



Office of the State Superintendent of Education

School Garden and Farm to School Program

Garden Safety Checklist

	Item #	ITEMS	YES	NO	N/A
Site Selection	1	Obtain historical information of the planned/ existing garden site and test the soil for toxins such as arsenic and lead.			
	2	Site garden away from hazards such as garbage, water run-off, flood zones and utilities.			
	3	Contact “Miss Utility” (1-800-257-7777) before digging in the soil.			
Soil & Compost	4	Compost bins are well maintained and prevent pests.			
	5	Compost collection station is staffed and monitored by an adult or a trained student.			
	6	Only properly treated, commercially prepared manure is used. Soil testing is done every three years.			
	7	Label instructions for soils, compost, and fertilizers are followed. Fertilizers are only applied by adults.			
Food Handling & Preparation	8	Containers used to transport harvested items are food-grade, properly cleaned and in good condition.			
	9	Persons who are currently ill or are known to be contagious are prevented from working in the garden and handling any food.			
	10	All persons have access to restrooms (with potable hot running water/soap/paper towels).			
	11	Proper personal hygiene practices are in place: All persons wash hands before harvesting food for public.			
	12	USDA “ <i>Best Practices for Handling Fresh Produce in Schools</i> ” procedures are being followed for items destined for consumption.			
	13	Harvested items are labeled and properly stored prior to use in cafeteria or otherwise consumed.			
Water & Irrigation	14	Gray water, waste water, and/or runoff water from surfaces that may contain toxins is not used to water edibles or wash produce.			
	15	Rainwater is collected from a roof with appropriate roofing material and stored in a food grade container.			
	16	Storage tanks such as cisterns or rain barrels are properly cleaned and flushed.			
	17	Backflow prevention devices are installed as part of the irrigation system.			
Garden Design	18	Non-toxic, non-leaching materials are used for edible garden beds.			
	19	Clear signage is provided regarding proper garden procedures such as composting, hand washing, and tool use.			
	20	Only non-allergenic and non-toxic plants are used.			





Tools	21	Tools and utensils are properly cleaned and sanitized.			
	22	Tools are properly stored and locked. Tools not suited for children such as sharp tools should be out of reach and closely monitored.			
Animals and Pests	23	Integrated Pest Management policies and procedures are followed.			
	24	Hands are washed with soap and water after being in an animal area and going back into the produce production area.			
	25	Animals are humanely housed in an enclosed area down-slope from the produce production area and are kept out of growing areas at all times.			
	26	There is no evidence of abuse from domestic and/or wild animals.			
	27	Bees are placed in a low traffic section of the garden that receives excellent sunlight.			
Health	28	A well-stocked first aid kit is readily available in the garden.			
	29	All persons are wearing closed-toed shoes, and are encouraged to wear appropriate clothing to protect from sun, cold, and heat.			