

**Utah State University  
Extension Grants Program 2017  
School Gardens: Here We Grow  
Final Report**

School Gardens: Here We Grow K–5 Professional Development for Utah Teachers

Discipline: 4H and Youth

Principal Investigator: Denise Stewardson (A00344667)

Co-principal Investigator: Lynn Wallin (A00406077)

Beginning Date & Project Duration: April 1, 2017 – December 31, 2017

Amount Requested: \$20,160

**Summary:**

This project supported Utah Agriculture in the Classroom’s efforts in developing and delivering three school garden inservice workshops to K-5 Utah teachers in Utah, Weber, and Cache counties. Participants received science-based lesson plans, technical information, and funding for implementing school gardens appropriate for students and available spaces.

**Project Results:**

*Increased collaboration between on- and off-campus faculty*

This project was an excellent vehicle to strengthen partnerships between USU Extension—faculty, specialists, county agents—Utah Farm Bureau volunteers, and Utah Agriculture in the Classroom (AITC). AITC education specialists created the teacher instructional resources and delivered the workshops. USU Extension horticultural specialists were invited to present their areas of expertise to teachers and offer additional Extension resources for preparing and maintaining school gardens. Farm Bureau volunteers provided lunches for the workshop participants and offered their resources for guest speakers and field trips to enhance classroom instruction.

*Outcomes, outputs, impacts*

Three school gardening workshops were conducted—one each in Utah, Weber, and Cache counties. Ninety teachers attended, consequently impacting approximately 2,7000 K-5 students. Utah AITC offered all of its school garden-related lesson plans and activities on its website at [www.utah.agclassroom.org](http://www.utah.agclassroom.org). This is a searchable site in which teachers can find grade- and subject-appropriate resources by simply using a keyword in the search box. All of the lessons developed for the workshops supported by this grant are available—free of charge—on the AITC website. Additionally, the agenda containing all resource links is posted on a workshop page for easy access by teachers—both those attending the workshop and anyone searching the Utah AITC website: [http://utah.agclassroom.org/workshops/37here\\_utah.cfm](http://utah.agclassroom.org/workshops/37here_utah.cfm). A school garden website—created and maintained by Utah AITC—is also available for teacher access. This website includes all resources and information created for this project:

<http://utah.agclassroom.org/garden/index.cfm>.

It is anticipated that the resources and materials provided in the workshops will increase agricultural literacy and facilitate science, social studies, language arts, arts, math, and nutrition integration into K-5 curriculum. Specifically, the anticipated student outcomes are identified in the National Agricultural Literacy Logic Model and the National Agricultural Literacy Outcomes. Students will understand the relationships among agriculture, the environment, plants and animals for food, fiber, energy, health, society, and economics; and understand the importance and value of agriculture in their daily lives. Teachers will understand and integrate student outcomes into academic subjects, and career and technical education. The approach of delivering these school garden workshops across the state provide opportunity for teachers to improve the quality of food, agricultural, natural resource, and human (FANH) sciences education, as identified by USDA-NIFA. Additionally, the use of school gardens often levels the playing field in offering equal opportunity for all students to develop a sense of community, induce feelings of belonging, increase social connection, and encourage environmental stewardship.

*Efforts/plans to produce, publish, and disseminate scholarly materials*

The program outputs, outcomes, and final data collected on this school gardens project were shared at the 2017 National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference by Utah AITC's director. Thirty educators attended this specific gardening workshop. This model is also appropriate to share in professional Extension publications and other appropriate Extension-related forums. Denise Stewardson, PI, is working with Extension faculty participating as workshop speakers to publish this project's impacts in the *Journal of the National Association of County Agricultural Agents*.

Additionally, all teacher workshop participants are invited to enroll in the AITC online professional development course (offered with both USU and USBE credit). Details of the course and information can be found at [Food, Land & People Online Course](#) (web link under construction as of 12/20/16; anticipated availability by 8/01/17).

*Efforts/plans to secure extramural funds*

Funding to support future inservice workshops will be pursued via the Fire-up Grants from National Agriculture in the Classroom Organization. The Utah Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom and the ongoing legislative appropriation also provide funding through annual budgets for these types of professional development offerings. The Utah Farm Bureau has offered to provide meals for teachers attending future workshops, as they have done in the past for many AITC workshops. This partnership is very much appreciated by the Utah AITC team and the teacher participants.

**Sharing Results and Lessons Learned within the USU Extension System:**

Denise Stewardson, PI, has requested a presentation time slot and exhibit table for the 2018 Extension Annual Conference. Additionally, all workshop agendas are posted to the Utah Agriculture in the Classroom website:

- Utah County: [http://utah.agclassroom.org/workshops/37here\\_utah.cfm](http://utah.agclassroom.org/workshops/37here_utah.cfm)
- Weber County: [http://utah.agclassroom.org/workshops/38here\\_weber.cfm](http://utah.agclassroom.org/workshops/38here_weber.cfm)
- Cache County: [http://utah.agclassroom.org/workshops/39here\\_cache.cfm](http://utah.agclassroom.org/workshops/39here_cache.cfm)

A permanent “Garden Center” was created to provide educators, Extension personnel, volunteers—anyone interested in school gardening—with resources covering all aspects of school gardens from funding opportunities to art in the garden. This center is available on the Utah Agriculture in the Classroom website at <http://utah.agclassroom.org/garden/index.cfm>. This online resource is shared at each of Utah AITC’s inservice and preservice workshops, and state, regional, and national presentations, as appropriate.