

Arizona School Gardens 2012

In March 2012, the Health and Nutrition Services' Annual School Garden Program Survey was distributed to principals in every school from Arizona's 500 school districts. Of these school districts, 191 individual customers provided their observations on the benefits and barriers to school gardens along with their interest in learning more about school garden programs in Arizona.

Active school garden?

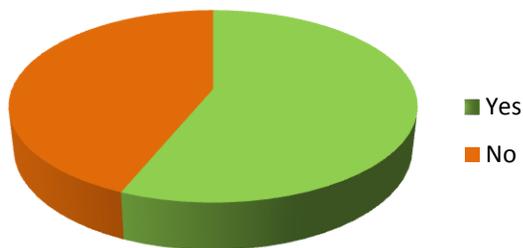


Figure 1.1

Respondents were asked if their school campus had any active school gardens. Looking at figure 1.1, the majority (55 %) classified their schools as having at least one school garden and provided its physical address. This information will be used to reach out to those respondents who indicated a desire for stronger communication from Arizona Department of Education (ADE).

Barriers

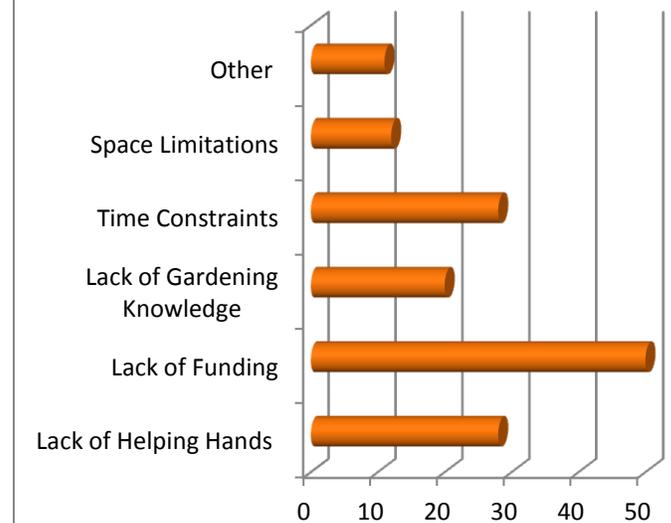


Chart 1.1

School respondents were asked to identify barriers when developing or maintaining a school garden program. Each respondent was able to select multiple barriers. As indicated in Chart 1.1, funding, time, and a lack of volunteers are considered the main barriers developing or maintaining school garden programs.

In response to these concerns, the Health and Nutrition Services will provide additional mediums to connect local school districts to resources that can help develop and maintain successful garden programs. With an established Arizona Farm to School list serve and Facebook page, garden managers will have access to information on funding, tips on sustaining garden volunteers, and time management for garden projects. Please visit [Arizona Farm to School](#) on Facebook to stay connected.

School respondents were also asked to identify the benefits observed in their school garden programs. In Chart 1.2, schools classified school pride, student involvement, and innovative education as the greatest benefits to implementing school garden programs. In Health and Nutrition Services we believe that school garden programs promote acceptance of fresh fruits and vegetables through sensory and garden based education lessons. Increased acceptance of fresh fruits and vegetables can ultimately lead to improvements in a child’s health, which we believe allows students to achieve excellence both academically and socially.

Survey participants were also asked for their interest in receiving information on implementing school gardens in Arizona. Figure 1.2 shows that the majority (91%), requested additional information. In response, the Health and Nutrition Services created an Arizona Farm to School list serve and Facebook page to help schools develop and implement school garden programs. Through these communications, ADE shares information on Arizona Farm to School activities including: successful school garden programs, funding opportunities, Farm to School partner programs, and other resources that relate to school gardens in Arizona.

For Frequently Asked Questions, reports, and other Arizona Farm to School resources please visit our website at www.azed.gov. Contact the ADE at (602) 542-8700 or send an email to ArizonaFarmtoSchool@azed.gov.

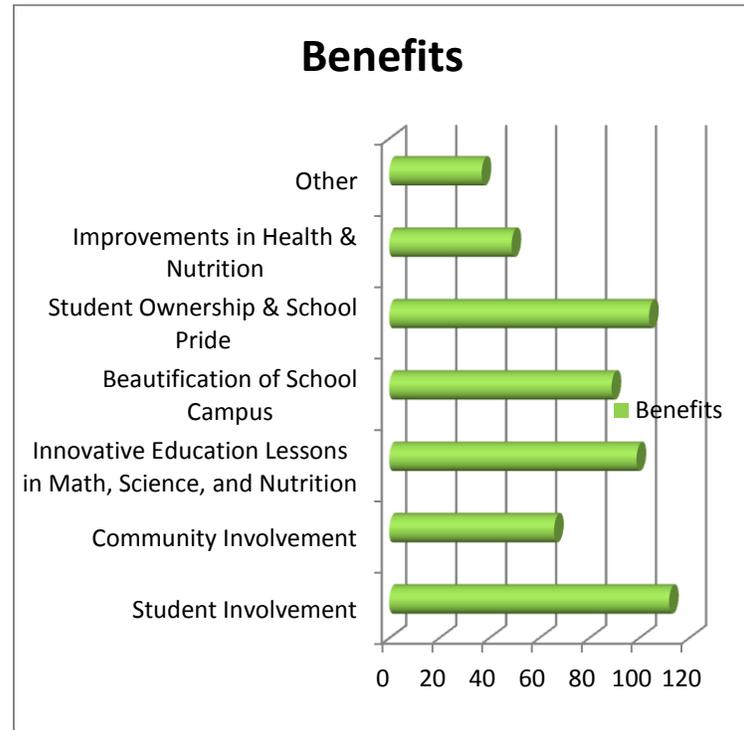


Chart 1.2

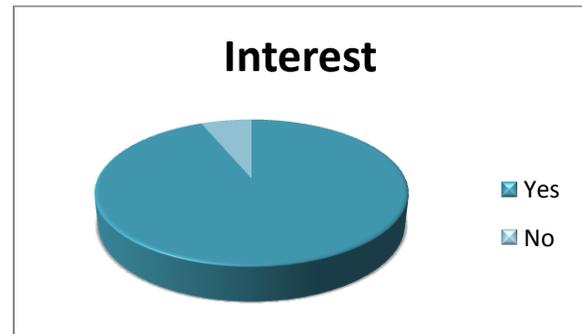


Figure 1.2



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