

SCHOOL GARDEN FOOD SAFETY QUESTIONNAIRE

Minneapolis Public Schools Garden to Cafeteria Program

The following are a series of questions to help you think through Food Safety in your School Garden.

About the Garden

- What is the goal or mission of your school garden?
- How big is your school garden? Generally, what do you grow?
- Who is involved in the garden? Who prepares the garden, waters, tends to the garden, and harvests? Who visits or learns in the garden?

Training

- How do you notify garden helpers and visitors about good handwashing and food safety?
- How do you “train” harvesters about good handwashing practices and food safety? Do you write down your training agenda/topics?
- Do people know that they can’t harvest if they’ve been sick 48-hours prior? Do you give helpers who’ve been sick other jobs or tasks in the garden?

Handwashing & Sanitation

- Where can you wash hands in or near the garden? Is this convenient enough to do so every time you harvest or touch something unsanitary?
- Is there a sign about handwashing?
- What is your process for if there’s blood or another contaminant in the garden? Do you have a plan for cleaning it up?

Chemicals & Compost

- Do you spray the garden with anything? Do you follow proper instructions for safety? Are these stored safely? *No chemicals allowed!*
- Do you use compost? Do you make your own compost? Are you turning the compost frequently? Do you keep compost away from garden (to minimize pests?) *No animal manure allowed!*

Water & Soil

- How do you water your garden?
- Do you use water that’s been tested?
- Do you use any surface water? If so, how do you make sure it’s safe and clean? *Surface water includes rain barrels!*

Pests, Pets & Wildlife

- Are pets kept out of the garden?
- Do you have fencing or other barriers/ways to keep out wildlife?
- Does someone inspect the garden for signs of wildlife before harvest?
- Do harvesters know when not to harvest something due to signs of pests or wildlife?

Harvesting & Record Keeping

- Are harvest knives and shears kept somewhere safe and clean?
- Are they washed regularly?
- Are harvest bins kept in a clean and safe area?
- Are they washed, rinsed and sanitized regularly?
- Do harvesters know to wash their hands?
- How will you make sure harvest totes are kept off ground?
- Are wash and harvest procedures clearly spelled out?
- How do you keep track of what is harvested, who harvested, how much, and on what day?
- Who is in charge of record keeping?

