



**August 2010**

### **Requirements for School-Based Garden/Farm-to-Cafeteria Programs-**

The following information is provided as a reference for those implementing school garden/farm programs within Santa Barbara County. It is specifically meant for those who seek to integrate school-grown produce into school cafeterias or food programs. The s'Cool Food Initiative worked in consultation with the County of Santa Barbara's Agricultural Commissioner's Office and Public Health Department (Environmental Health Services Division) in obtaining this information. Please contact these agencies with specific questions or concerns.

#### **REQUIRED**

1. All food used in a food facility/cafeteria must be obtained from an 'approved source.' The State of California has determined that gardens that receive 'certified farmers status' through the local Agriculture Department are considered 'approved' and can be used as a source of produce for school food programs/cafeterias (see below for instructions on obtaining a *Certified Producer's Certificate* from the local Ag. Department). Garden/farms must be operated under the direction of a horticulturalist.
2. If the garden/farm will be growing produce that the cafeterias **do not** already use, this may be considered a 'change in menu' and may necessitate a plan check from Environmental Health Services (EHS). This is necessary to ensure that proper infrastructure is in place (ie. appropriate food prep sink) to accommodate the menu change. Replacing vegetables which are already on the menu with certified school-grown garden/farm produce is not a change in the menu.
3. If no change in menu takes place, the school should forward a copy of the *Certified Producer's Certificate (CPC)* to EHS to confirm 'approved source' status. The school kitchen should also keep a current copy of the certificate available for reference. The *CPC* is not an indemnification. As with all food, the food facility must still make the determination that the food they receive is acceptable to be served to children.

#### **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

1. Gardens deemed an 'approved source' can provide produce for school food facilities as described above. Gardens which are **solely** operated by students as a class project are **not** permitted to bring food into the food facility, nor is the facility allowed to accept the products from the garden. A classroom project must remain in the classroom. Produce from this garden is not permitted to be sold or given away to the public.
2. If installing a produce sink to rinse produce at the garden/farm location, it must be approved by EHS. Rinsing produce from an 'approved source' at a garden sink does not preclude the need to thoroughly wash the produce again in the food facility as per normal protocol. The use of the garden hose for "washing" products for consumption in the field is not recommended.



3. Fields used to grow food should be monitored for animal intrusion.
4. Pesticides are never recommended in a school garden/farm (see *Resources* section below for safe school garden practices). For information on pesticide use on school grounds under the California Healthy Schools Act, see: <http://apps.cdpr.ca.gov/schoolipm/overview/faq2000.cfm#3pestuse>. Certain pest control products may be exempt from pesticide requirements.

#### **OBTAINING A CERTIFIED PRODUCER'S CERTIFICATE**

1. Fill out and submit an application and map to the County Agricultural Commissioner, which can be found at: <http://www.countyofsb.org/uploadedFiles/agcomm/pue/CertProdCertApp.pdf>
2. List all commodities that are currently planted and growing; other commodities can be added later at no additional fee. All fruits and vegetables must be produced by the certificate holder.
3. After submitting an application, an inspector from the Agricultural Commissioner's Office will conduct an inspection of the garden/farm to verify what is being grown.
4. A certificate will be issued for a \$25 annual fee. Note that each participating school must have their own certificate.

#### **RESOURCES:**

**National Farm to School Network-** *Best Practices for School Gardens:*  
[http://www.farmentoschool.org/files/publications\\_188.pdf](http://www.farmentoschool.org/files/publications_188.pdf)

**University of California-** *Safe Handling of Fruits and Vegetables:*  
<http://postharvest.ucdavis.edu/datastorefiles/234-418.pdf>

**US Dept. of Agriculture-** *School Garden Q&As:*  
[http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/governance/Policy-Memos/2009/SP\\_32-2009\\_os.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/governance/Policy-Memos/2009/SP_32-2009_os.pdf)

***Any questions or concerns regarding specific requirements should be directed to the Environmental Health Services Division of the Public Health Department (805-681-4900) or the County Agricultural Commissioner (805-681-5600).***