



Kauaʻi School Garden Guide

A brief how-to on setting up your school's garden program



About Kauaʻi School Garden Network & Kauaʻi Farm-to-School Hui

The Kauaʻi School Garden Network (KSGN) was established in 2010 and supports all schools, ECE-12, on the island of Kauaʻi. We provide technical assistance for school gardens, school sustainability initiatives, local food in local schools and the development of wellness committees that are able to address school specific concerns around healthy food and nutrition choices. In addition, we offer schools curriculum, training, and networking opportunities.

In 2014, we began offering full-time AmeriCorps VISTA members to help with growing capacity for schools to manage their school garden and food projects through early 2019. This helped to develop gardens at schools across the island and helped Kauaʻi reach 94% of schools having school gardens - the #1 island statewide! MK also helped to create two school garden and meal programs for Kauai's first farm-to-school pilots from 2015-2019 at Kawaikini NCPSC and Ke Kula Niʻihau O Kekaha PCS.

In 2018, we launched the new Kauaʻi Farm-to-School Hui, a stakeholder group that meets quarterly to facilitate collaboration and cross-sector efforts that increase access to healthy food through school environments, especially for low-income families. In 2020, this group will be identifying a 5-year Farm-to-School Strategic Plan for Kauaʻi. We also have the following resources available to stay up to date and connected to fellow educators, supporters, resources, grant opportunities, and more:

Facebook Group:

www.facebook.com/groups/153785905340682

E-Newsletter Sign-Up:

www.malamakauai.org/mk/get-connected/e-newsletter

Webpage Resources:

www.malamakauai.org/mk/programs-3/kauai-school-gardens

Reach Out For More Info:

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(808) 828-0685 x23 | farmtoschool@malamakauai.org

Step 1: Assemble Your Team & Support Resources.

Your Team

The more people that are involved with developing and supporting your school garden program, the higher its chances of long-term sustainability and success! One of the most common reasons for school garden failure is not having enough participants in both the planning and maintenance processes.

Begin by speaking with as many stakeholders as possible to get them on board. Ask them; what their level of interest in the project is, what they would be able to help with, and if they would be willing to meet on a regular basis to help drive the project forward. One crucial component to a successful garden project is to set regular meeting times for your Committee.

Try to complete a list of these contacts and create a committee that will ultimately be responsible for your school garden program:

Group	Name	Title	Phone	Email
Administration				
Administration				
Janitorial				
Cafeteria Mgr				
PTA/PTSA				
PTA/PTSA				
Teacher				
Teacher				
Community Volunteer				
Community Volunteer				
Students				
Other				

If there is enough interest, you may want to delegate roles to different parties, such as fundraising, resource development, volunteer management, etc. Groups such as Master Gardener and Rotary may also want to participate and support your project as community volunteers!

Your Resources

Next, consider which supplies and resources your school garden project will need on an ongoing basis and determine community-based resources that might be willing to support your project through donations of time or materials, discounts, or man hours:

Resource	Name	Company/Org	Phone	Email
Compost				
Mulch				
Plants				
Trees				
Seeds				
Volunteer Groups				
Irrigation				
Other:				

Step 2: Set Your Goals. Plan & Install Your Garden.

Define Your Goals

Use these guiding questions to ask your team about how your school's gardening efforts will support and integrate into overall school goals related to garden design, food distribution, and education.

Grow.	Eat.	Share.
<p>What types of produce does your school want to grow?</p> <p>How much space do you have available to garden?</p> <p>Do you <i>really</i> have enough time dedicated for a high-maintenance garden, or would you like to start with something simpler, like food trees, bushes and/or edible landscaping installation?</p>	<p>Where will the food you produce go?</p> <p>What food safety protocols and resources will you need to have in place?</p> <p>Is food distribution a part of a larger farm-to-school effort, fundraising strategy, or a way to feed and connect families?</p> <p>Is your school ready for Garden-to-Cafeteria efforts to incorporate produce into meal programs?</p>	<p>How will the garden be integrated into school operations and education?</p> <p>How many educators will utilize the garden space? When and for what exactly?</p> <p>Do you have curriculum in mind to use in the garden?</p> <p>Will families be engaged in the garden?</p> <p>Who are your local farmers? Will they be connected to your efforts?</p>

Complete a Site Checklist

More specific questions and data points to consider:

Total # of students:

How many students will use the garden at one time? When? How?

Does a current garden program exist? If so, what is included?

Description of proposed garden area or expansion:

Garden types of interest:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Composting Site / Vermiculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Aquaponics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agroforestry | <input type="checkbox"/> Fruit Trees |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Row Crops | <input type="checkbox"/> Medicinal Herbs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Raised Garden Beds | <input type="checkbox"/> Bee/Butterfly Garden |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse / Nursery | <input type="checkbox"/> Peace Garden |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian Garden | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

School food interest areas - how will produce be used?

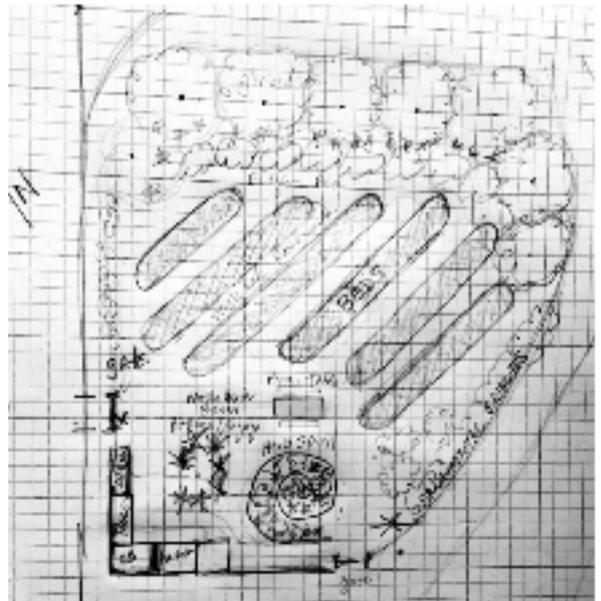
- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Salad Bar | <input type="checkbox"/> Given to Students / Families to Take Home |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooking Demos | <input type="checkbox"/> Donated to Charity / Food Pantries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Schools Snacks | <input type="checkbox"/> Other? _____ |

What are the biggest obstacles that could affect your garden's installation or management?

Create Your Garden Plan & Map

Creating a drawing and plan for your garden's design is an important step not to be overlooked. A couple of keys to planning your garden well:

- Obtain a map of the school property to use as a guide
- Get the utility lines across the campus marked on your map to avoid interference
- Complete a soil sample & testing to ensure the soil is clean from hazardous chemicals and to understand what types of fertilization you will need to add
- Develop a plan for irrigation; with no water, there is no garden! Automated irrigation can be the most easy to maintain, but also needs to be monitored regularly. If you're going to be using a lot of water, it may be worth it to have a separate ag rate meter installed to manage water bills.



Key Contacts:

CTAHR Soil Testing - (808) 274-3478
KIUC (Power) - (808) 246-4300
Department of Water - (808) 245-5400

Call Before You Dig - 811 or (866) 423-7287
Hawaii Gas - (808) 245-3301

Develop a Wish List of Supplies & Obtain Them

Create a wish list and budget for your school garden program, being sure to ask teachers for their individual project interests and supply needs. Use this information to create a budget for your school garden project so that you can plan fundraisers, apply to grants, and request in-kind donations effectively. Make sure to send your wish list home with students; many times parents have connections and resources to help support your project. You'll want to be sure that all of your materials are on-site and ready for installation day!

Install Your Garden

We've seen garden installations happen successfully in a variety of ways, including:

- Students install a garden over time as a part of a class or after-school program
- Community volunteers install the garden over a day or weekend-long Garden Party
- A community group hosts a public gardening class where participants install the school garden as a part of class



Step 3: Care for & Integrate Your Garden.

Gardens are incredibly fun to install, but not always as thrilling to manage and maintain. Things like watering, weeding, ensuring a consistent crop production schedule, and making sure that the garden project overall is sustainable can be time-consuming. These tips may help:

Create a Volunteer Team & Maintenance Schedule

Having a large volunteer base for your school's garden is an amazing blessing worth putting effort into. Students and teachers alone may have difficulty regularly maintaining a garden space without deep and wide curricular integration. Many times we see school gardens fail because there are not enough participants to keep it going, so this is one of the most important steps to consider. There are many groups that you can connect with to help with garden maintenance including Kaua'i RSVP, Traffic Court Community Service, PTA/PTSAs, Kaua'i Master Gardeners, Rotary Clubs, and others. Really successful school gardens often incorporate a quarterly Garden Party work day tied to campus family nights.

Plan for the Summer & Other School Breaks

Don't forget to care for your garden over breaks to ensure that it doesn't become overgrown and unmanageable! Summer is a great time to put your garden to bed using cover crops and mulching, which will also help to increase soil fertility for the next year. Something as simple as an automated timing system can help to ensure that crops get watered consistently. Alternatively, you could see that your school garden is used and managed by a community group, volunteers, or a youth summer program.

Integrate the Garden into the Curriculum

A garden becomes sustainable when teachers and students feel connected and have ownership of its success for the long-term. Heavily involve teachers in the project planning process and regularly check in with them to see what they need to connect in-class learning to your outdoor classroom. Some schools give each teacher their own garden bed to help promote individualized lessons and autonomy.

It's also critical to see the value in incorporating the garden into a variety of subjects - it's not just for science class! There are some great school garden, composting, nutrition, and sustainability curriculum that can be incorporated into your program, such as:

- **Kōkua Hawai'i Foundation** - `ĀINA in Schools, culturally-relevant K-6 curriculum on composting, nutrition, and gardens. www.kokuahawaiifoundation.org
- **Project Learning Tree** - Offers GreenSchools Certification, GreenWorks! Grants, and a variety of curriculum covering environment, energy, waste, and more. www.plt.org
- **Bishop Museum Online Learning Center** - digital educational resources in STEM, art, literacy, & culture for K-12, higher ed & informal education. bishopmuseumeducation.org
- **Green Living Project** - "Students Connecting to Global Sustainability" curriculum uses multimedia and technology to bring sustainability-centered education to K-12 classrooms. <http://glpfilms.com/education/curriculum>
- **Kohala Center School Garden Curriculum Map** - Extensive listing of various curriculum resources. <http://kohalacenter.org/hisgn/hisgn-resources/school-garden-curriculum>
- **Life Lab** - A great mainland-based resource for a variety of curriculum, ECE to Grade 5. <https://www.lifelab.org/store/>
- **Farm to Keiki** - Garden and nutrition curriculum for preschool aged children. <https://www.farmtokeiki.org/>

Keep Fundraising!

By keeping funds flowing into your garden program, you'll always be able to purchase what your garden needs to thrive and survive! Successful garden projects create sustainable revenue streams, such as an annual school garden fundraiser each October for National Farm-to-School Month, bi-annual plant or compost sales, or an ongoing fundraiser such as HI-5 recycling on their campus.

There are also a wide variety of grants available to support school gardening initiatives. Stay abreast of locally applicable opportunities by visiting our resource webpage online (www.malamakauai.org/mk/programs-3/kauai-school-gardens) or joining our Facebook Group (www.facebook.com/groups/153785905340682) for the latest news and opportunities.

Consider Bringing on a School Garden Coordinator

Nothing helps your program gain significant traction, expansion, and sustainability more than bringing on part-time or full-time paid staff dedicated to it. Consider working with other local schools to even "share" someone. Although grants are a great resource, creating a more sustainable funding stream for the position is a more stable plan for the long-term. Ideas for funding this position include:

- PTT (Part-time Teacher Funding from DOE)
- Parent-Teacher Association Fundraising
- Project-based Earned Income (selling vermicompost/compost, local food baskets, plants, etc.)
- National Corporation for Community Service (FoodCorps, AmeriCorps VISTA, RSVP, etc.)

Connect Your Campus Efforts to Islandwide Initiatives

Connecting your garden and farm-to-school efforts to resources off campus has tremendous benefits, including sharing of best practices, collaborative project support, networking, resource-sharing and more. We welcome all school garden leaders at our quarterly Kaua'i Farm-to-School Hui Stakeholder Group. Contact Joell for more info on how to get involved!

Still Have Questions? Reach Out For More Info:

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