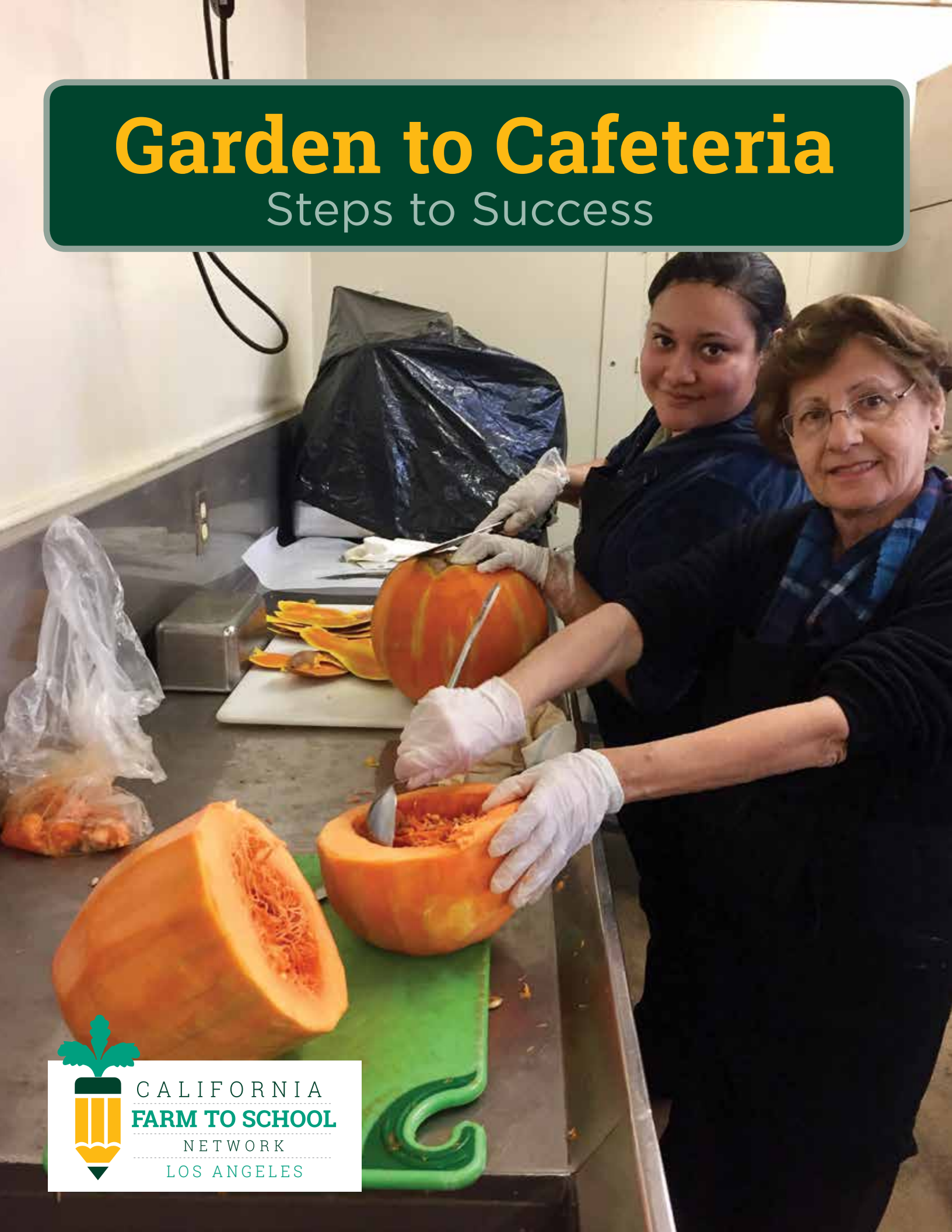
Garden to Cafeteria

Steps to Success



CALIFORNIA
FARM TO SCHOOL
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Garden to Cafeteria

Steps to Success

2017

This publication is a product of Urban and Environmental Policy Institute at Occidental College (UEPI), which operates the Los Angeles Farm to School Network. It was created in partnership with Pasadena Unified School District's (PUSD) Farm to School program.

UEPI is an applied research and advocacy center with the mission of advancing community-driven programs and policies to build healthy, thriving communities and achieve social, economic, and environmental justice. PUSD's Farm to School program is dedicated to building and growing a healthy school environment.

www.lafarmtoschool.org

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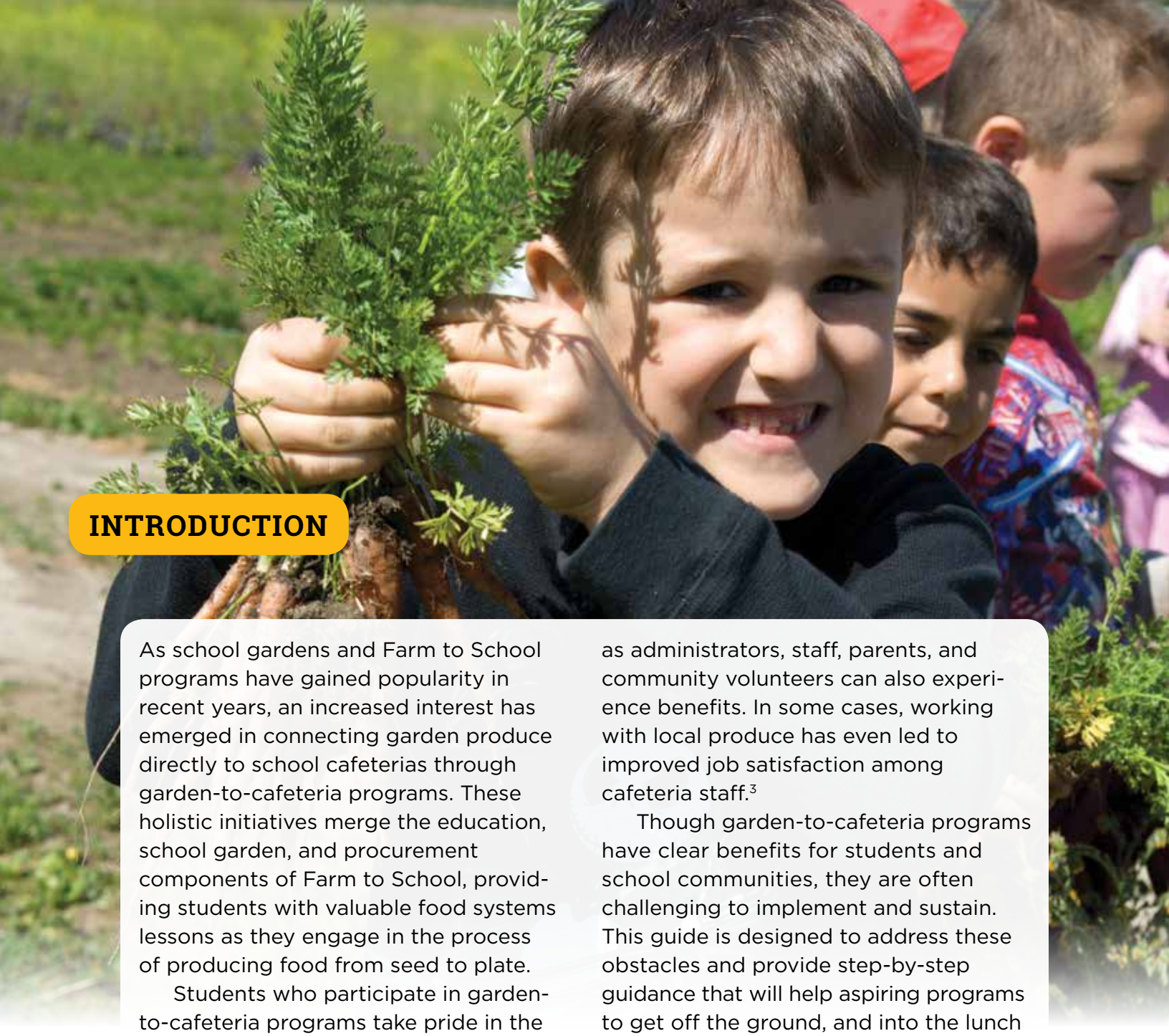
HELPFUL GARDEN-TO-CAFETERIA RESOURCES & TOOLS

RESOURCE KEY

This publication features many helpful resources and tools to guide you through specific steps in building your garden-to-cafeteria program. Each major program step has an associated list of resources. The resources are keyed to the text by ***Step*** and ***Resource Number***. For example, the third resource on the **Step 1 "Resource List"** would be cited as 1 3. This system routes you directly to information that is relevant to your program needs.

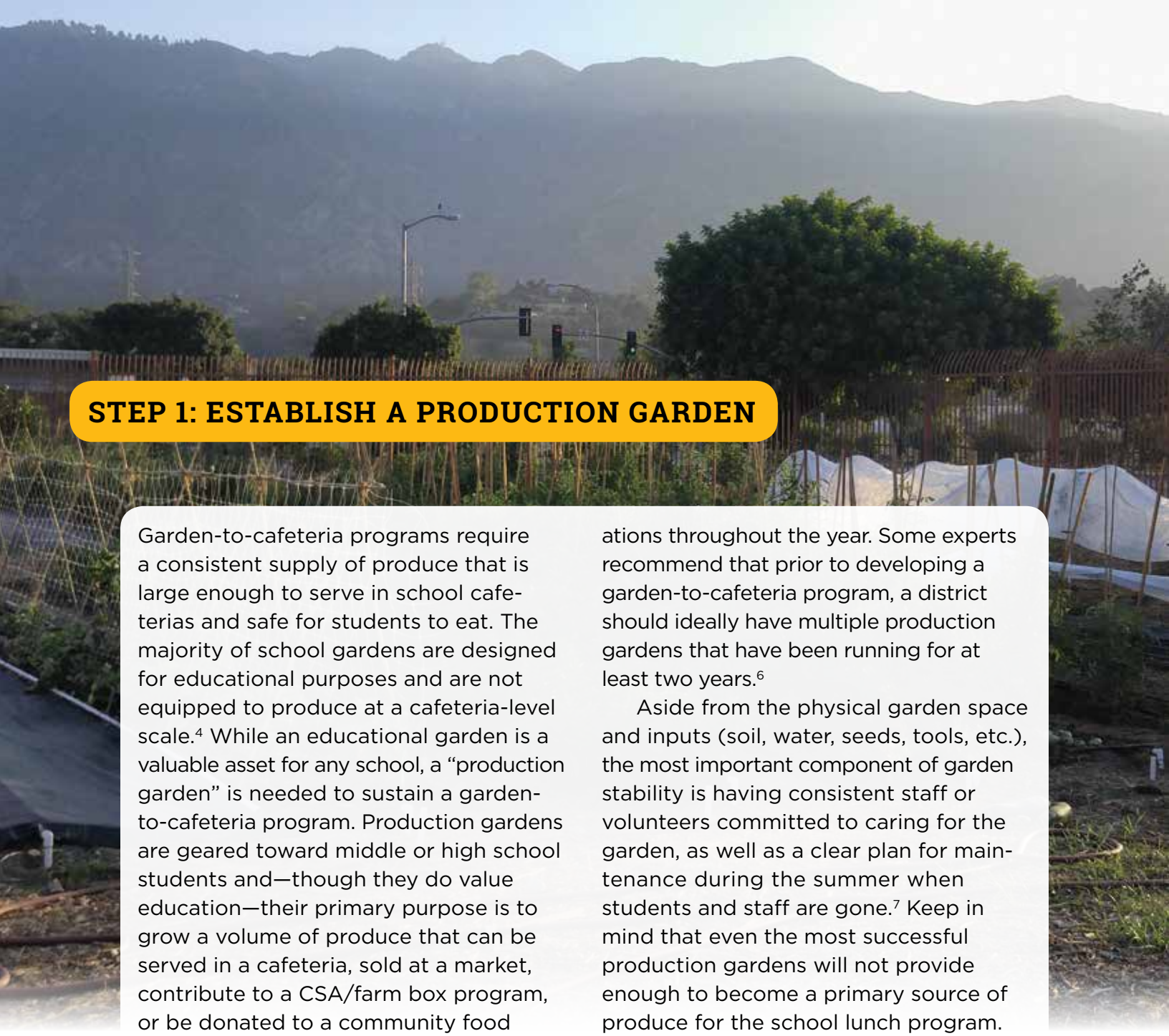


INTRODUCTION

As school gardens and Farm to School programs have gained popularity in recent years, an increased interest has emerged in connecting garden produce directly to school cafeterias through garden-to-cafeteria programs. These holistic initiatives merge the education, school garden, and procurement components of Farm to School, providing students with valuable food systems lessons as they engage in the process of producing food from seed to plate.

Students who participate in garden-to-cafeteria programs take pride in the food that they grow and are more likely to eat fruits and vegetables in the cafeteria that they recognize from the garden, even if the produce served is from a different source.[1] School garden programs are also linked to improved nutrition knowledge and an increase in student preferences for fresh fruits and vegetables.[2] Additionally, because garden-to-cafeteria programs engage a wide range of stakeholders, other members of the school community such as administrators, staff, parents, and community volunteers can also experience benefits. In some cases, working with local produce has even led to improved job satisfaction among cafeteria staff.[3]

Though garden-to-cafeteria programs have clear benefits for students and school communities, they are often challenging to implement and sustain. This guide is designed to address these obstacles and provide step-by-step guidance that will help aspiring programs to get off the ground, and into the lunch line. It is the product of a partnership between the Urban & Environmental Policy Institute at Occidental College (UEPI), which leads the Los Angeles Farm to School Network, and Pasadena Unified School District (PUSD), which launched a successful garden-to-cafeteria program over the 2016–17 school year. The recommendations in this guide are based on findings from PUSD's program and also draw from best practices established by other leaders in the field.



STEP 1: ESTABLISH A PRODUCTION GARDEN

Garden-to-cafeteria programs require a consistent supply of produce that is large enough to serve in school cafeterias and safe for students to eat. The majority of school gardens are designed for educational purposes and are not equipped to produce at a cafeteria-level scale.[4] While an educational garden is a valuable asset for any school, a "production garden" is needed to sustain a garden-to-cafeteria program. Production gardens are geared toward middle or high school students and—though they do value education—their primary purpose is to grow a volume of produce that can be served in a cafeteria, sold at a market, contribute to a CSA/farm box program, or be donated to a community food assistance organization.[5] When determining if your school's production garden is ready to partner with the school lunch program, the most important factors to consider are the ability to produce at scale and adhere to food safety standards.

GARDEN READINESS 1 1 2 3 4 5

Before attempting to implement a garden-to-cafeteria program, make sure that your school or district has a stable production garden with the capacity to maintain operations throughout the year. Some experts recommend that prior to developing a garden-to-cafeteria program, a district should ideally have multiple production gardens that have been running for at least two years.[6]

Aside from the physical garden space and inputs (soil, water, seeds, tools, etc.), the most important component of garden stability is having consistent staff or volunteers committed to caring for the garden, as well as a clear plan for maintenance during the summer when students and staff are gone.[7] Keep in mind that even the most successful production gardens will not provide enough to become a primary source of produce for the school lunch program. Instead, garden produce should be viewed as a supplemental source that has added benefits for all members of the school community.[8]

FOOD SAFETY 1 6 7 8 9 10

Food safety is central to any garden-to-cafeteria program. School food services are responsible for ensuring that all of the food they serve is safe for student consumption, and they are required to meet very stringent food safety standards.

LESSONS FROM PASADENA UNIFIED: ESTABLISH A PRODUCTION GARDEN

Before piloting their garden-to-cafeteria program, PUSD already had a strong and well-established Farm to School program that integrated the three Farm to School components of local sourcing, classroom education, and school gardens. In addition to having a garden instructor on staff and gardens at nearly every school, seven schools had designated "production gardens." While most of the district's gardens are used only for educational purposes, the production gardens are run by older students and can produce enough fruits and vegetables to collectively support the garden-to-cafeteria program.

A full year before the launch of their garden-to-cafeteria program, PUSD worked with the Department of Public Health to develop a food safety manual for garden production that would guide district-wide implementation of the garden-to-cafeteria model and ensure that all of the produce served in the cafeteria would meet food safety standards. Once the production garden sites were determined to be compliant with the safety standards outlined in the manual, they were ready to start producing for the cafeteria and avoided the need to worry about issues with food safety compliance down the line. PUSD staff emphasized that having established production gardens and food safety standards in place before the start of the pilot was essential. This eased the relationship with the food service department by guaranteeing safe produce and a (relatively) consistent supply. You can see PUSD's approved food safety protocol manual in the resources section below. 1 8

Therefore, having an approved food safety protocol in place before starting a program is highly recommended.[9] This way, all parties can be confident that the garden produce is safe, and issues that might derail the program later in the process can be avoided altogether. Maintaining food safety practices in a school garden does not have to add significant work, and can also provide a valuable educational opportunity for students.[5]

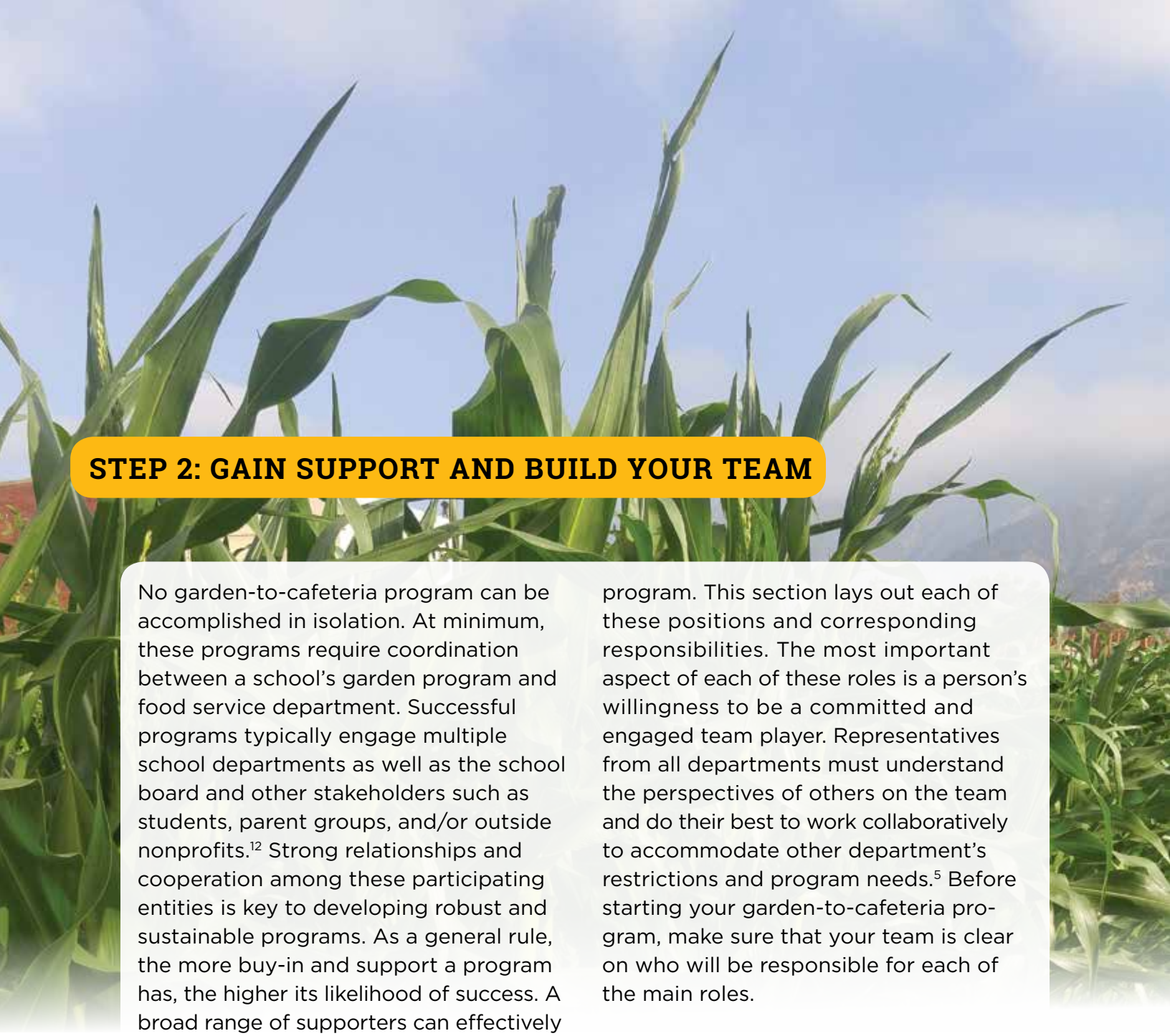
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS 1 2 4 5 7

If your school garden is not yet ready to leap into a garden-to-cafeteria program, that's okay! It is much better to start a program when you're ready and first focus your energy on stabilizing and sustaining an existing garden program. There are also incremental steps that your program can experiment with before taking on the full garden-to-cafeteria model.[10] For example, setting up an afterschool farm stand, CSA program, or "farmraiser" event can be a good way to gain experience selling produce[11] that will also gauge your readiness for working with the cafeteria. Though the next steps in this guide are for schools with established production gardens, resources in this section include tips for garden programs working to sustain current activities and/or that are hoping to expand to a garden-to-cafeteria model in the future.

HELPFUL GARDEN-TO-CAFETERIA RESOURCES & TOOLS

1 ESTABLISH A PRODUCTION GARDEN

1. **Getting Started: A Guide for Creating School Gardens as Outdoor Classrooms**
   Life Lab and Center for Ecoliteracy (2017)
   www.lifelab.org
2. **School Garden Guide**
   Slow Food USA (2013)
   www.slowfoodusa.org/resources-and-grants
3. **Steps to a School Garden**
   Collective School Garden Network (2015)
   www.csgn.org/steps
4. **Create & Sustain a Program**
   KidsGardening (2016)
   (see sections on "Funding a School Garden Program," "Sustaining Your Program," "Strategies for Growing a Business," and "School Farmers' Markets")
   https://kidsgardening.org
5. **Funding a Garden Coordinator**
   Collective School Garden Network (2015)
   www.csgn.org/funding-garden-coordinator
6. **Food Safety Tips for School Gardens**
   USDA and National Food Service Management Institute (2015)
   http://nfsmi.org
7. **Garden to Cafeteria: a Step-by-Step Guide**
   Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems (2014)
   (see section on "Plan for Safe Food Practices")
   http://foodsystems.msu.edu/resources/garden_to_cafeteria
8. **PUSD: Farm to School Safety Protocol Manual**
   Pasadena Unified School District (2016)
   www.pusd.us/domain/2002
9. **Garden to Cafeteria Food Safety Protocols**
   Slow Food USA (2017)
   www.slowfoodusa.org/garden-to-cafeteria
10. **Eat What You Grow! A School Garden Food Safety Manual for Chicago Public Schools**
    FamilyFarmed (2013)
    www.farmtoschool.org/resources



STEP 2: GAIN SUPPORT AND BUILD YOUR TEAM

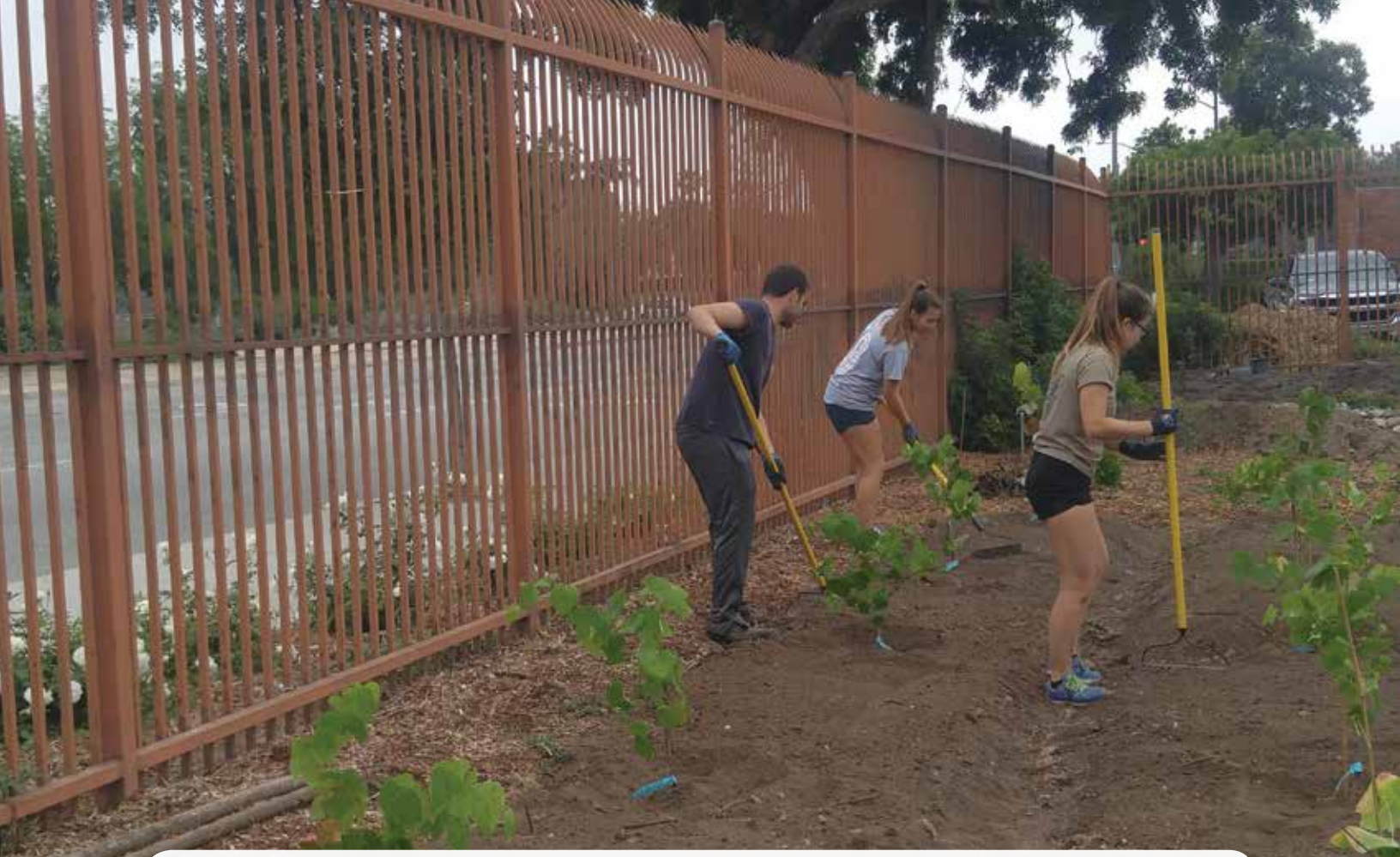
No garden-to-cafeteria program can be accomplished in isolation. At minimum, these programs require coordination between a school's garden program and food service department. Successful programs typically engage multiple school departments as well as the school board and other stakeholders such as students, parent groups, and/or outside nonprofits.[12] Strong relationships and cooperation among these participating entities is key to developing robust and sustainable programs. As a general rule, the more buy-in and support a program has, the higher its likelihood of success. A broad range of supporters can effectively advocate for the program by advancing beneficial policies, facilitating funding opportunities, or securing staffing needs.[13]

KEY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Though garden-to-cafeteria programs vary widely and can incorporate leadership from a variety of school departments or outside groups, there are a few roles and responsibilities that are central to the successful implementation of any program. This section lays out each of these positions and corresponding responsibilities. The most important aspect of each of these roles is a person's willingness to be a committed and engaged team player. Representatives from all departments must understand the perspectives of others on the team and do their best to work collaboratively to accommodate other department's restrictions and program needs.[5] Before starting your garden-to-cafeteria program, make sure that your team is clear on who will be responsible for each of the main roles.

Program Coordinator

Engaging partners, coordinating information, and facilitating conversations to move a garden-to-cafeteria program forward can be a lot of work. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge this program coordination as a key role in the project. Ideally, a paid staff person within one of the school's departments takes on this responsibility because it is easiest to get the job done and maintain momentum when it is a part of someone's



paid position. However, it can be performed by a parent, other volunteer, or partnering nonprofit organization. The program coordinator needs to understand all of the moving pieces within a garden-to-cafeteria program, be able to translate information across school departments, and take the lead in troubleshooting when barriers or challenges arise during the course of implementation.

School Garden Representative

A representative from the school garden must be actively involved throughout a garden-to-cafeteria program's development and implementation. In a best-case scenario, this is a paid garden instructor or garden manager,[14] though a dedicated master gardener or other volunteer could potentially do the job. This position must have the authority to determine what is planted in the school garden as well as the capacity to oversee garden maintenance and harvesting activities (including adherence to food safety protocols).[15]

Food Service Representative

Food service administrators decide what goes on the school lunch menu and are also in charge of all food purchasing. Therefore, a garden-to-cafeteria program cannot function without participation from a school's food service department. The food service representative on the team must have enough decision-making power to incorporate garden produce into the menu, coordinate purchasing, train staff on any new processing or preparation tasks, and develop a plan for supplying backup items if the garden produce does not come through as planned or is insufficient to serve the entire student body.

LESSONS FROM PASADENA UNIFIED: PROGRAM SUPPORT AND TEAM BUILDING

PUSD has been a long-time proponent of Farm to School. A few years before the launch of their garden-to-cafeteria program, the school board passed a non-binding resolution to source 2% of cafeteria produce from school gardens in the district. Though this commitment was not enforceable, it demonstrated district-wide support and justification for a garden-to-cafeteria program.

PUSD's garden-to-cafeteria program is a highly collaborative initiative between their health programs, school garden, facilities, and food and nutrition services departments. The district is fortunate to have health programs staff who fundraise for their Farm to School programs and also oversee and coordinate program implementation. Not only are their health programs staff passionate about Farm to School, but they are also able to dedicate time to taking on the garden-to-cafeteria "program coordinator" role, acting as the glue that pulls the rest of the program together.

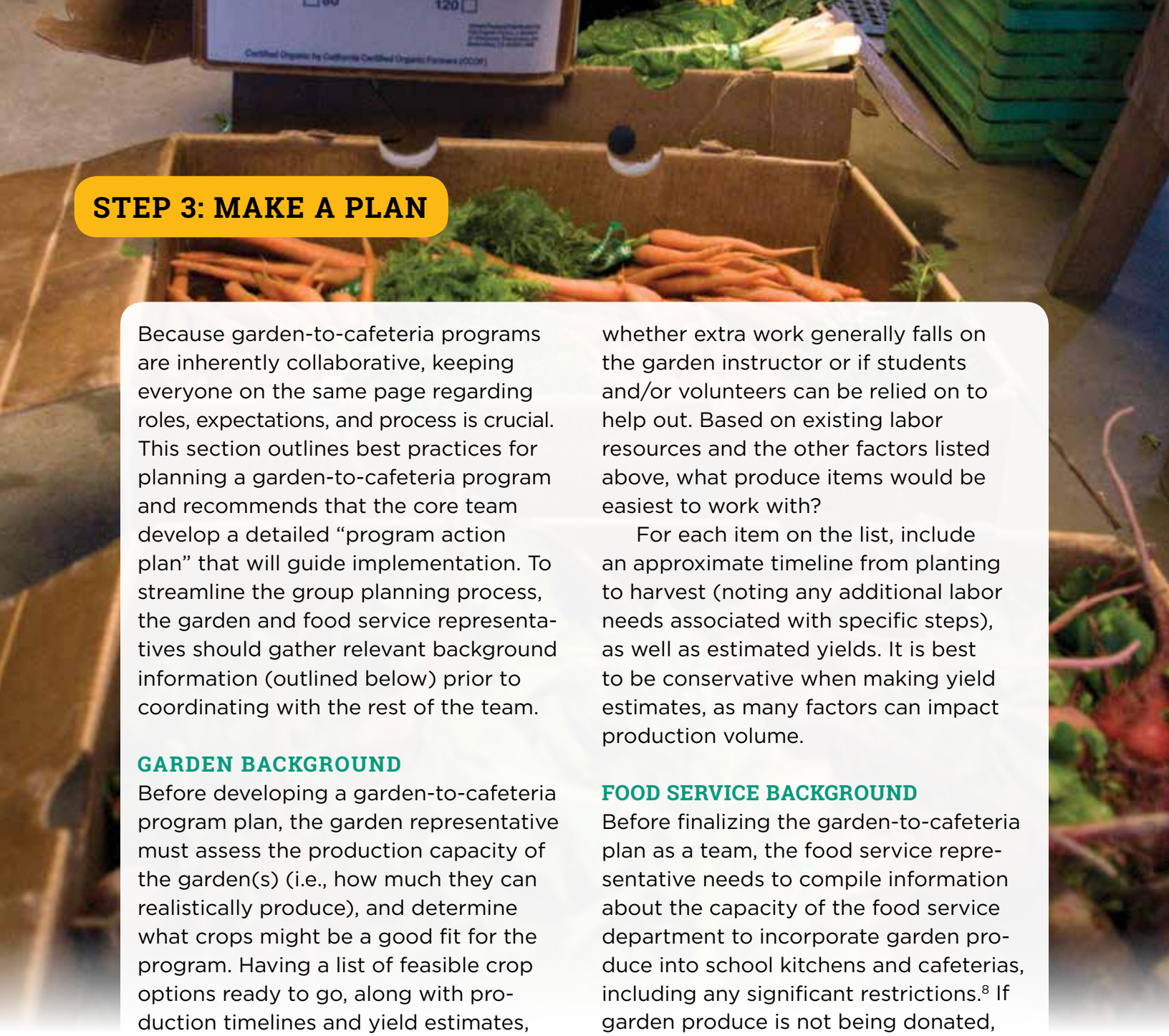
In addition to the health programs department, PUSD has a paid master gardener on staff who teaches garden classes, maintains school gardens throughout the district, and runs all aspects of production for the garden-to-cafeteria program, making the entire program possible. The garden-to-cafeteria team also has a representative from the facilities department who helps to build gardens and ensure access to water and other infrastructure needs, and a food and nutrition services director who is willing to incorporate garden produce into the menu.

The health programs staff maintain ongoing communication between these "core team" department partners and also convene other community members and stakeholders at bimonthly Farm to School meetings where they discuss the program's progress and next steps. All of PUSD's core team members agreed that the successful development and implementation of their garden-to-cafeteria program hinges upon having active staff involvement and ongoing collaboration across different departments.

HELPFUL GARDEN-TO-CAFETERIA RESOURCES & TOOLS

2 PROGRAM SUPPORT AND TEAM BUILDING

1. **The USDA Farm to School Planning Toolkit**
   USDA Food and Nutrition Service (2017)
   (see section on "Building Your Farm to School Team")
   www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool
2. **Farm to Child Nutrition Programs Planning Guide**
   USDA Food and Nutrition Service (2016)
   www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/farm-school-resources
3. **Garden to Cafeteria Program Manual**
   Slow Food Denver (2017)
   www.slowfoodusa.org/garden-to-cafeteria
4. **Create and Sustain a Program**
   KidsGardening (2016)
   (see sections on "Gathering Support" and "Forming a Garden Committee")
   https://kidsgardening.org/create-sustain-a-program/



STEP 3: MAKE A PLAN

Because garden-to-cafeteria programs are inherently collaborative, keeping everyone on the same page regarding roles, expectations, and process is crucial. This section outlines best practices for planning a garden-to-cafeteria program and recommends that the core team develop a detailed "program action plan" that will guide implementation. To streamline the group planning process, the garden and food service representatives should gather relevant background information (outlined below) prior to coordinating with the rest of the team.

GARDEN BACKGROUND

Before developing a garden-to-cafeteria program plan, the garden representative must assess the production capacity of the garden(s) (i.e., how much they can realistically produce), and determine what crops might be a good fit for the program. Having a list of feasible crop options ready to go, along with production timelines and yield estimates, will help the team to finalize the garden menu plans more quickly.

Selecting Possible Crops 3 1 2 3

Some factors and questions to consider when identifying possible crop options include: seasonality, crop reliability, production volume, garden space and water requirements, cultural appropriateness for the student population, harvesting and storage needs, and labor intensity.[10, 15] When assessing labor needs, consider whether extra work generally falls on the garden instructor or if students and/or volunteers can be relied on to help out. Based on existing labor resources and the other factors listed above, what produce items would be easiest to work with?

For each item on the list, include an approximate timeline from planting to harvest (noting any additional labor needs associated with specific steps), as well as estimated yields. It is best to be conservative when making yield estimates, as many factors can impact production volume.

FOOD SERVICE BACKGROUND

Before finalizing the garden-to-cafeteria plan as a team, the food service representative needs to compile information about the capacity of the food service department to incorporate garden produce into school kitchens and cafeterias, including any significant restrictions.[8] If garden produce is not being donated, the food service representative must also have a plan for buying produce from the garden[16] and be prepared to explain any purchasing requirements to the rest of the team. Again, having this information outlined and in an accessible format before discussing possibilities with the full garden-to-cafeteria team will help the group to select produce items for the menu and plan out other program details. Some specific topics for the food service representative to consider are outlined below.

Facilities & Equipment 3 4 5

Available kitchen facilities and equipment can determine which produce items are feasible (or not possible) to include in the program.[5, 8] Is there a kitchen where produce can be washed and prepared? How much storage space is available for fresh produce? Are there any other structural limitations?

Staff Capacity 3 5 6

Staff skills, time, and training needs must also be factored into the program plans. Do food service staff currently have the ability to handle and prepare fresh (usually whole) fruits and vegetables? If not, is training a realistic option? How much time can be dedicated to produce preparation? Would some produce items be easier for staff to handle than others? What characteristics define those items?

Purchasing 3 1 7 8

If a program's plans involve purchasing from the garden, the food service representative will have to determine the best strategy for doing so. School districts participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) are required to put out a competitive bid for almost all food vendors. In this process, prospective vendors submit a proposal to sell specific food items to the school district, and the district is required to accept the most cost-effective bid meeting their purchasing criteria.[16]

Most school gardens would never be competitive in this process, so luckily there is another option. Beginning in 2014, the USDA (which regulates the NSLP) made a special allowance for purchases under $3,500. Through a new classification called a "micro-purchase," these very small purchases (from vendors such as school gardens) are exempt from the competitive bid process. As long as each garden purchase does not exceed $3,500, the micro-purchase designation is an option that can work well for garden-to-cafeteria programs.[16] Other aspects of purchasing that the food service representative should look into include cost (i.e., what is the average price per unit currently paid for comparable produce items), specific state and local regulations, if there are any standard pack or delivery requirements for certain products, and any invoicing procedures that might need to be adjusted.[5, 10, 16]

PROGRAM ACTION PLAN

Once the garden and food service representatives have explored the issues and questions above, the team is ready to create a garden-to-cafeteria program action plan! This is the point at which the team works together to decide on key program details, including the crops, timeline, cafeteria menu, logistics, communication strategies, and expectations. This detailed program outline should specifically address the following topics and questions.

Crop Selection 3 1 2 3 7

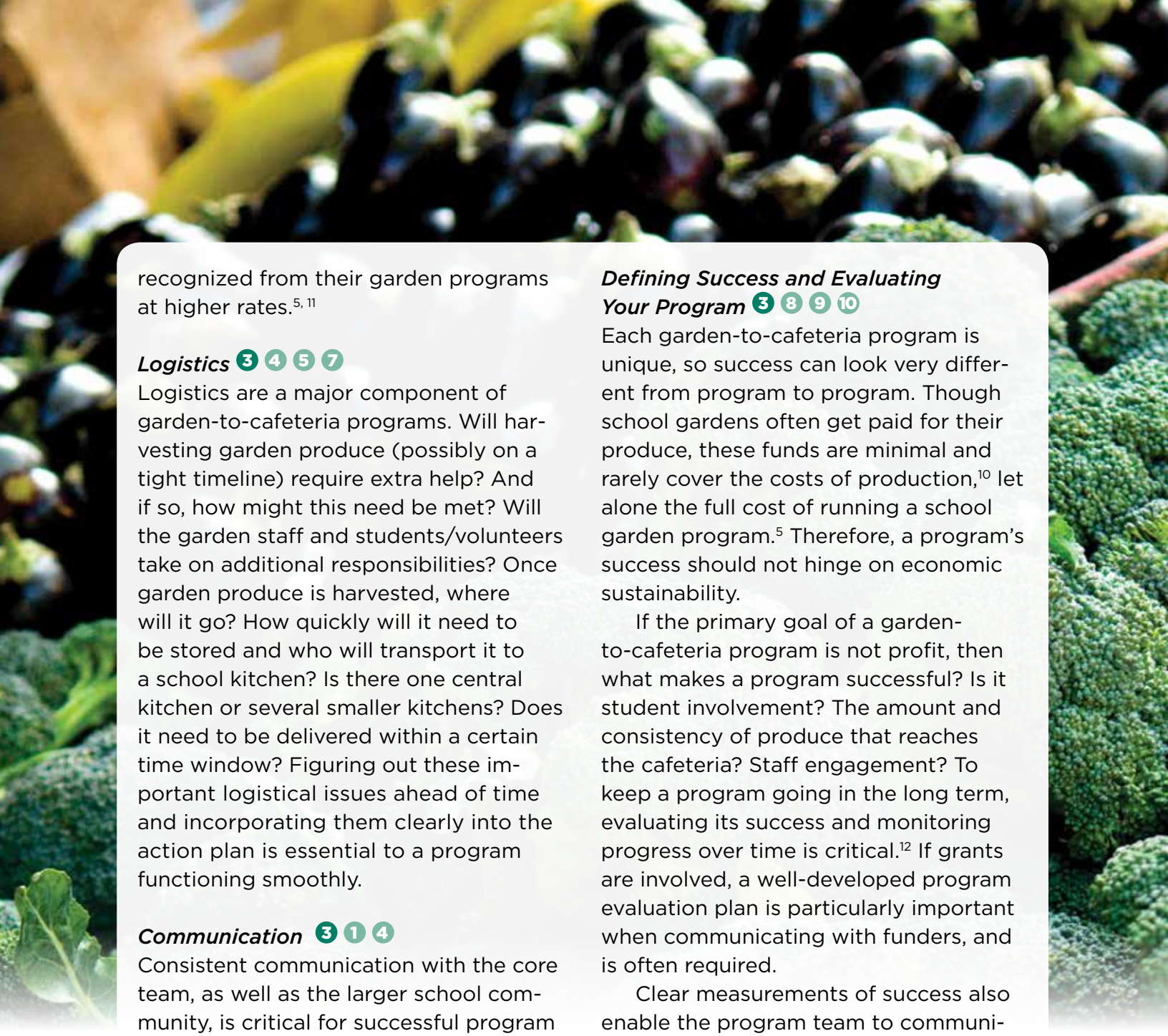
Based on the research and information gathered by the garden and food service representatives, what crops will be the best fit for the program? Are there any produce items that would be easy to work with from both the garden and food service perspectives? Starting out with the simplest solution is usually the best method. Save the more challenging projects or garden experiments for once the program is better established.

Menu Planning & Troubleshooting 3 4 7 8

The garden-to-cafeteria menu determines how and when selected produce items will be served in the cafeteria. Given the size of your student body and structure of school meals, how might your kitchen incorporate garden produce into its menu planning? Garden items typically yield a small amount of a single product for a short period of time, but there are still many possibilities. Garden produce can be offered in a salad bar with minimal preparation or incorporated into a school lunch recipe.[12] Depending on the program, it can be offered once a week, every month, or once a year. What interval would be best for your program? Garden items can also be incorporated into a special meal or event that provides an additional opportunity to highlight how an item was grown and harvested right in the school garden.

It is also important to consider the timeline for menu planning in relation to the maturation time required for the crops.[10] How far in advance are the menus decided? And when should crops be planted if they need to be ready at a certain time? Leaving as much flexibility around the garden items as possible is highly recommended, as things do not always grow as planned.[5]

There is also the question of what to do when unanticipated problems arise. What if a produce item does not come in as expected? It is always important to have a backup plan in place that provides direction to team members as to how they might remedy the situation. Produce from a garden is inconsistent and often involves surprises. Even if a crop is ready on time, the yield may not be what was expected. Therefore, it is always important to have a supplemental source on hand, especially if the item is required for a recipe. If a supplemental or backup item does need to be used, it should not detract from the program's success. Leaders of existing programs have noted that even when actual garden items were unavailable, students still consumed the fruits and vegetables they



recognized from their garden programs at higher rates.[5, 11]

Logistics 3 4 5 7

Logistics are a major component of garden-to-cafeteria programs. Will harvesting garden produce (possibly on a tight timeline) require extra help? And if so, how might this need be met? Will the garden staff and students/volunteers take on additional responsibilities? Once garden produce is harvested, where will it go? How quickly will it need to be stored and who will transport it to a school kitchen? Is there one central kitchen or several smaller kitchens? Does it need to be delivered within a certain time window? Figuring out these important logistical issues ahead of time and incorporating them clearly into the action plan is essential to a program functioning smoothly.

Communication 3 1 4

Consistent communication with the core team, as well as the larger school community, is critical for successful program implementation and maintaining ongoing support. Once the program is up and running, what are the expectations around communication for the various team members? How often will the group check in about the program's status and next steps? If something goes wrong, who needs to be contacted about the issue? And finally, what is the strategy for sharing information about the program more broadly, both within the school and the wider community?

Defining Success and Evaluating Your Program 3 8 9 10

Each garden-to-cafeteria program is unique, so success can look very different from program to program. Though school gardens often get paid for their produce, these funds are minimal and rarely cover the costs of production,[10] let alone the full cost of running a school garden program.[5] Therefore, a program's success should not hinge on economic sustainability.

If the primary goal of a garden-to-cafeteria program is not profit, then what makes a program successful? Is it student involvement? The amount and consistency of produce that reaches the cafeteria? Staff engagement? To keep a program going in the long term, evaluating its success and monitoring progress over time is critical.[12] If grants are involved, a well-developed program evaluation plan is particularly important when communicating with funders, and is often required.

Clear measurements of success also enable the program team to communicate their achievements to the wider school community. Additionally, these guidelines give team members a straightforward understanding of their own performance, i.e., what is going well and what aspects of the program can be improved. In your program action plan, be sure to include clear evaluation indicators and a plan to monitor your program's success over time.

LESSONS FROM PASADENA UNIFIED: PROGRAM PLANNING

PUSD's team decided to coordinate their seven production gardens to grow and harvest one item per month that would be purchased collectively by PUSD's food service department as a "micro-purchase." In the 2016–17 school year, PUSD's food service purchased a produce item from the production gardens each month as a part of the District's "CA Thursdays" program (in which all food served on a given Thursday is produced in CA). The items were either offered in the salad bars or incorporated into recipes. At PUSD, success was measured by the holistic completion of all parts of garden-to-cafeteria: educating students in the garden, using approved food safety practices to bring school garden produce to the cafeteria, and having students taste and appreciate the food that they or their classmates grew.

HELPFUL GARDEN-TO-CAFETERIA RESOURCES & TOOLS

3 PROGRAM PLANNING

1. **Garden to Cafeteria: a Step-by-Step Guide**
   Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems (2014)
   (see sections on "Plan What to Grow in the Garden" and "Develop an Agreement")
   http://foodsystems.msu.edu/resources/garden_to_cafeteria
2. **Planning Annual Vegetable Crops**
   Life Lab (2012)
   www.lifelab.org
3. **How Much Water Does My Food Garden Need?**
   University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources (2014)
   http://ucanr.edu/sites/scmg/files/185639.pdf
4. **Garden to Cafeteria Program Manual**
   Slow Food Denver (2017)
   (see section on "Meeting with the Food Service Director")
   www.slowfoodusa.org/garden-to-cafeteria
5. **Safe Salad Bars in Schools: A Guide for School Food Service**
   Washington State Department of Agriculture, Washington State Department of Health, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Washington State University School of Food Science (2014)
   www.wafarmtoschool.org
6. **Training Template: Culinary Skills for Local Foods**
   National Farm to School Network (2014)
   www.farmtoschool.org/Resources
7. **Procuring Local Foods for Child Nutrition Programs**
   USDA Food and Nutrition Service (2015)
   www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/procuring-local-foods
8. **The USDA Farm to School Planning Toolkit**
   USDA Food and Nutrition Service (2017)
   (see sections on "School Gardening," "Establishing a Vision and Goals," "Buying Local Foods," "Menu Planning," and "Evaluating Your Efforts")
   www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool
9. **Evaluation for Transformation: A Cross-Sectoral Evaluation Framework for Farm to School**
   National Farm to School Network (2014)
   www.farmtoschool.org/Resources
10. **The Benefits of Farm to School**
    National Farm to School Network (2016)
    www.farmtoschool.org/Resources

STEP 4: IMPLEMENTATION

4 1 2 3

Once the program action plan is in place, your garden-to-cafeteria program is ready to begin, and all of the team members can start working on their respective tasks. The garden staff coordinate with students to plant, tend, and harvest the selected crops. The food service staff prepare to handle the garden produce and advertise the program to students. And the coordinator continues to facilitate conversations and build awareness about the program. The most rewarding part of a garden-to-cafeteria program is when all of the hard work pays off and the first garden item is served in the cafeteria and enjoyed by students.

TROUBLESHOOTING

Garden production rarely goes exactly as planned, so maintaining flexibility around timing and product availability is an important strategy for dealing with this uncertainty. Food services should make sure to have a backup plan just in case a specific garden item fails to come through, and ensure that staff are prepared to accommodate a relatively large volume all at once if a crop is abundant.

ONGOING COMMUNICATION

Even if your program is running smoothly, regular communication and check-in meetings are still a good idea. This ongoing dialogue gives the group an opportunity to monitor progress, problem solve collaboratively, plan for next steps, and share work with other members of the school community.

EVALUATION & PROGRAM MONITORING

The group meetings described above can also be a time to formally track and document any measures of success established in your evaluation plan. Staying on top of documentation and program monitoring protocols will make the overall evaluation process much easier.

LESSONS FROM PASADENA UNIFIED: IMPLEMENTATION

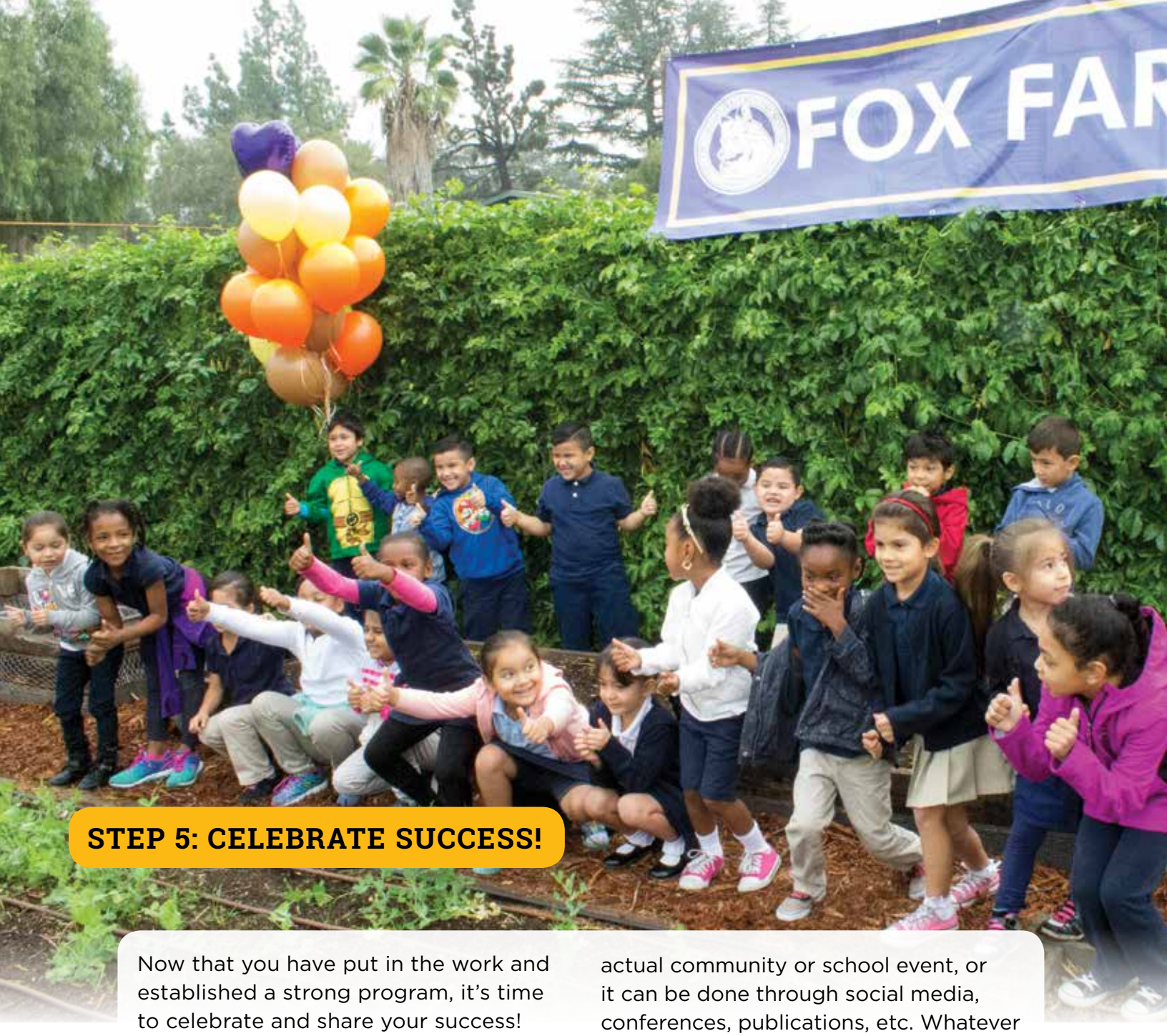
After launching their program in the 2016–17 school year, PUSD's primary takeaways and lessons learned had to do with the importance of preparation, communication, and flexibility. Staff agreed that the most significant factor in a successful garden-to-cafeteria program is buy-in from and communication between all departments involved. Key staff communicated regularly throughout the pilot and also convened bimonthly Farm to School meetings with the greater community.

PUSD staff reported that flexibility and the ability to troubleshoot was essential to their success, as produce items were not always available on precise dates. Additionally, some crops thrived beyond expectations while others did poorly. In all cases, food service staff had to improvise and adjust, and sometimes use backup sources. One month, this improvisation resulted in a "pumpkin-peach crisp" due to the unexpected availability of 400 lbs. of pumpkins. Though the cafeteria staff had to change plans on short notice, it was the students' favorite garden-to-cafeteria dish all year!

HELPFUL GARDEN-TO-CAFETERIA RESOURCES & TOOLS

4 IMPLEMENTATION

1. **Garden to Cafeteria: a Step-by-Step Guide**
   Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems (2014)
   (see sections on "Harvest and Sales Logs" and "Link to Garden Produce")
   http://foodsystems.msu.edu/resources/garden_to_cafeteria
2. **Garden to Cafeteria Program Manual**
   Slow Food Denver (2017)
   www.slowfoodusa.org/garden-to-cafeteria
3. **PUSD: Farm to School Safety Protocol Manual**
   Pasadena Unified School District (2016)
   www.pusd.us/domain/2002



STEP 5: CELEBRATE SUCCESS!

Now that you have put in the work and established a strong program, it's time to celebrate and share your success! Events and other promotional efforts will keep your community engaged, and sharing accomplishments with donors and foundations can lead to funding opportunities that will sustain and grow your program into the future.[11]

PROMOTE YOUR PROGRAM

5 1 2 3 4

Promoting your program's achievements can be done in a variety of ways. This "celebration" can take the form of an actual community or school event, or it can be done through social media, conferences, publications, etc. Whatever the means, make sure to highlight your accomplishments so that your school community is aware of the program and others can be inspired and learn from your work. While promotion efforts are strategic in terms of engaging funders and cultivating buy-in, don't forget that they are also an opportunity to celebrate everyone's work and have fun!

LESSONS FROM PASADENA UNIFIED: CELEBRATING SUCCESS

PUSD builds enthusiasm for their garden-to-cafeteria program each month by featuring garden items prominently in their "CA Thursdays" meals. The district's garden safety protocol manual is available on their website and PUSD staff regularly attend local events and conferences to discuss and promote their work. Additionally, PUSD's program is featured on the Los Angeles Farm to School Network website as a "model program" in the region. Operating and promoting a strong program has made PUSD the recipient of multiple Farm to School awards and honors, and helped to secure funding for the district's master gardener position. You can see some of the promotional tools that PUSD has used below. 5 5 6 7

HELPFUL GARDEN-TO-CAFETERIA RESOURCES & TOOLS

5 CELEBRATE SUCCESS!

1. **The USDA Farm to School Planning Toolkit**
   USDA Food and Nutrition Service (2017)
   (see section on "Promoting Your Program")
   www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool
2. **School Garden Guide**
   Slow Food USA (2013)
   (see chapter on "Marketing")
   www.slowfoodusa.org/files/files/slow-food-usa-school-garden-manual.pdf
3. **Getting Started: A Guide for Creating School Gardens as Outdoor Classrooms**
   Life Lab and Center for Ecoliteracy (2017)
   (see section on "Keeping Your Garden in the Public Eye")
   www.lifelab.org
4. **Celebrate Farm to School Month**
   National Farm to School Network (2017)
   www.farmtoschool.org/Resources
5. **California Thursdays**
   Center for Ecoliteracy (2016)
   www.californiathursdays.org/
6. **Los Angeles Farm to School Network Website**
   Urban & Environmental Policy Institute at Occidental College (2017)
   (see program map and section on "Model Programs")
   www.lafarmtoschool.org
7. **PUSD Farm to School Webpage**
   Pasadena Unified School District (2017)
   www.pusd.us/farmtoschool

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2. Morris JL, Zidenberg-Cherr S. Garden-Enhanced Nutrition Curriculum Improves Fourth-Grade School Children's Knowledge of Nutrition Preferences for Some Vegetables. J Am Diet Assoc. 2002;102(1):91–93.

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6. Slow Food USA. Garden to Cafeteria Toolkit. 2017. Available at www.slowfoodusa.org/garden-to-cafeteria

7. Life Lab and Center for Ecoliteracy. Getting Started: A Guide for Creating School Gardens as Outdoor Classrooms. 2017. Available at www.lifelab.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/GettingStarted.pdf

8. Slow Food Denver. Garden to Cafeteria Program Manual. 2017. Available at www.slowfoodusa.org/contents/sdownload/2878/file/Garden-to-Cafeteria-Program-Manual-Slow-Food-Denver.pdf

9. USDA and National Food Service Management Institute. Food Safety Tips for School Gardens. 2015. Available at http://nfsmi.org/documentlibraryfiles/PDF/20110822025700.pdf

10. Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems. Garden to Cafeteria: A Step-by-Step Guide. 2014. Available at http://foodsystems.msu.edu/resources/garden_to_cafeteria

11. Slow Food USA. Slow Food USA's School Garden Guide. 2013. Available at www.slowfoodusa.org/files/files/slow-food-usa-school-garden-manual.pdf

12. USDA Food and Nutrition Service. The USDA Farm to School Planning Toolkit. 2016. Available at https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/f2s/F2S-Planning-Kit.pdf

13. KidsGardening. Gathering Support. 2016. Available at https://kidsgardening.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/KG_CSprogram-gatheringsupport.pdf

14. Life Lab. Sustaining School Gardens—Funding School Garden Coordinators. 2012. Available at www.lifelab.org/2012/12/funding-garden-coordinators/

15. Pasadena Unified School District. PUSD: Farm to School Safety Protocol Manual. 2016. Available at www.pusd.us/domain/2002

16. USDA Food and Nutrition Service. Procuring Local Foods for Child Nutrition Programs. 2015. Available at www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/procuring-local-foods

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