



Press Release
December 4, 2018

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Teaching the Next Generation: The Garden as Your Classroom

Field to Family is hosting a free workshop focused on supporting hands-on learning in school garden settings

Date: December 8, 2018

Time: 12:00 – 5:00 PM

Location: Kirkwood Community College Main Campus in Iowa City

(Iowa City) March 23, 2017 – As part of the farm to school program, Field to Family is hosting a school garden workshop, “Teaching the Next Generation: The Garden as Your Classroom” on Saturday, December 8. This free workshop is open to teachers, school district staff, early care and education providers, garden volunteers and all those who plant seeds for community, healthy kids, and food justice in eastern Iowa.

Workshop presenters will share school district and community resources that support learning about the outdoor environment, showcase versatile designs for outdoor classrooms, and demonstrate activities that support new science standards while cultivating a school-wide culture of health. **This years' workshop will focus on two main areas: teaching educators how to use schools gardens as a hands-on learning tools and educating attendees on the importance of racial and social equity in farm to school.**

Presenters include:

- Elizabeth Maas, Restoration Ecologist, Kirkwood Community College, will demonstrate an activity following the Next Generation Science Standards
- Deja Knight, Masters Candidate in Psychological and Brain Sciences at University of Iowa, will present on the history of racism in the U.S. food system
- Ilsa DeWald, Local Foods Coordinator, Johnson County, will speak about building a school garden programs while prioritizing racial and social equity
- Molly Schintler, Farm to School Coordinator, Field to Family, will cover general resources available to school gardeners and those creating and maintaining outdoor classroom space.

In addition to the workshop presentations, school garden leaders from throughout the community will sit on a panel to share resources and best practices for starting and maintaining school gardens.

‘School Garden Leaders’ Panelists include:

- Jen Kardos, Instructor and Therapeutic Horticulturist with Backyard Abundance and Health Coach with EPIC Functional Medicine
- Cassie Panther, Elementary Education Students at University of Iowa and Outdoor Educator at Taproot Nature Experience
- Kaye Lindsley, Preschool Teacher at Willowwind School

- Joyce Miller, school garden volunteer

“The interest in school gardens and farm to school has grown exponentially in the last decade” explained Molly Schintler, Farm to School Coordinator with Field to Family. “Studies have shown that students who learn in a school garden setting experience many benefits such as better test scores, increased self-esteem, and a deeper understanding and value for diversity.”

This event was possible because of a USDA Farm to School Grant awarded to Iowa Valley RC&D. Iowa Valley RC&D and Field to Family are working with 4 school districts (Solon, Iowa City, Clear Creek Amana and Cedar Rapids), to increase the capacity for farm to school success. The project includes school food procurement planning and in school nutrition education programs.

Field to Family (www.fieldtofamily.org) is based in Iowa City and works to create a more local, healthy and sustainable regional food system. Field to Family’s Farm to School Program works to increase the amount of fresh, local food that students eat through our three projects: 1) adding more local foods to school lunches, 2) building school gardens and composting systems, and 3) providing food, agriculture, and nutrition education programs.

Iowa Valley RC&D (www.iowavalleyrcd.org) is a 501c3 non-profit based in Amana who works to grow local economies, strengthen food systems, foster protection and enhancement of natural resources, and develop awareness for the arts, history, and culture. The Iowa Valley RC&D’s expertise is in community food systems, planning, and placemaking.

This project has been funded at least in part with Federal funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the view of policies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organization imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.