Join the Science Math Resource Center at Montana State University this summer for the Workshop for K–8 educators about the Science of School Gardens. The workshop is being organized in collaboration with Gallatin Valley Farm to School and Farm to School of Park County.

This is a wonderful hands-on learning opportunity for teachers on the basics of planning, planting and maintaining school gardens, greenhouses and aquaponics systems; teaching science, math and ELA lessons using school gardens; and on incorporating basic garden-based nutrition education into your classroom. Both days will include demonstration lessons and activities so be prepared to get your hands dirty! Participants will receive 12 OPI credits.

Register online:
www.montana.edu/ehhd/smrc/
Presenters:

Erin Jackson
Erin Jackson has worked in Farm to School education programs for eight years, including two years as a FoodCorps Service Member at Bozeman’s Hyalite Elementary School and four years in her current position as Education Director with Gallatin Valley Farm to School. She teaches garden- and food-based science and nutrition lessons year round to K-5th grade students, including five weeks of summer camps at Bozeman school gardens. In addition, she provides training and guidance in farm to school education programming to educators, college interns and schools across the Gallatin Valley. She has an M.Ed from MSU and a 5th-12th grade general science and biology teaching certification.

Rachael Jones
Rachael Jones is the founding Executive Director of Farm to School of Park County and has been growing food for over 12 years in Park County. In 2015, her impact on Livingston's local food system expanded through her role as Livingston Public Schools' Farmer Educator. She has developed a myriad of educational opportunities for K-12 students in the Livingston School District utilizing in-ground school gardens, aquaponics systems, greenhouses, and vertical gardens. She holds a B.S. in Plant Sciences and Plant Pathology from MSU, though her career began unofficially in her Grandmother Ethel’s garden.

Overview:
Farm to school is taking root across Montana and nationwide. Farm to school programs incorporate school gardens, local food purchasing, and/or food, nutrition, and agriculture education to connect children with fresh, healthy food. School gardens are living laboratories that help bring to life science, math, language arts and nutrition concepts through multi-sensory experiences.

The first day of the workshop will focus on developing and maintaining school gardens, gardening basics including soil structure and health, and garden-based science and nutrition lessons that can enrich learning for students in grades K-8 while cultivating curiosity, adventurous eaters and healthy eating habits. Participants will explore MSU’s Plant Growth Center, Gallatin Valley Farm to School’s Bozone Ozone Bus mobile greenhouse, and the Irving Elementary School Garden and Orchard.

The second day of the workshop takes place in Livingston. Participants will have an opportunity to tour and explore two functioning school greenhouses where food is grown by students for Livingston Public Schools’ meal program. Participants will learn the basics of greenhouse management and aquaponics systems; and how they may be used to reinforce NGSS. Participants will also experience F2SPC’s greenhouse to cafeteria process in order to prepare and deliver a fresh Harvest of the Month cafeteria taste test. The day in Livingston will conclude with in-ground garden lessons at Winans Elementary.

Objectives:
Participants will:
- Identify at least one garden or nutrition-based activity they will conduct in their classrooms, whether or not they have a school garden.
- Explore successful schools gardens in Montana of various types, including raised beds, greenhouses and aquaponics systems.
- Identify the components of healthy compost and soil and how to maintain these systems in the school garden setting.
- Describe at least three considerations for keeping a successful school garden and greenhouse growing.
- Identify one garden “mentor” in the class or in their community to contact with after the conference to enhance their garden based lessons.
- Learn the Montana Harvest of the Month & farm to school basics – how it works, expectations, why it is important, how to implement & available lessons and resources.
- Participate in and learn how to conduct taste tests of Harvest of the Month items.
- Learn how to reinforce NGSS using school garden and local foods.

For more information contact:
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