



# Children's, School and Youth Gardens

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**University of California**

Agriculture and Natural Resources

■ UCCE Master Gardener Program

# Benefits of Youth and School Gardens

- Exposure to nature is not just good for children's health; it also improves their ability to learn.
- Research suggests that students are more engaged in learning not only during outdoor classes but also upon returning to their classroom afterward.
- Gardens provide both a therapeutic and learning environment.
- Subjects that can be taught in the garden include horticulture, but also math, literature, history and other sciences such as chemistry, agronomy, and biology.



# Learning About Horticulture

- Providing hands on experiences in growing vegetables, fruits, herbs and flowers.
- Showing students where food comes and becoming familiar with plant foods that they know and love and those that they haven't tasted yet.
- Cooking and sharing food that has been harvested.
- Learning the latest science and growing methods in agriculture and home gardening.
- Providing opportunities to work in teams and develop friendships with students who have similar interests.





## Website – Lessons

The team has spent the last several years developing lessons for teachers and students as well as fact sheets

- Lessons
  - TK to Grade 2
  - Grades 3 to 5
  - Grades 6 to 8
  - Grades 9 to 12



## Website – Fact Sheets

- Fact Sheets
  - Citrus
  - Flowers
  - Fruits and Vegetables
  - Herbs
  - Native Plants

[MG You Tube Channel](#)



### Know What You Grow!



## Milkweed

**Scientific Name:** *Asclepias spp.*

**Recommended Varieties:**

Plant only varieties native to your area. It is not recommended to plant tropical milkweeds.

- Narrow Leaf - *Asclepias fascicularis*
- Skeleton - *Asclepias subulata*
- Whitestem or Wax - *Asclepias albicans*
- Kofole - *Asclepias eriocarpa*
- California - *Asclepias californica*

**Common Pest(s):**

*Aphis nerii*, also called milkweed aphids or oleander aphids, seed bugs, spider mites and longhorn beetles.

[CA Native Plant Society](#)  
[Change-Making.com](#)  
[Ucanr.edu](#)

### Growing Information

**Native Habitat**

Of the fifteen species of milkweed that are native to California, the five listed milkweeds do very well in Riverside County. These drought-tolerant plants play a critical role in supporting a tremendous range of pollinators, and occur in nearly all of the state's ecoregions.

**Ideal Planting Window**

Seed can be sown in the fall, once the rains start, at a seeding rate of approximately 15 seed every 2 feet. After spreading seeds onto a prepared seedbed, incorporate them into the soil immediately using a rake, harrow, ring-roller, or gentle over-head irrigation. Narrow-leave milkweed in particular seems to do well planted in the fall.

**Growing Guidance**

[Xerces.org](#)







# Activities in Youth and School Gardens



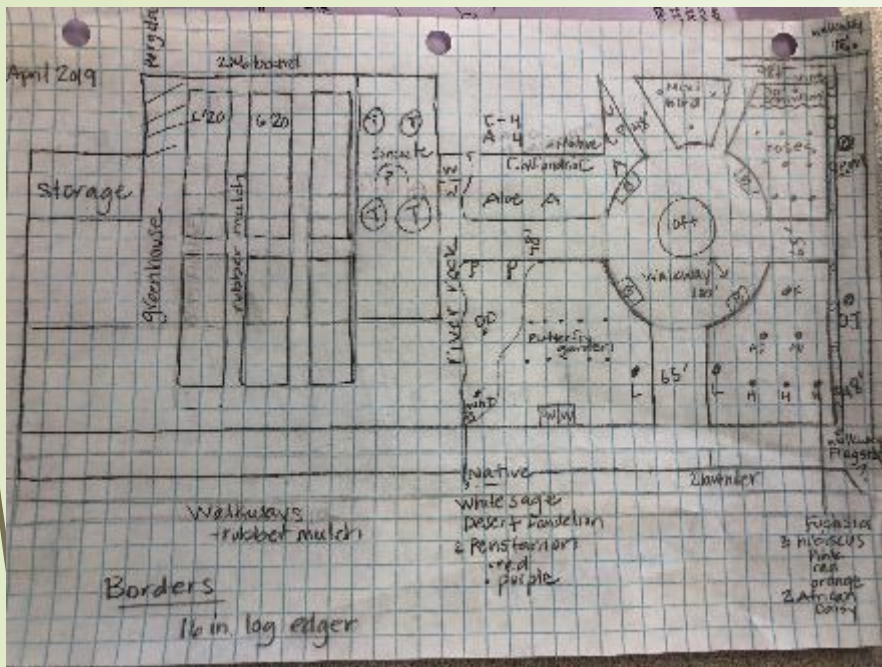
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# Planting and Growing in School Gardens

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Master Gardeners can assist in advising schools on the planning and design of school gardens.

UCCE Master Gardener Program of Riverside County



## Possible Locations to Volunteer in a School or Youth Garden in the Desert



- ▶ Past and Possible Future Opportunities
  - ▶ Boys and Girls Club of Cathedral City
  - ▶ Cielo Vista Charter School in Palm Springs
  - ▶ La Quinta Middle School
  - ▶ Palm Desert Charter Middle School



## Possible Locations to Volunteer in a School or Youth Garden in West County



- ▶ Past and Possible Future Opportunities
  - ▶ Barnett Elementary School in Temecula
  - ▶ Dartmouth Middle School in Hemet
  - ▶ May Ranch Elementary School in Perris
  - ▶ Menifee Middle School in Menifee
  - ▶ Red Hawk Elementary School in Temecula
  
- ▶ Arizona Middle School in Riverside
- ▶ Loma Vista Middle School in Riverside
- ▶ Valley View Elementary in Riverside
- ▶ Wells Middle School in Riverside



## Barnett Elementary Garden Harvest

During the Summer, Barnett Elementary in Temecula harvested summer crops to share with the community.

Master Gardeners consulted in the garden on

What to Plant

How to Resolve Pest and  
Disease Issues



## Pumpkin Decorating

Master Gardeners helped 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Grade students decorate pumpkins with succulents.

Students learned how to propagate succulents.





## Curran Elementary Raised Beds

At Curran Elementary in Murrieta, Master Gardeners helped with education projects in second grade classrooms.

Planting vegetables and flowers in raised beds

Using ollas filled with water for irrigation



## Arizona Middle School Preparing a Harvest Meal

Master gardeners assisted with the three cooking classes sponsored by Arizona's Garden Club for gardening students and their families





## Cielo Vista Students Composting

At Cielo Vista Charter School in Palm Springs, Master Gardeners helped educate 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades on composting.

Components of compost

How to make and maintain compost

Uses of compost



## Cielo Vista Students Planting Seeds

At Cielo Vista Charter School in Palm Springs, Master Gardeners helped educate 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students on planting vegetable seeds in their raised bed gardens.





# Earn Volunteer Hours By Participating in Upcoming **Youth and School Garden** Activities!

The logo for the organization, consisting of the letters 'Vms' in a stylized, bold, sans-serif font. The 'V' is white with a black outline, and the 'ms' are solid black. The logo is tilted slightly to the right and is set against a white background that is part of a larger graphic element.

*Enjoy working the MG Info Tables  
and/or the Helpline?*

**Learn and develop key talking points for  
promoting our youth and school programs**

*Interested in participating in a discussion regarding  
the work being done  
with our school gardens?*

**Attend a Youth and School Garden Countywide  
meeting**

*Do you enjoy gathering information  
about gardening?*

**Conduct research with veteran MG supervision  
on a topic for a school lesson**

*Are you "techy"?*

**Do a technical review of a PowerPoint Lesson or  
Fact Sheet with veteran MG supervision**

*Love getting your hands dirty?*

**Participate in our Plant Propagation efforts for  
school gardens**

*Interested in volunteering at a school garden?*

**Join an MG veteran for an onsite, hands-on  
experience with students**

## Goals for 2022- 2023

- Refine our shade structure and irrigation at Grow Lab for growing seedlings at least twice per year
- Develop pilot projects at 3 or more schools with native plant gardens
- Continue to develop and expand our website with fact sheets and lessons
- Expand the participation in our committee's projects with MG Volunteers.

