



## *Growing Together Affiliation*

The mission of the New Jersey Agricultural Society's *Learning Through Gardening* program is to give New Jersey preschools and elementary schools materials to build and maintain fruit and/or vegetable gardens and to provide teachers with the support needed to use the garden as an outdoor classroom. A school garden gives children the opportunity to learn where their food comes from, how it grows, and that a healthy diet begins with fruits and vegetables. Research shows that school gardening can improve students' test scores and school behavior. Further, gardens can promote effective experiential learning in many subjects, particularly the areas of science, environmental, and food education. School-based gardens may also spur the interest in young children to learn about and visit New Jersey's farms, and perhaps to consider pursuing a career path related to agriculture or to become our next generation of new/beginning farmers. These are goals that the *Growing Together* affiliation seeks to support and achieve.

We offer two *Growing Together* affiliations for new schools:

- Growing Partnership*** - This is a "start-up" three year affiliation. This will help to establish a brand new school garden.
  - 6 raised beds and soil, (3 the first year, 3 the second year)
  - 2 hoses and nozzles-(one the first year, 1 the second)
  - hand garden tools for two classes,

- For gardens built on soil: a soil (lead) test.
- For gardens built on blacktop:
  - landscape fabric
  - kneeling pads
- Seedlings and plugs for three seasons: spring, summer, fall (each year)
- Access to the Teacher ToolBox which contains over 100 garden related lessons and videos
- A monthly newsletter which has new content and is time relevant
- Support from the program director
  
- Growing Associate** - This is a three year affiliation that will help rejuvenate an existing garden area.
  - 2 hoses and nozzles
  - hand garden tools for two classes,
  - Seedlings and plugs for three seasons: spring, summer, fall (each year)
  - Access to the Teacher ToolBox which contains over 100 garden related lessons and videos
  - A monthly newsletter which has new content and is time relevant
  - Support from the program director

Please keep in mind that:

- Only school gardens for the growing of fruits and vegetables are considered.
- Only schools that seek to launch a school-wide gardening program will be considered. This opportunity does not provide support for gardens used solely for after-school or club activities.

- There must be a plan for the garden to be used by at least two grade levels during the first year. Plans should also describe how the garden's use will be expanded by at least one grade level in the second year.
- A garden committee of at least six members must be formed before an application is submitted. The garden committee must include:
  - 3 teachers from *two* different grade levels
  - 1 PTO/PTA member
  - Other members may also include administrators, custodians, cafeteria managers, etc.
- At least one committee member must serve as committee chair. A second person may be designated as co-chair. The committee chairperson or co-chair may serve as contact person for the program.
- Applications must be accompanied by a letter of support from the school principal.
- Every application must be accompanied by a picture of the garden space.
- Program participants will be required to submit an annual description of their garden activities, including photos if desired. If sharing photographs, please be aware that they may be used on the NJAS LTG website or in LTG newsletters. As such, appropriate releases should be provided for all individuals who appear in the photographs.
- One teacher must attend the Best Practices Workshop in each year of the participation in the program.
- In the first year of the program, two classes of students must complete a simple survey before the gardening year begins and after the first year of gardening is completed.

New Jersey Agricultural Society's



**LEARNING  
THROUGH  
GARDENING**

*Growing Together Affiliation*

Application

**Name of School:**

**Address:**

**City:**

**State:**

**Zip:**

**Mailing Address( if different from above):**

**Address:**

**City:**

**State:**

**Zip:**

**Phone number:**

**Fax number:**

**County:**

**Check the participation level for which you applying:**

- Growing Partnership*
- Growing Associate*

**Garden Committee Chairperson:**

**Role:**

**Email:**

**Principal:**

**Email:**

- ***Be sure to include a letter of support from the school principal with your application***

**Garden Committee Membership:**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Position: grade taught/role</b>

**Number of Students in the School:**

**Grade levels at school:**

**Classes per grade level:**

**Number of Teachers:**

**% free/reduced lunch:**

Please answer the following questions:

1. Please describe your goals for the garden space.
2. How will the garden be used by at least two grade levels in the first year and by three or more grade levels in subsequent years? What ideas do you have for integrating the curriculum of these grade levels with the garden?
3. Please describe the area you intend to use for the garden, be sure to include the following information:
  - a. How has the space been used in the past?
  - b. How many hours of sunlight does it get daily?
  - c. Is there a water source? How far away is it?
  - d. Is the area fenced?
  - e. If the area is not fenced, do you have a problem with deer?
  - f. Is there any work that needs to be done prior to using the space?

*REMEMBER to include a photograph of the space with your application!*

4. Please include a proposed budget for any items required or desired for your garden that are NOT included in the *Growing Together* program. Do you have a source of funding for these items, for example, from the PTA or a community business?
5. *Learning Through Gardening* requires that schools participate in a Gardening Basics Workshop, held either in person, virtually, or by watching a recording. Additionally, one teacher needs to attend a Best Practices Workshop in each of the program's three years. Will your school be able to meet these requirements? How will the information learned at the workshops be disseminated to others?

6. What is your plan for staff, parent, and community support to ensure the gardening program is successful and sustainable?

Email completed applications to: [ltg@njagsociety.org](mailto:ltg@njagsociety.org)