

Naperville North Edible Garden and Outdoor Classroom

An Annual Grant Award Story

The Edible Garden at Naperville North High School converted unused outdoor space into a productive “outdoor classroom” area to support hands-on activities in agriculture, math, art, design, biology, chemistry, food science and more.



The Edible Garden offers students a unique experience which enriches learning about subjects ranging from nutrition and agriculture to art and design. It is a unique resource to multi-needs students whose year-round role provides them with life and job-readiness skills. Science classes can leverage the garden as part of learning real-world applications and food science classes in particular can use the produce grown to explore the processes of canning and cooking fresh foods. Other uses of The Edible Garden are limited only by the imagination – the environment can be used as a tool for exploring the arts as easily as business.



Types of crops include:
 Tomato, Apple, Pear,
 Peppers, Sage, Dill, Parsley,
 Lettuce Zucchini, Basil.

Regular donations of fresh produce are made to Loaves & Fishes in Naperville.



School gardens have been shown to benefit students in a wide range of ways. Some of the more obvious outcomes include an improved understanding and appreciation of agriculture, food production and environmental issues. Perhaps even more valuable results relate to personal growth including development of vocational and physical skills, increased confidence and self-esteem and an improved engagement in the learning process.

The Edible Garden proved to be a success right from the start! NEF funds grants based on their value to District 203 students but some grants also benefit faculty, parents and more. In the case of The Edible Garden, there was such a large turnout of staff to help get the area prepared that there weren't enough shovels and wheelbarrows to go around! The positive energy and spirit of all involved, particularly the faculty, is something that carries into the everyday learning process.



For more information about The Edible Garden, contact Katie Genovesi, Instructional Coordinator of Special Education, Naperville North High School
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