to engage staff, especially if this type of collaborative brainstorming is new to your program.

Agenda and Talking Points

Create an agenda and take notes to capture staff thoughts from the discussions.

- Learning Session Recap:
 - Share Key Learnings handouts.
 - Discuss self-assessment results.
 - Discuss possible goals.
 - Discuss action planning.
- Review progress:
 - Share an update on your action plan progress.
 - Ask staff if they have any questions, needs, or thoughts about the progress you have made.
 - Ask staff to share any changes they have seen in their classrooms.

Learning Collaborative Checklist

Before the Learning Collaborative Begins

- Determine Leadership Team members from your ECE program.
- Share your program's participation in the Learning Collaborative with staff and families.

During the Learning Collaborative

- Attend all Learning Sessions.
- Work with Leadership Team members to complete the required self-assessment.
- Complete Key Learnings with Leadership Team.
- Share the Key Learnings with teachers and staff.
- Create action plans.
- Implement your action plans with the help of the resources found in this Resource Guide. Engage children, staff, and families in the changes you are making in the program.
- Update your ECE program's policies to reflect your new commitment to promoting Farm to ECE strategies and healthy habits.
- Document your progress on your program's Storyboard.
-

Final Action Period Tasks after the Learning Collaborative is Over

- Work with Leadership Team members to complete the final self-assessment.
- Complete the Sustaining Your ECE Program's Garden Handout to continue your healthy habits journey.
- Celebrate your success! Thank you for participating. Stay healthy!

Ask for Help as Needed

Reach out as needed to your coach or other participating ECE programs for support, ideas, and resources.

Continuing the Process of Healthy Change

Upon completion of the Learning Collaborative, Leadership Teams should continue to work together with program staff and families. Identify additional areas where there may be opportunities for healthy changes. You can utilize tools shared during the Learning Collaborative to continue the quality improvement process.

Leadership Teams can use the Sustaining Your ECE Program's Garden handout found at the end of the Resource Guide to help facilitate this discussion with program staff and to develop next steps for creating additional healthy changes.

Gardening Learning Collaborative

Overview

The Gardening Learning Collaborative is included in a three-part Farm to ECE Learning Collaborative series. This Gardening Learning Collaborative focuses on the role gardening can play in ECE settings to support healthy habits, improve language and literacy skills, relationships, and overall child development. During the Learning Sessions, participants will increase their knowledge and skills around gardening recommended practices and identify goals for healthy change that their ECE program will work towards.

Key content includes:

- Recommended practices for gardening
- Benefits of gardening in ECE programs and ways to implement changes within your program
- Using a self-assessment and action planning tools to make healthy changes
- Strategies for engaging children and families in gardening activities
- Helpful resources and materials created specifically for ECE programs
- Guidance to help sustain healthy changes made through the Learning Collaborative



Gardening Key Learnings

1. Farm to Early Care and Education is a set of strategies and activities that focus on providing children the opportunity to:

- Consume healthy, locally grown foods,
- Grow their own food, and,
- Participate in hands-on activities that teach about nutrition and food

2. What is Gardening?

- Gardening is the practice of growing and cultivating plants.
- When gardening in ECE programs, it reaches children about how food and plants are grown and gives them the opportunity to experience growing themselves.

3. What are the benefits of gardening with young children?

- There are many benefits of gardening in ECE programs.
- Gardening exposes children to new fruits and vegetables and can increase their fruit and vegetable intake.
- Gardening can also increase a child's willingness to try new foods.

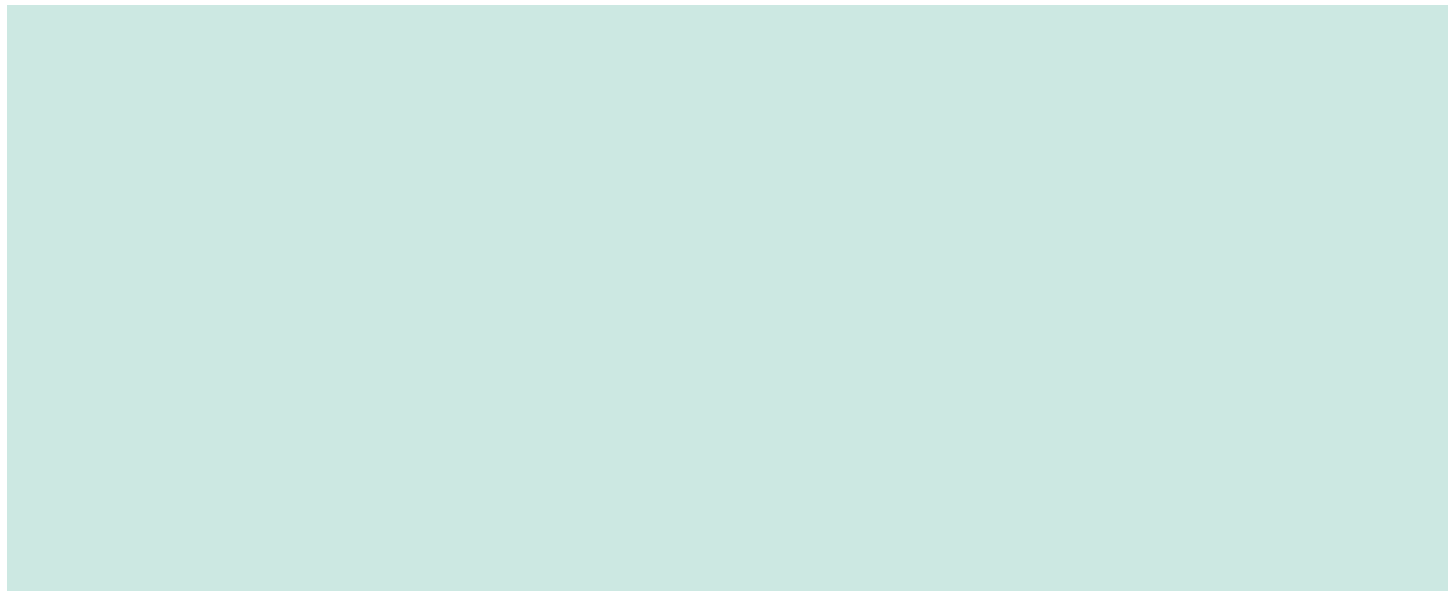
4. How do we get started?

- Start small and add plants and spaces for gardening as you become more experienced and confident in your gardening abilities.
- Take time to gather information and resources.
- Learn gardening basics and build on that knowledge.

Additional resources to share with our ECE program staff:

- *Natural Learning Initiative at NC State University "Short"- [Weeding, Planting and Watering](#).*
- *Better Kid Care Online Training- [Fresh Harvest- Children Grow in the Garden](#)*

What takeaways from this Gardening Learning Collaborative do we want to share with staff and families?



You can find an editable version of the Key Learnings document [here](#).



Credit: Growing Gardens

GETTING STARTED WITH FARM TO EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

Stay Informed

Join our network:
FarmtoSchool.org

Twitter
@FarmtoSchool

Facebook
National Farm to School Network

Instagram
@FarmtoSchool



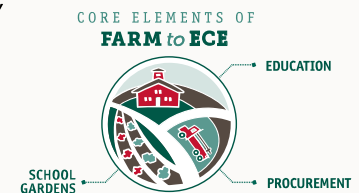
NATIONAL FARM to SCHOOL NETWORK

GROWING STRONGER TOGETHER

The National Farm to School Network is an information, advocacy and networking hub for communities working to bring local food sourcing, school gardens and food and agriculture education into school systems and early and education settings.

What is farm to early care and education?

Farm to early care and education is a set of strategies and activities that offer increased access to healthy, local foods through local procurement, gardening opportunities, and food and agriculture education activities to enhance the quality of educational experience. These same core elements as farm to school adapt well to all types of early care and education settings (e.g., preschools, child care centers, family child care homes, Head Start/Early Head Start, programs in K-12 school districts). In addition to promoting health, wellness, and high quality educational opportunities, farm to early care and education also expands healthy food access, encourages family and community engagement, provides additional market opportunities for farmers, and supports thriving communities.



Getting started

Farm to early care and education offers multiple strategies to improve the health of children, increase the quality of educational experiences, and promote valuable family engagement opportunities, aligning with goals of the early care and education community. This list provides easy first steps to develop a lasting initiative in your community:

- 1 Assess where you are and where you'd like to be.** Are your goals centered on:
 - Purchasing healthy, local foods to be served in meals or snacks?
 - Establishing a garden or offering gardening experiences?
 - Enhancing the learning environment with other food and agriculture related activities (e.g., field trips to farms or farmers markets, cooking lessons, etc.)?
 - Engaging families in local food access and education?
 - All of the above?
- 2 Form a team and collaborate.** Educators and administrators, parents, Child Care Resource and Referral staff, local farmers and producers, community organizations, and even local colleges/universities can play important roles in supporting farm to early care and education activities.
- 3 Establish one or two attainable goals to get started.** Some ideas include:
 - Identify snack or meal items that you would like to transition to local.
 - Find a farmer, farmers market, grocery store, or wholesaler to connect you to local foods. Search LocalHarvest (localharvest.org) or reach out to the National Farm to School Network for help making these connections.
 - Identify curricula, activities or books related to gardens, preparing and eating healthy, local foods or learning about where food comes from and how it grows.
 - Plan a local foods meal, snack, day, or special event.
 - Reach out to a local nursery or hardware store for donations or other support for starting an edible garden.
 - Plan a farm or farmers market field trip, a farmer or chef visit to the classroom, or host a tasting of local produce.

WHY FARM TO EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION?

KIDS WIN

Farm to early care and education provides all children access to nutritious, high quality, local food so they are ready to learn and grow. Farm to early care and education activities enhance classroom education through hands-on learning related to food, health, agriculture and nutrition.

FARMERS WIN

Farm to early care and education can offer new financial opportunities for farmers, fishers, ranchers, food processors and food manufacturers by opening the doors to an institutional market worth billions of dollars.

COMMUNITIES WIN

Buying from local producers and processors reduces the carbon footprint of food transportation while stimulating the local economy. Educational activities such as school gardens and composting programs help to create a healthy environment around the community.

The National Farm to School Network has a wide variety of resources and information about farm to school in early care and education. For more information visit farmtoschool.org/ECE.

Updated September 2018

4 Learn from others. If you are running into an obstacle, it is likely that there is someone who has run into it before! Some places to connect and learn from others include:

- The **National Farm to School Network** website (farmtoschool.org). Find resources and contact information for people in your state and region who are working on farm to school and farm to early care and education. Sign up for our e-newsletter to receive regular communication about news, resources and opportunities. Search our resource database for tools and materials to support every facet of farm to early care and education.
- Your county or state's **Child Care Resource and Referral agency**. These agencies can provide resources and ways to learn about and connect with other early care and education programs and sites that are implementing farm to early care and education activities. Find your local agencies at www.usa.childcareaware.org.
- The **Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)** staff in your state. Learn how CACFP can help you make local food more economical and can free up resources for other farm to early care and education activities. CACFP state agency contacts can be found at www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp.

5 Promote farm to early care and education in your community. Ideas include sharing information and recipes in parent newsletters, posting garden or field trip photos to a website or on social media, or inviting local media to your activities.

Opportunities in early care and education settings

A few key characteristics of early care and education settings make them ideal for local food procurement, gardening, and food and agriculture education:

Local foods procurement: Early care and education programs tend to purchase at smaller volumes and generally do not offer a la carte choices or multiple meal options. Small purchasing volumes can be a good fit for small farmers who may not have enough volume to work with an entire school district.

Curriculum: Experiential education is highly encouraged in early care and education settings. This is a great fit with many farm to early care and education activities such as gardening, cooking, and taste tests. Farm to early care and education activities align well with existing early care and education curricula and support achievement of early learning standards.

Family involvement: Family involvement tends to be strong during the early childhood years, which can be a huge asset for farm to early care and education programming. Families can engage in farm to early care and education activities in the early care and education setting and children take home what they learn, influencing family food choices in the home.

FARM TO EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION IN EVERY SETTING

Farm to early care and education adapts to all kinds of settings. Here are two examples:

Family child care as the perfect platform for experiential education

Family child care providers across the country are providing valuable hands-on education opportunities to children through backyard gardens, cooking activities, farm field trips and more. Farm to early care and education is a great fit for family child care because activities can adapt to all the different age groups and abilities that may be served in one family child care setting.



Farm to early care and education supports Head Start success

Head Start offers vital, high quality early care and education opportunities to low-income families across the country. Farm to early care and education offers benefits that align with Head Start priority areas, including an emphasis on experiential learning, family and community engagement, and life-long health and wellness for children, families and caregivers.

Mindfulness in the Garden

Overview: While simply being in the garden can be nourishing for the mind, body, and soul, these three no-supplies-needed activities can help kids feel grounded while connecting to nature and themselves.

Materials: none

Approximate Time to Complete: 15 minutes

Location: INDOOR, OUTDOOR

Ages: K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12

Season: SUMMER, SPRING, WINTER, FALL



Instructions:

Keen Observation

This practice sets time for kids to slow down, take in their surroundings, and observe changes in the garden. It can be done as a one-time activity, but it is most effective when it is conducted as a regular opening practice whenever kids arrive at the garden.

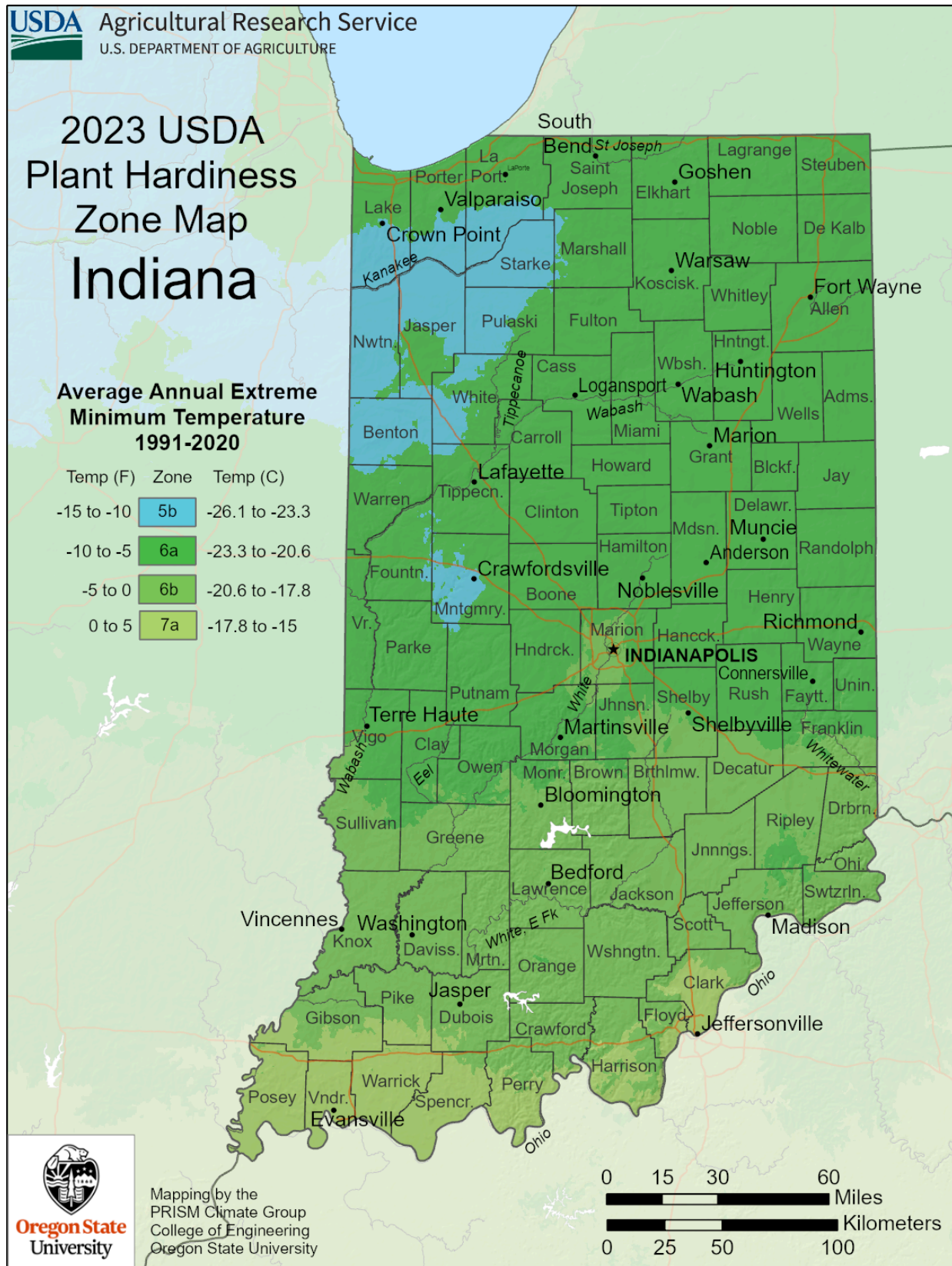
1. Circle up and explain that everyone will be doing an observation activity. Let them know they will silently observe the surrounding environment for a designated time. This time will depend on what is appropriate for your group of students; 1-3 minutes is usually a good starting place. Tell kids that while you, as the activity leader, will be speaking, and they, as the keen observers, should remain silent during this activity. However, they will have an opportunity to share afterwards.

2. Allow kids to choose an area in their garden as their “observation station.” If you plan on integrating this activity into your welcome routine, tell kids that they will be returning to this spot over the next semester, season, or year. Be sure to designate the parameters of the area they will be observing from so that they stay in your line of sight, are close enough to hear you, and don’t wander off.

3. Once kids are settled in, begin guiding them through their keen observation. Ask questions that are relevant to your environment such as:

- a. What do you feel on your skin?
- b. What sounds do you hear?
- c. What do you smell?
- d. What is the closest thing you can see?
- e. Look as far as the eye can see – what is there?
- f. What colors stand out to you?

KidsGardening is a nonprofit educational organization. Support provided by sponsors and donors is critical to our ability to provide free garden-based resources for parents and educators. All gifts are tax-deductible.



Indiana Plant Hardiness Map found [Here](#) and Plant Hardiness Map for the entire United States [Here](#)

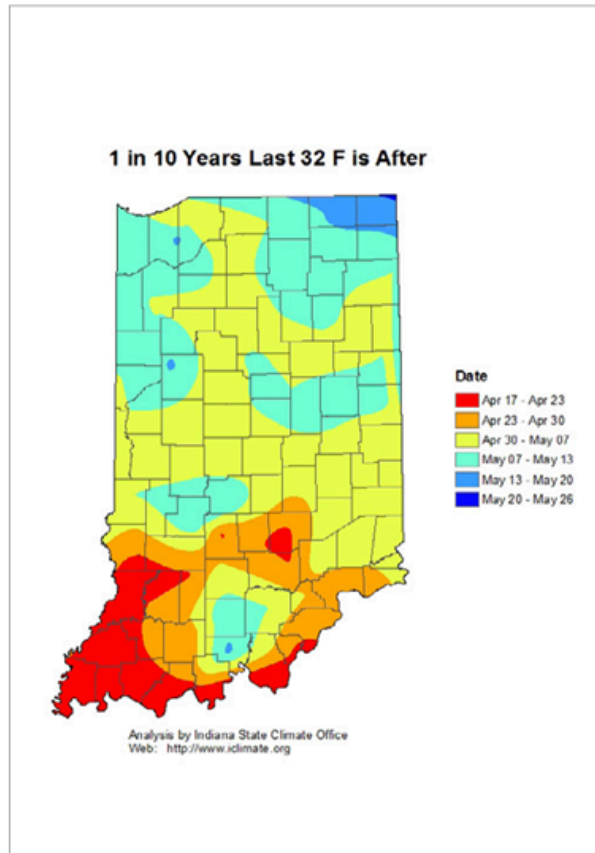


Figure 1. Frost Dates in Spring. There is a 10% chance that the last occurrence of 32°F will occur after these dates. About two weeks earlier, that chance increases to 50%. Tender crops may need some protection from frosts.

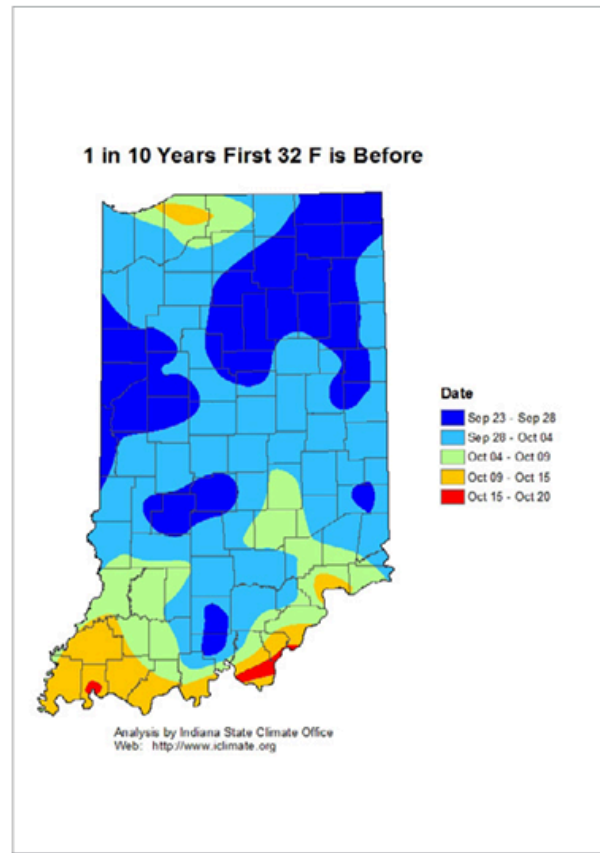


Figure 2. Frost Dates in Fall. There is a 10% chance that the first occurrence of 32°F will occur before these dates. About 2 weeks later, that chance increases to 50%. Tender crops may need some protection from frosts.

HO-186-W Indiana Vegetable Planting Calendar

Table 1. Some common vegetables grouped according to their relative requirements for cool and warm weather.

Cool season crops for early-spring planting		
Hardy (tolerates hard frost) plant 4-6 weeks before last spring frost (see Figure 1)		
asparagus ⁴	kale ³	potato ⁴
broccoli ²	kohlrabi	radish ¹
Brussels sprouts ²	leek ²	rhubarb ⁴
cabbage ²	mustard ³	spinach ³
collards ³	onion ^{3, 4}	turnip ¹
horseradish ⁴	peas ¹	
Semi-hardy (tolerates light frost) plant 2-4 weeks before last spring frost		
beet ³	celery ²	lettuce ³
carrot ¹	chard ³	mustard ³
cauliflower ²	chinese cabbage ²	parsnip ¹
Warm season crops for later-spring or early-summer planting		
Tender (damaged by frost) plant after average last spring frost (minimum air temp 50°F)		
bean ¹	tomato ²	sweet corn ¹
Very Tender (damaged by light frost and air temperature below 50°F) plant at least two weeks after average last spring frost (minimum air temp 60-65°F)		
cucumber ³	okra ²	pumpkin ³
eggplant ²	pepper ²	squash ³
melons ²	sweet potato ⁴	

Table 2. Cool season plants for late-summer or fall planting (plant at least 4-8* weeks before first fall frost) (See Figure 2)

beet ³	green onion ²	radish ¹
broccoli ²	kale ²	spinach ³
Brussels sprouts ² (transplant by mid-summer)	kohlrabi ²	turnip ¹
cabbage ²	lettuce ³	
collards ²	mustard greens ¹	

* When deciding fall planting dates, consider the days to maturity for your crop and choose faster maturing cultivars when possible.

¹ typically direct-seeded

² typically transplanted

³ can be either direct-seeded or transplanted

⁴ typically vegetatively propagated

Full Resource Found [Here](#)

















































































COMPANION

FOOD gardening NETWORK
Growing Good Food at Home

PLANTING CHART

PLANT

PARTNERS

Tomatoes 	       Basil Asparagus Broccoli Garlic Carrots Celery Onions
Beans 	       Corn Squash Radish Beets Spinach Cucumber Potato
Peppers 	     Basil Onion Garlic Spinach Tomatoes
Carrot 	        Chives Onion Leeks Tomato Rosemary Coriander Lettuce Radish
Lettuce 	       Mint Chives Dill Beans Beets Onion Broccoli
Potatoes 	     Corn Cabbages Peas Squash Beans
Onions 	       Carrots Parsnips Lettuce Cabbage Beets Tomatoes Rosemary
Cucumber 	      Corn Cabbage Beans Radish Celery Lettuce
Squash 	     Corn Peas Radish Dill Beans
Corn 	    Beans Cucumbers Pumpkins Melons
Peas 	        Cauliflower Garlic Turnip Radish Potato Cucumber Corn Beans

Links to Additional Gardening Resources

- [Indiana Grown Toolkits:](#)
 - [Farm to ECE Toolkit](#)
 - [Gardening Toolkit](#)
- [Natural Learning Initiative \(NLI\) Gardening videos:](#)
 - [Gardening shorts](#)
 - [Weeding, Planting, Watering Video from NLI](#)
- [Kids Gardening- Why Garden with Kids?](#)
- [Growing Minds- Farm to ECE Bookshelf](#)
- [Ideas for Gardening in ECE Programs:](#)
 - [Hydroponics](#)
 - [Herb garden](#)
 - [Create a seed viewer](#)
 - [Make seed balls](#)
 - [Living necklace](#)
 - [Grow your own salad](#)
 - [Growing potatoes in a bag/bucket](#)
 - [Growing and exploring herbs](#)
- [Children's Guide to Insect Species that Will Help their Garden Grow](#)
- [Food Safety Fact Sheets: Food Safety and School Gardens & Washing Fruits and Vegetables](#)
- [Safe Handling Sheet](#)
- [USDA Food Safety Basics](#)
- [Better Kid Care: Fresh Harvest: Children Grow in the Garden](#)
- [Managing Insects in the Home Vegetable Garden](#)
- [Companion Planting Chart and Guide for Vegetable Gardens](#)
- [How Pollination Works Video](#)

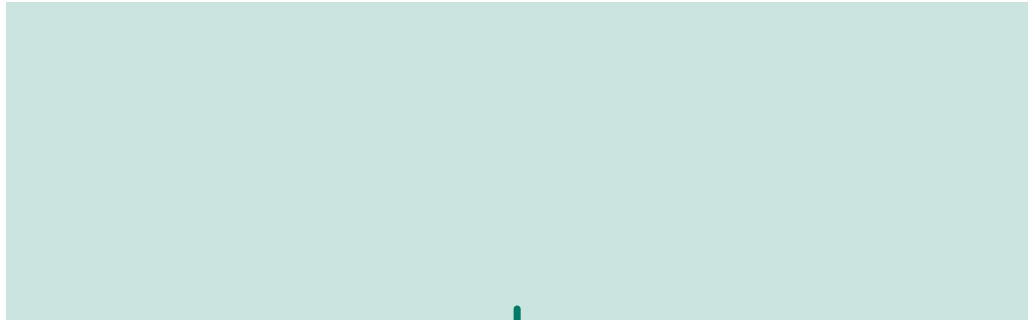


Sustaining Your ECE Program's Garden

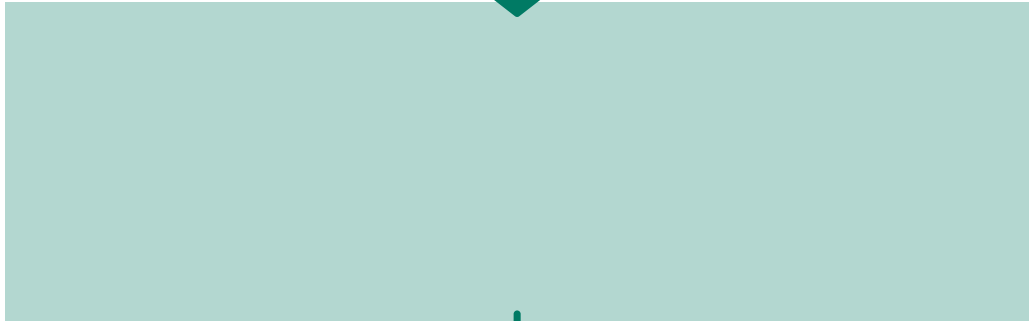
You, your Leadership Team, and ECE program have worked hard during this Learning Collaborative to create a healthier ECE environment, impacting children's health and development today and into the future. Today we celebrate these changes and start planning your next step on this healthy journey!

Healthy change should be an on-going process. You can record your initial ideas on this handout. Discuss your ideas with your Leadership Team, staff, and families to make a final plan for your ECE program.

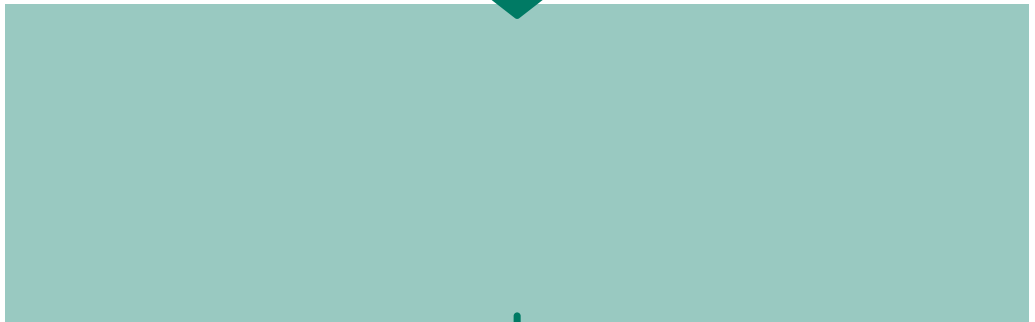
1. What went well with our garden this season?



2. What challenges did we face?



3. What would we like to continue growing in the future? How can we expand?



4. What do we need to sustain our garden? (Actions, information, materials, etc.)



Glossary

<p>Action Period</p>	<p>A period between Learning Sessions during which Leadership Teams lead a variety of tasks. Leadership Teams share information learned with staff and families and complete self-assessments and action plans. They also engage others in implementing changes and documenting progress.</p>
<p>Action Plan</p>	<p>List of tasks to guide an ECE program to implement a new recommended practice.</p>
<p>Coaches</p>	<p>Individuals responsible for leading the Learning Sessions and providing ongoing technical assistance to participating ECE programs.</p>
<p>Early Care and Education (ECE)</p>	<p>The field, sector, or industry that includes care and learning experiences for children from birth to age five.</p>
<p>Early Care and Education Program (ECE Program)</p>	<p>A business or organized service that provides care and learning experiences to groups of children from birth to age five. ECE centers and family child care homes (FCCH) are common types of ECE programs.</p>
<p>Early Childhood</p>	<p>A developmental period of time, typically birth to age five.</p>
<p>Facility</p>	<p>The physical place where an ECE program is offered.</p>
<p>Leadership Team</p>	<p>ECE program staff that are committed to leading the work of the Learning Collaborative – attending the Learning Sessions and guiding the Action Periods. For ECE centers, the Leadership Team is usually composed of three people (e.g., owner/director, lead teacher, food service personnel, or other staff). A FCCH may have a Leadership Team composed only of the owner/teacher or may include additional personnel or family members of children in their care.</p>
<p>Learning Collaborative</p>	<p>A learning community of ECE programs brought together to increase their knowledge, create networks of support, and equip programs to make healthy changes to their practices, policies, and environments.</p>

<p>Learning Session</p>	<p>Learning Sessions provide the curriculum content. Most sessions are held live and offer active learning on nutrition, breastfeeding support, physical activity, or screen time, as well as their impact on children’s health and development. Live sessions provide opportunities to build relationships, develop leadership, increase collaboration, and plan for healthy change. All Learning Sessions can be conducted in-person or virtually.</p>
<p>Project Coordinator</p>	<p>The individual responsible for administering and providing overall coordination of the Learning Collaboratives in the state. To support delivery of Learning Collaboratives, this individual leads the recruitment of coaches and ECE programs, provides ongoing oversight and technical support for coaches, and facilitates communication about the project. This could be a separate staff member when multiple Learning Collaboratives are being coordinated simultaneously, or the coach may serve as the project coordinator if implementing independently.</p>
<p>Recommended Practices</p>	<p>In ECE, recommended practices are strategies, standards, methods, and techniques that provide guidance to ECE professionals and families on effective ways to improve health and learning outcomes of young children.</p>
<p>Resource Guide</p>	<p>An accompanying guide for Leadership Team members that includes activities and handouts used in the Learning Sessions or should be shared with ECE program staff and families.</p>
<p>Self-assessment</p>	<p>A questionnaire designed to help ECE programs identify which recommended practices they are and are not meeting in order to select relevant goals regarding program environments, practices, and policies.</p>
<p>Technical Assistance (TA)</p>	<p>Encouragement, support, information, and resources provided by coaches to help Leadership Teams develop and implement action plans for healthy change ensuring the inclusion of all staff members.</p>

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