

Farm to Summer Rainbow Garden Implementation Guide



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Introduction

This summer season presents an exciting opportunity for Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) sponsors to venture into the world of Farm to School and Early Childhood Education (ECE). Taking part in this initiative will add or create an educational component to the program. What better way to do this than to add a little more color to everyone's week with a rainbow themed garden?

To celebrate the different colors of the rainbow, promote locally grown produce such as radishes, carrots, yellow summer squash, cucumbers, blue flowers indigenous to Indiana, and purple basil. This guide contains helpful tips on how to execute your rainbow garden! Choose the way you want to participate, you do not have to do them all!

For SFSP sponsors who plan to apply for the Turnip the Beet award, this will be a great addition to your application!



Support Network

The Indiana Grown for Schools Network was established to support the Farm to School and Early Childcare Education (ECE) efforts in Indiana. In signing up for this farm to summer initiative, utilize the following resources, as needed. Please visit the [Indiana Grown for Schools](#) website and learn what resources are there. There are [toolkits](#) for the different pillars of Farm to School, [Harvest of the Month](#) resources, lesson plans, [webinars](#), and more.

The network is eager to support all participating agencies. Please don't hesitate to contact our Farm to School Coordinators to schedule a technical assistance call or site visit.



Ways to Participate

Grow the Rainbow

There are a variety of ways to grow your rainbow garden; growing in an in-ground, a raised bed, or by using a container! All of these options are great ways to utilize the seeds that will be given.

Locally Procure the Rainbow

There are several ways to procure locally. You can work with your broadline distributor to learn more about their local options, contact a local food hub or food cooperative to share your needs, or purchase products directly from a farmer or grower.

Teach the Rainbow

There are several educational resources to support student engagement from the selected products. Teaching kids about food and nutrition, and connecting food to how it is grown can increase the amount of fruits and veggies kids eat. In this guide you will find some great educational resources that can be used to help your students better understand their food.



Implementation of Initiative

Building a team

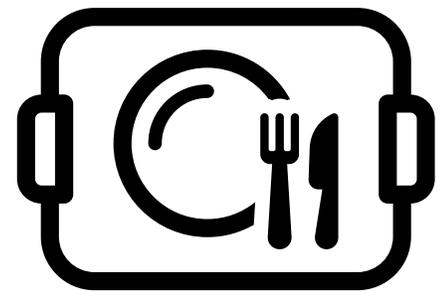


It is helpful to gather team members so you will have ample support throughout the summer. Work with the members of your agency's staff or volunteers to determine how you can best incorporate summer growing and education into the summer program. Reach out to your Purdue Extension team to see if they would be able to assist in finding volunteers. Also, your community might have a gardening group that could be contacted for additional support.

How to Promote and Feature Produce

Showcase the garden produce on the serving line! This can sometimes be a challenge due to the quantity and timing of when products are harvested during the summer meals program. However, this can be a fun way to draw everything together for kids. One suggestion is to have harvested items be an additional menu line item. This will allow for flexibility if something does not go as planned. In addition, the produce could be featured as a taste test item, which will make the products extend longer. Don't be afraid to mix school garden produce and produce from your broadline distributor. Even a small amount of the products being served helps the kids to see the connection between where their food comes from and the plate!

If procuring local products or highlighting the produce from a mainline vendor, feature one per week throughout the summer or present everything in one week. Some sites may plan a fun themed day such as, "Farmer Friday" to promote carrots or "Pizza Day" to serve their basil.



Grow the Rainbow

Supply List

Seeds will be provided for each type of produce featured in the rainbow garden. In order to grow, sponsors will need to gather some additional items listed below. For a more in-depth list, you can visit the [Grow to Learn Guide](#), that includes a comprehensive list of equipment.

For both outdoor and indoor gardens sponsors will need to make sure they have a hose or other way to transport **water**. In addition, a **shovel** or similar yard tool may be needed to plant into the ground or pot.

- Indoor or Container Garden
 - Pot
 - Soil
- Outdoor Garden
 - Garden Beds if utilizing raised beds
 - Soil for amending

For more information on growing gardens, please, see the school garden [toolkit](#).



Timeline

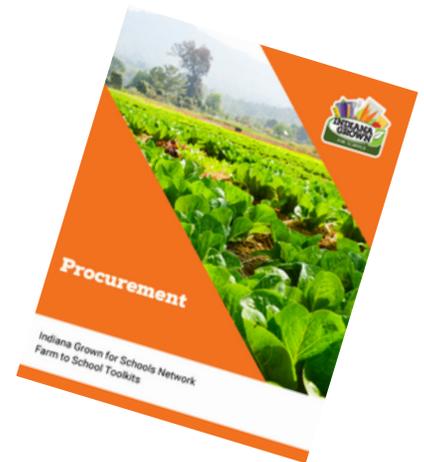
It is recommended to follow the timeline shared below. We have simplified the growing schedule, however, there could be some variations depending on the timeline of your summer program and when you have availability to plant. It is important to remember that even if students have the opportunity to plant the seeds, it is a chance for them to experience growing and learning about the foods they eat.

	May	June	Harvesting
Radish	Plant in ground	Plant in ground	Harvest ~29 days after planting
Carrot	Plant in ground	Plant in Ground	Harvest ~65 days after planting
Yellow Summer Squash	Plant in ground or start inside	Plant in Ground	Harvest ~58 days after planting
Cucumbers	Plant in ground or start inside	Plant in Ground	Harvest ~70 days after planting
Blue False Indigo	Plant in ground or start inside	Plant in-ground	Blooms Mid april - Late Fall *may not bloom fully first year
Purple Basil	Plant in ground or start inside	Plant in Ground	~80 days to full maturity



Locally Procure the Rainbow

There are many ways to procure locally. Sponsors can purchase directly from a farmer or producer, purchase from a broadline distributor, or purchase from a food hub. **Reach out to your local health department to ensure there are no local ordinances or regulations in your county.** See the attached document to learn state procurement guidelines. The Procurement Toolkit has more in-depth information on how to procure locally.



Directly from Farmer or Producer

Sponsors that want to purchase produce from a farm should check out the [buyer's guide](#) for a list of farmers that might be in their area! Contact farmers directly by using the buyer's guide or by reaching out to [Anna Holloway](#), Farm to School Value Chain Professional, who would be happy to assist in connecting sponsors to producers.

From your mainline vendor or food hub

Next, sponsors might be able to utilize a broadline distributor for local products, depending on their vendor. Sales representatives can help determine if they have any available local options. Lastly, depending on your area, there might be a food hub that products could be purchased from.

Monetary Procurement Procedures

For more information on procurement thresholds, please refer to the Department of Education's Procuring Local Foods Info Sheet, found in Appendix A.



Teach the Rainbow

Teach about veggies through nutritional education and activities.

Eating many different colors, ensures our bodies get the nutrients that they need to function. Every colorful plant has what is called a phytochemical which gives it the rich color we all see and love. These phytochemicals obtain core nutrients that help with different functions of the body. *“Eating the rainbow”* is a great way to think about and teach kids how to obtain these important nutrients.

Team Nutrition at the USDA has a great lesson called Eat Your Colors, found [here](#).

The American Institute of Cancer Research has a lesson called, Taste the Colors of the Rainbow, found [here](#).

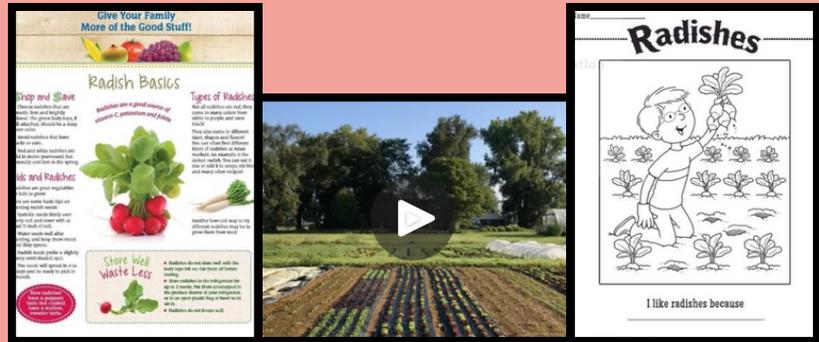
National Ag in the Classroom has a lesson for middle schoolers called, Food Master, found [here](#).

Let's Learn!

Please utilize the following links to be directed to educational resources about radishes, carrots, summer squash, cucumbers, basil and plants native to Indiana. On the Indiana Grown for Schools website, there is a [Harvest of the Month](#) database where you can access a variety of resources to support educational opportunities, school food service, and school communication.



Radish



Additional Resources

[SNAP - Ed Radish Lesson Plans](#)

Carrot

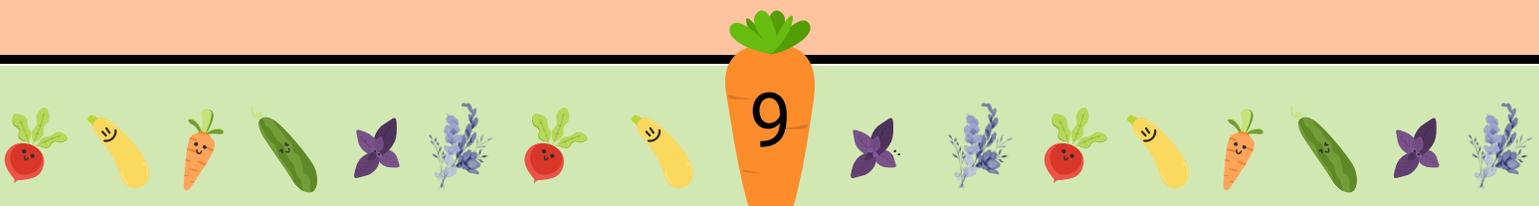


Additional Resources

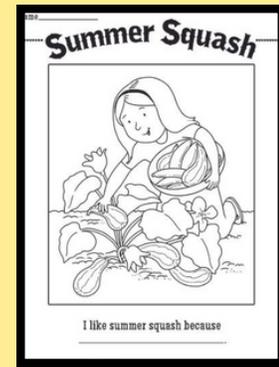
[Fun Facts Sheet about Carrots](#)

[New Hampshire Harvest of the Month Lesson Plans](#)

[Beets and Carrots Lesson Plan](#)



Yellow Squash



Additional Resources

[Curcubits Lesson Plan Oklahoma Ag in the Classroom Activities](#)

[Montana State Extension Summer Squash Fact Sheet](#)

[National Recreation and Parks Association Lesson Plan](#)

Cucumber

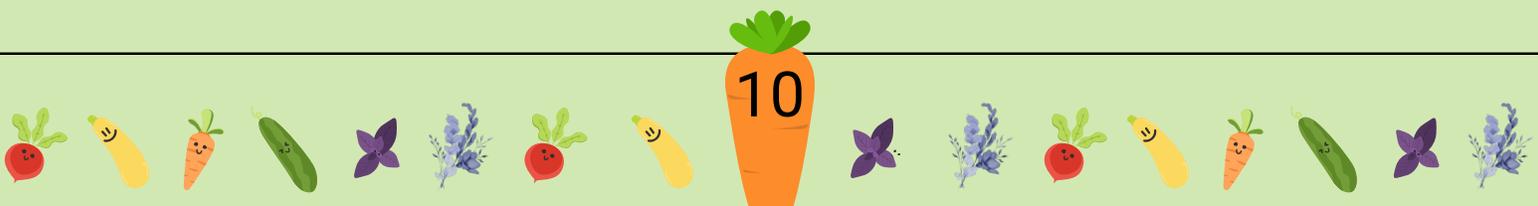


Additional Resources

[Cucumber Lesson Plan](#)

[Growing Minds Exploration Activity](#)

[SNAP-Ed Cucumbers Info Page](#)



Blue False Indigo

A flowering plant was included as they attract pollinators which makes the entire gardening process work. Attracting pollinating bees, hummingbirds, and butterflies is very important for the plant to produce its fruit. Pollinators carry pollen from one plant to another, thus initiating the flower to yield fruit.

Additional Resources

[Honey Bees: A Pollenation Simulation](#)

[Kidsgardening.org Pollenator Activity and Lesson Plans](#)

[Honey Bee Health Coalition - Classroom Pollenator Education and Resources](#)

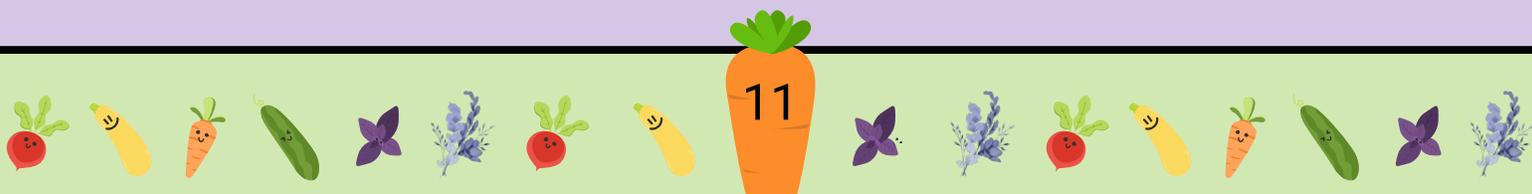
Purple Basil

Additional Resources

[Kidsgardening.org Exploring Herbs Activity](#)

[Teacher Vision, Herbs in the Classroom lesson plan](#)

[Taste of Herbs and Spices Lesson](#)





Appendix A

IDOIE Procuring Local Foods Info Sheet





Procuring Local Foods Info Sheet

Schools can procure local foods by:

1. Procuring local foods through vendors/distributors using an informal or formal bidding process.
2. Procuring local foods directly from local growers using an informal or formal bidding process.
3. If utilizing the DoD Fresh program, contact us to find out which selections are local.

Food Safety:

- **Please always reach out to your local health department to learn about any specific ordinances or regulations.**
- **State Guidelines**
 - **Un-Processed Produce**
 - If a farm falls under the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), Produce Safety Rule, they must comply with those standards.
 - [FSMA Flowchart](#)
 - [FSMA Fact Sheet](#)
 - If a farm does not fall under the FSMA, there are a few other ways you can ensure they are following safe practices, however, no other certifications are required by the state.
 - You could work with farmers/producers that are [GAP](#) certified, however, this is not required.
 - You could work with a farmer/producer that is certified with the Department of Health - [Food Protection Division](#), however, this is not required.
 - To ask questions to the Indiana State Department of Health's Food Safety Farm Consultants regarding local farms in your area, find them [here](#).
 - **Meat and Poultry**
 - Meat and Poultry are regulated by the Board of Animal Health (BOAH)



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- According to state guidelines meat and poultry, purchased in Indiana, must be purchased from a state or USDA inspected facility.
- **Diary**
 - Dairy products are regulated by the Board of Animal Health (BOAH)
 - According to state guidelines dairy products must be purchased from a state or USDA inspected facility.
- **Eggs**
 - Please reach out if you are wanting to procure local eggs to discuss the options.

Procuring Locally

- The dollar amount for purchase will determine the procurement method when buying from a vendor/distributor or directly from a grower.
- To help determine pounds for purchase, go to [IDOE's Crediting Webpage](#).

Procurement Thresholds

Informal Micro-Purchase Procurement (\$10,000 or \$50,000)

- The micro-purchasing method can be used when purchases are *\$10,000 / \$50,000 or less per vendor, per year. This method requires you to simply set a price with the producer and purchase the product. You can purchase multiple times from the same vendor in the same year under this method.
 - *Look in your procurement plan to find out what your micro-purchase threshold is

Informal Small Purchase Procurement (<\$150,000)

- The small purchase method requires three bids and a set of criteria to determine which farm to select.

Formal Procurement (more than \$150,000):

- Contact the State Agency for the process and proper steps.

For questions or concerns about local procurement, please contact Sophie Lindley, IDOE Farm to School Coordinator, at slindley@doe.in.gov.