**SNAP-Ed Garden Partnership Guidelines -2024**

Funding available for FY2024:

In FY2024, each garden project can request funding ranging from $300-$500, with 4-6 grants to be awarded based on the number of applications received. After reading the guidelines below, use the proposal form to submit your project idea.

Overview

“SNAP-Ed field staff can play an instrumental role in community food gardening for the low-income population” (SNAP-Ed Guidance).

Staff can partner with garden groups to conduct policy, systems, and environment (PSE) work related to gardens and can incorporate direct education using garden produce in any adult or youth curriculum with income-eligible participants. **Please see below for some guidelines on what is allowable related to time and purchasing, and some ideas of what might work in your community.**

What can field staff do?

SNAP-Ed staff can partner with their agent, another community partner or group, or school to establish, reinvigorate, or enhance community and school gardens. Garden teams will work towards policy, system, or environmental changes in their community for **SNAP** **eligible low-income** populations. Nutrition education (direct or indirect) is required to be integrated in garden projects, and it is preferred to include both direct and indirect nutrition education. Efforts to include both PSE work and education constitute a multi-level intervention in which access to the garden or its produce reinforces the nutrition knowledge and skills gained from classes.

If you plan to add a summer garden PSE project goal, first ensure your project has a reportable outcome that aligns with SNAP-Ed program guidelines and that a plan for maintaining the garden throughout the growing season is in place. PSE project contributions by SNAP-Ed are typically in the form of staff time spent assisting with planning the project. Some examples of reportable PSE changes that may come from working with a partner on a garden project include:

* Edible gardens (establish, reinvigorate, enhance food gardens)
* Initiated or expanded a mechanism for distributing onsite garden produce to communities
* Initiated or expanded farm-to-table/use of fresh or local produce
* Initiated or expanded use of onsite garden produce for meals/snacks provided onsite
* Initiated or expanded use of the garden for nutrition education
* Initiated, improved or expanded opportunities for parents/students/community to access fruits and vegetables from the garden
* Initiated, improved or expanded opportunities for parents/students/community to work in the garden

By assisting an agent or other community partner who manages a community garden in a low-income area such as public housing sites, eligible schools, and qualifying community sites, educators can be a part of a group effort to create some of the PSE changes above, and may also be able to offer direct education classes, incorporate garden produce tastings, or do recruitment demonstrations with donated garden produce (if available).

Please keep in mind, the eligibility guidelines for SNAP-Ed are still in place for this project and the overall goal of SNAP-Ed work remains the same: *To improve the likelihood that persons eligible for SNAP will make healthy food choices within a limited budget and choose physically active lifestyles consisted with the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the USDA food guidance.*

In addition to the reportable outcomes above, what else needs to be tracked and reported?

All projects funded or not will be asked to report on their success by sharing stories and information about the impact of the project at the end of the grant year. Reports will be due by September 30. Reports may include photos and videos from the project, in addition to other metrics such as:

* list of partners involved in the garden project, and the respective role of each (Partnerships can be entered directly into PEARS, and noted on the Mid-Year Narrative)
* List each location that received produce (These sites can be entered directly into the PEARS Partnership module, and noted on the Mid-Year Narrative)
* Total pounds of produce donated (if tracking is possible)
* A list of direct or indirect education provided, and how many individuals were reached through each class/series/or handout
* # of participants reached/served at sites receiving produce (unduplicated, estimated count such as number of individuals who have access to use/receive the produce)

Contact the state office to identify other applicable metrics.

* **If funding is requested**: Please use the proposal for participation form to propose a partnership that involves a request for funding. Track garden activities on your Monthly Contact Summary, PEARS Partnerships, and Mid-Year Narrative. Your garden PSE goal should be listed on your annual goals form. Contact the Assistant Director to modify your PSE goals at any time throughout the year.
* **If funding is NOT requested**: Track garden activities on your Monthly Contact Summary, PEARS Partnerships, and Mid-Year Narrative. Your garden PSE goal should be listed on your annual goals form. Contact the Assistant Director to modify your PSE goals at any time throughout the year.

What costs are not allowed?

* Staff time for efforts related to maintaining (weeding, watering, etc.) a community garden unless it is a community/group event where you may have nutrition education or recruiting opportunities.
* Staff time writing grants on behalf of partner organizations, though input on community grants can be provided as technical assistance.
* Cost of purchase or rental of garden equipment (tractors, etc.), plots of land, large gardening tools, irrigation systems, etc.
* The purchase of non-edible plants and items used for non-edible pollinator gardens are not allowable.
* Cost of seeds, plants, etc. for the personal garden plots of individuals. Individuals can use SNAP benefits to purchase these items for personal use.

What costs are allowed?

* Staff time working with a garden group to help plan, coordinate, and provide information to others on how to plant a community or school garden at an eligible site.
* Staff time spent encouraging or promoting eligible populations to engage with community or school gardening.
* Staff time incorporating the preparation of garden produce into direct education classes, demonstrations with donated produce, or providing indirect education.
* It is highly encouraged to work with community partners and other groups to leverage resources such as donations of equipment, infrastructure cost, plant starters, and time maintaining the garden etc.
* Supplies for approved garden partnerships. See list of allowable supplies in the chart below.

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| **Allowable items for purchased** | **Description of Items** |
| Seeds/Seedling Plants | Various types of vegetables and edible flowers |
| Supplies for starting seeds/plants | Starter trays, plastic pots, potting soil |
| Garden Soil and compost | Soil, fertilizer, compost and soil amendment |
| Small Garden Tools | Shovel, hoe and hand trowel |
| Food safety supplies | Soap, sanitizer and gloves |
| Educational Supplies | Educational materials |
| Printing materials for education | Poster, paper |
| Row coverings, garden fabric, shade cloth | Fabric, plastic covers including hoops, row covers, fabric for plant protection |
| Hoses supply repair | Hoses and sprinklers |
| Raise bed materials and building and maintaining raise beds | Hardware and lumber items used for raised beds consisting of lumber, bricks, fasteners and panels |

Additional resources:

1. [Yard and Garden](https://store.msuextension.org/Departments/MontGuides-by-Category/AG/Yard-and-Garden.aspx) Publications (MSU Extension)

2. [School Gardening](https://www.fns.usda.gov/cfs/farm-school-resources#School%20Gardening) (USDA)

3. [Gardening](https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/nutrition-education/nutrition-education-materials/gardening) (SNAP-Ed)

4. [FNSE Garden Plan](https://fs3.formsite.com/nicole4/form33/index.html) and [Checklist](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PRVnoZ5FMwC0gJJKpFLcgNvStgjAXzQP/view) (University of Maryland Extension)

5. [Garden Implementation](https://uccalfresh.ucdavis.edu/initiatives/gardening) (UC CalFresh Nutrition Education)

6. [School Garden Resources](https://www.wholekidsfoundation.org/school-gardens) (Whole Kids Foundation)

7. [Gardening Resources](https://www.schoolgardenproject.org/resources/) (School Garden Project of Lane County) – specifically “Increasing Inclusion in the School Garden” and “Growing Success With School Gardens”