



Growing the School Garden Movement in Hawai'i

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Planting pumpkins

such as basic botany, planting a garden, soils and composting, native Hawaiian plants & the environment, and IPM.

Over the past few years school garden education and farm-to-school programs have been revitalized both locally and nationally. This is an exciting time and there is great potential for UH Master Gardeners to further contribute to the learning experience for our keiki. Much of what we're doing already ties into the idea that we can help bring about a more sustainable future and foster vibrant communities. That said, there is much going on behind the scenes too and it is important for us to share what we learn along the way.

This year, MGs are building on past efforts by emphasizing "School Garden Basics" at the Second Saturday at the Garden event series at the UH Urban Garden Center in Pearl City, to enhance garden-based learning. O'ahu Master Gardeners and other volunteers came together at the UGC in Pearl City on February 9, 2013 to kick-off to the 2013 SS@G series. Each month through October, O'ahu MGs invite the public to attend a series of workshops, demonstrations, hands-on activities and garden tours to share knowledge and offer tips about gardening in Hawaii. The SS@G events will enable a deeper exploration and hands-on activities relating to the school gardening basics modules used to train educators.

The movement is Statewide! The Hawai'i Farm to

On O'ahu, we see more and more schools establishing school gardens in our local communities. To respond and support this trend, O'ahu MGs have led intensive weekend courses, "School Garden Basics Workshop for Educators" developed in cooperation with the Kōkua Hawai'i Foundation. The workshops include 6 PowerPoint presentations created entirely by MGs. They are geared at school garden volunteers and Hawai'i educators, ranging from pre-school through high school teachers, interested in incorporating lessons from the garden into their curriculum. The workshop modules explore topics



School and School Garden Hui (HFSSGH) is a statewide coalition of school garden networks and organizations dedicated to bringing together school garden resources to build capacity, create professional development opportunities, recommend policy, engage in advocacy, and research and evaluate programs. The Hawai'i Farm to School and School Garden Hui works with schools, educators, students, policy makers, and their community partners through the following organizations:

- ◆ Department of Health Healthy Hawai'i Initiative
- ◆ Hawai'i Island School Garden Network
- ◆ Kaua'i School Garden Network
- ◆ Maui School Garden Network
- ◆ Moloka'i School Garden Network
- ◆ O'ahu Farm to School Network

A website for the HFSSGH is nearly ready to go live, stay tuned! The new website will include contact information for MG Helplines on each island so we can continue to be valuable resources to the gardening public. The O'ahu MGs are active members of the O'ahu Farm to School Network (OFSN), and accordingly, part of the HFSSGH.

Gardens provide a living laboratory for students to explore and the opportunity for educators to emphasize real-life choices about how people connect to their natural environment and other important issues of sustainability. School gardens, or learning gardens, become outdoor classrooms where students become engaged in STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering, and math). More recently, in the changing vocabulary of education there has been a push to transform from STEM to STEAM and emphasize both art and science education. In doing so, we will prepare our youth to become the innovators leading the 21st-century economy from a broad based perspective and deep understanding of interconnectedness.

Lastly, I wanted to share some exciting movement in the legislature this session relating to school gardens:

- ◆ House Bill 478 proposes to allow schools to grow food in school gardens for consumption in their school meal programs, and for nonprofit organizations to establish and administer fresh food distribution services.
- ◆ Senate Bill 609 aims to require that the Department of Education, in collaboration with the Department of Health, to develop nutritionally-sound public school menu plans that give students the option of a vegetarian entree as



In the Pizza Garden

part of a school lunch meal at least once a week.

Keep up the great work MGs and please, share with us how you help -or would like to- grow the school garden movement in Hawaii. A hui hou!

A collection of School Garden Resources, including O'ahu MG's School Gardening Basics modules, are listed on our UH MG website: <http://www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/UHMG/school.asp>. O'ahu MGs would like to share the modules with neighbor island MGs! Please email Leah Rothbaum (rothbauml@ctahr.hawaii.edu) or Anna Yorba (asyorba@gmail.com) if you'd like copies to use in hosting your own training! rothbauml@ctahr.hawaii.edu

Details on the Second Saturday at the Garden events can be viewed here: www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/ougc