

What is *Eat What You Grow*?

Eat What You Grow is a school garden food safety program that allows school garden produce to be served in the school dining center. The program provides students with real harvest experience while exposing them to agricultural engineering and teaching them important facts about food safety. Based on the USDA's Good Agricultural Practices, the *Eat What You Grow School Garden Food Safety Manual* provides protocols and guidance to minimize microbial hazards for fresh fruits and vegetables grown in the school garden. Schools participating in the program receive a comprehensive school garden food safety manual, training in a food safety workshop, and implementation support.

Why *Eat What You Grow*?

School gardens are a great way to get students excited about trying fresh fruits and vegetables, and they provide hands-on opportunities to teach students about plant sciences and biological processes. But, if the food they are growing cannot be eaten, these powerful lessons can fall short. The *Eat What You Grow* program is designed to show students how food moves from the soil to their plates, as well as to provide life-skills the students can take with them to garden in their own spaces.

To Get Started:

The first step is to gather a garden team and begin planning for the growing season. It's never too early to plan. Your team should include:

Food Safety Manager - this CPS employee is the primary point of contact for the school's garden
Garden Leader - assists in all aspects of the school garden
Kitchen Manager - oversees the school's kitchen

Steps:

1. Gather your team, plan your garden.
2. Contact the **Chicago Public Schools (CPS) School Garden Coordinator at dmthomas21@cps.edu** for the next *Eat What You Grow* orientation.
3. Become familiar with the School Garden Food Safety Manual.
4. Attend *Eat What You Grow* Food Safety training.
5. Develop Personalized Food Safety Plan.
6. Meet with the CPS School Garden Coordinator to ensure all protocols are in place.
7. Coordinate Harvest days with Kitchen Manager .
8. Train participants in food safety protocols, and follow them!
9. Harvest and enjoy!

