

# School Garden Research

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USDA supports school gardens as a proven tactic for improving children's attitudes and consumption of produce, and for incorporating experiential nutrition and agriculture education into school curriculum. As noted in the memos, [Farm to School and School Garden Expenses](#) and [School Garden Q&As](#), funds from the nonprofit school food service account can be used for many school garden expenses as long as the garden is supporting the school meal programs.

An abbreviated list of school garden based research:

- 1) This study of middle school-aged students indicates that school gardening may increase the variety of vegetables eaten. (Ratcliffe, M.M., et al. (2011) [The Effects of School Garden Experiences on Middle School-Aged Students' Knowledge, Attitudes, and Behaviors Associated with Vegetable Consumption](#). Health Promotion Practice 12.1: 36-43.)
- 2) The article reports that school gardens can positively impact children's food choices by improving their preferences for vegetables and increasing their nutrition knowledge. (Graham, H. et al. (2005) [Use of School Gardens in Academic Instruction](#). Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior. 37: 3: 147-151.)
- 3) A study that concludes children who participated in the garden learned to like healthy foods. (Cavaliere, D. (1987). [How Zucchini Won Fifth-Grade Hearts](#). Children Today, 16(3), 18-21.)
- 4) Adolescents in this study who participated in the garden-based nutrition intervention increased their servings of fruits and vegetables more than students in the two other groups.. (McAleese, J. D. & L. L. Ranklin. (2007). [Garden-based nutrition education affects fruit and vegetable consumption in sixth-grade adolescents](#). Journal of the American Dietetic Association, 107:662-665
- 5) This study reports that after gardening, children have an increased interest in eating fruit and vegetables, possess an appreciation for working with neighborhood adults, and have an increased interest for improvement of neighborhood appearance. (Pothukuchi, K. (2004) [Hortaliza: A Youth "Nutrition Garden" in Southwest Detroit. Children, Youth and Environments](#). 14(2): 124-155.)