

SC SCHOOL GARDEN EDUCATION AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Administered by



COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
College of Agriculture, Forestry and Life Sciences



Sponsored by

The South Carolina Department of Education
and South Carolina Farm to School



SOUTH CAROLINA
FARM to SCHOOL



SCHOOL GARDEN EDUCATION AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Information and Instructions

The SC Department of Education's Office of Health and Nutrition recognizes the importance of educating students about agriculture, nutrition, and making healthier food choices. The School Garden Education & Assistance Program provides training and technical support for school gardens in partnership with the Clemson Extension School Gardening program and the SC Farm to School initiative. The goal of the program is to introduce students to hands-on agriculture and nutrition education as well as encourage public schools to use locally grown South Carolina produce in their school menus. The effort will support better health outcomes for children and economic opportunities for local farmers.

Eligible Entities:

1. All South Carolina public schools currently participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or School Breakfast Program (SBP) are eligible to apply.
2. Only two (2) schools awarded per district each year. Schools previously awarded are not eligible.

Program Overview:

Each awarded school will be required to:

Complete the [School Gardening for SC Educators](#) online school garden training for three (3) staff members. The school garden training covers best practices on how to start and maintain a school garden. All three staff members must complete this 5-week asynchronous online course to qualify for the school garden kits. As part of this training each staff member will receive:

- *The Garden Stem: Curriculum for your Garden Classroom*
- *Seasonal Planting Guide and Calendar for SC School and Community Gardens*
- Comprehensive grade-specific educational classroom materials
- 20 renewal credits from the South Carolina Department of Education
- Ongoing school garden technical assistance, resources, newsletters, and training opportunities throughout the school year
- Connections to county level Clemson Extension 4-H and horticulture agents as well as other local community-based Farm to School partners

Each awarded school will receive upon completion of the online training:

- Turn-Key School Garden Kit
 - Tool-free cedar accessible raised bed kit with drip irrigation & trellis
 - Soil, compost, fertilizer, and mulch
 - Premium garden hoses and irrigation supplies
 - A class set of gardening tools and a wagon
 - Vermicomposting bin and worms
- Transplants and seeds delivered to your school quarterly for one year (following the *Seasonal Planting Guide and Calendar for SC School and Community Gardens*)
- Technical assistance throughout the project duration
- Special note: This award does not include any monetary funding.

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Application and Project Timeline:

Application Open	Monday, December 1, 2025
Application Deadline	Friday, January 23, 2026, at 5 pm EST
Announcement of Awards	Early February 2026
Mandatory Virtual Training (Required)	February 23, 2026
School Gardening for SC Educators Online Course	February 23, 2026- March 30, 2026
School Gardens Installed	April-May 2026
Project Duration	February 2026 – February 2027
Mid-Point Survey	May 2026
Final Survey	February 2027

How to Apply:

- Please complete and submit the online application [linked here](https://clemsontn.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0ur7HV1pJPWz22G): https://clemsontn.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0ur7HV1pJPWz22G
- Only online submissions will be accepted.
- The deadline to submit the online application is Friday, January 23, 2026, at 5:00 pm EST

If awarded, here are the next steps and responsibilities:

- One representative from the school garden team must attend a one-hour virtual training on Monday, February 23, 2026, at 3:00 pm.
- The three staff members serving on the garden team must fully complete the online School Gardening for SC Educators course before receiving the school garden materials.
- All raised beds and gardening materials including soil, compost, and related supplies will be provided through the program. Participating schools agree to install the beds according to the planting plan and training provided by the program. Schools will plant the supplied seeds and transplants within one week of delivery and will use the garden as an outdoor classroom to engage students in hands-on learning about where food comes from and the importance of agriculture, nutrition, and environmental stewardship.
- The school must maintain the raised beds past the initial grant period of one calendar year.
- Complete two surveys to provide project information during and after the project. The online surveys will take approximately 15 minutes each to complete.
- Ensure compliance with providing signed publicity releases as needed for media mentions and photo use (to be provided).
- Allow program administrators and/or sponsors to perform site visits periodically.

Need assistance?

- Email Clemson Extension School Garden team at schoolgardens@clemson.edu with any questions regarding the program and application.

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Checklist for Application Completion

To complete the application:

1. Read the application in its entirety (see attached pages for reference only).
2. Select your garden team consisting of at least three (3) staff members from your school. These staff members can be classroom teachers, school food service representatives, nurses, physical education teachers, librarians or other support staff.
3. Complete ALL items on the [online application form](#). Only online submissions will be accepted.
4. The deadline to apply is Friday January 23, 2026, at 5 pm EST.

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Application Questions

1. School District Name
2. School Name
3. School Address
4. Contact Name
5. Contact Email Address
6. Contact Title/Position
7. Does your school participate in the National School Lunch and/or Breakfast Program?
8. What total percentage of your school's students are eligible for free and reduced-price meals?
 - 0-40%
 - 40-60%
 - 60-100%
9. What other school nutrition programs does your school participate in?
 - Participates in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)
 - Currently serves SC locally grown produce in the cafeteria
 - Serves an alternative Breakfast Service model
 - Participates in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable program (FFVP)
 - Participates in the DoD Fresh/USDA Commodity Foods
 - Participates in the Certified SC Cafeteria program
 - Other
 - None
10. Please name 3 staff members who will be on your school's garden team and take the School Gardening for SC Educators online course*. Please include their current job titles/position as well.

*Your school garden's team will be taking this course from February 23, 2026, to March 30, 2026. All coursework must be completed during this time to be eligible for this garden grant opportunity.
11. Please include the contact information for the 3 staff members who will be on your school's garden team and take the School Gardening for SC Educators online course.
12. How involved will your school's administration be involved in your school's garden? How have they demonstrated their support of your school applying to receive a garden?
13. How will your school's garden team engage the cafeteria staff in the school garden?
14. How will your school's garden team involve the students in the school garden?

15. What other community members will be involved in your school's garden project?
 - Parents
 - Master Gardeners
 - Local Farmers
 - Local Community Organization
 - Other
16. Does your school currently have an active school garden?
17. If your school has had a garden but it is not currently active, please explain why it is not being used. What is needed to get your school's garden growing again?
18. How will your school implement and utilize the garden to integrate Farm to School activities into the classroom and/or cafeteria?
 - Produce taste testing
 - Farmers Market
 - Nutrition Education
 - Incorporating the garden into science, math, ELA lessons
 - After school garden club
 - Serving garden produce in the cafeteria
 - Other
19. For any of the Farm to School activities checked above, please briefly explain how you plan to implement these activities.
20. What are the long-term goals for your school's garden? Please name 3 SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) goals.
21. How does your school plan to sustain the garden and keep growing each school year after this grant opportunity has ended? This opportunity includes online training, school garden beds and materials that will be purchased and delivered to your school, and quarterly plants/seed delivery for one year.
22. What other Farm to School, school wellness or environmental programs does your school currently participate in?
 - Current school-level wellness committee
 - 4-H Youth Development programming
 - Ag in the Classroom
 - Future Farmers of America (FFA)
 - Rural Health Network programming
 - Green Steps Program
 - Other
 - None
23. Please include any additional information about your school garden project as well as your reasoning why your school should receive this opportunity.

Only online submissions accepted. Please fill out the online application at the link provided: https://clemsan.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0ur7HV1pJPWz22G