



NH Farm to School Case Studies

Nottingham Elementary School Garden
Nottingham, NH

Earth Turners learn about gardening, marketing and healthy eating

The garden at the Nottingham School was started by the principal, Michele Carvalho, in the fall of 2009. She and a parent volunteer intended to resurrect some flowerbeds that had been neglected, but soon determined that they needed to start the garden from scratch. Donations from Agway, Fernald Lumber, the PTA, and the community helped to supply materials and funding to start.

The students that work in the garden are called Earth Turners and meet every

Thursday afternoon from 2:30-4:30. Each week, Ms. Carvalho has a list of projects to work on in the garden, such as building a trellis for beans, weeding, or making signs. A student is also assigned to take photos and keep a journal of the day's activities and observations.

Some of the vegetables and sunflowers grown the first year were sold at the Nottingham Farmers Market. The funds raised were used to purchase a tool cart to hold and store the garden tools. This summer, the students hope to raise enough money through sales to purchase a drip irrigation system. In the

fall, a corn maze will be planted to be enjoyed by the students.

The garden is located just outside the gymnasium doors so classrooms have easy access to this hands-on learning opportunity. Ms. Carvalho says more and more teachers are bringing their classrooms out to the garden to apply science and math knowledge. One of the classes studying the life cycle of butterflies released their butterflies in the garden. The garden also utilizes compost made from the cafeteria kitchen scraps.

--By Stacey Purslow

NH Farm to School (NHFTS) is a statewide program working to connect NH farms and schools. Farm to school connections enable schools to serve healthy, locally grown foods in their cafeterias, integrate farms, food, and nutrition into their curriculum, and explore food and agriculture-based learning opportunities. NHFTS is a program of the University of New Hampshire's Sustainability Academy, and is grateful for the generous support of Share Our Strength and the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation.

