

School Farmer's Market or Garden Fair

There are several ways that a School Farmer's Market or Garden Fair could be organized:

- An in-school event only for students and staff
- A combination of in-school activities and an after-school or evening open house for the public
- Coordinating the food fair with the FFA chapter or local 4-H clubs
- Coordinating with parent's group, student council or other groups in your school
- If the space is available, a farmer's market might be open after school on a regular basis (i.e. Wednesday from 3 – 6 p.m.) to raise funds for the school or a special project
- Other ideas?

Where would the food come from?

Some options include:

- School garden
- Container gardens from the classrooms
- High School agriculture education department's greenhouse
- Student's home garden
- Community gardens
- From local farmer's markets

How can it be organized? Some options include:

- A taste-testing area for sampling the various products
- A cook-off or some type of contest using garden produce (i.e. salsa contest, vegetable soup)
- Students could research different foods, how they are grown/produced/processed and make educational displays for a "Food Science Fair" type event
- Displays or demonstrations set up by local producers, processors, grocery store, markets and others involved in the food industry. Students could visit them on a rotational basis or in a "trade show" setting
- Other types of contests: largest pumpkin, most uniform group of tomatoes, longest cucumber or others!
- Making Vegetable Soup- utilizing the produce from the various exhibits to make vegetable soup for everyone
- Produce brought in would be displayed but then donated to a local food pantry
- Have the Master Gardeners on hand to answer gardening questions or to set up displays on how to garden using containers, small spaces and other new ideas.
- Have Veggie Races! Using vegetables that are decorated, design a racetrack similar to the Wisconsin State Fair FFA Veggie Races.
- A panel of local producers (select a variety of types of production and commodities) and food processors/retailers could discuss their operations, careers, and their role in the food industry
- Presenters could be in classrooms and students rotate from one room to another – perhaps 20 minute intervals
- The community could be invited in to view displays and exhibits. A panel of local producers could talk about their operations.

To start the project, a sample plan of action:

1. Brainstorm in class about the possible projects
2. Who do you need to get permission from?
3. What date would be best?
4. Who can help organize and fund this activity?
5. What rooms/space are needed?
6. Putting the plan together
7. Promotion of event
8. The actual event!
9. Evaluation of the event

This can be an excellent activity for students to learn how to plan an activity and carry it out to success!