



2014-2015 Growing Minds Report Card

growing minds



farm to school
an asap program

About

ASAP's mission is to help local farms thrive, link farmers to markets and supporters, and build healthy communities through connections to local food.

ASAP's farm to school program, Growing Minds, provides resources and training to farmers, teachers, chefs, school nutrition staff, parents, and other community members to encourage schools to provide experiential education that will ensure children know where their food comes from and develop lifelong healthy eating habits.



The mission of Growing Minds is to improve systems to create positive experiences with local food and farms that promote the health and education of our children, our farms, and our communities.

We accomplish this goal by these strategic activities that are detailed on the following pages:

- Building capacity
- Policy development
- Engaging the community
- Making locally grown food accessible to all

Additionally, ASAP serves as the Southeast Regional Lead for the National Farm to School Network. To learn more about the network, visit www.farmtoschool.org.

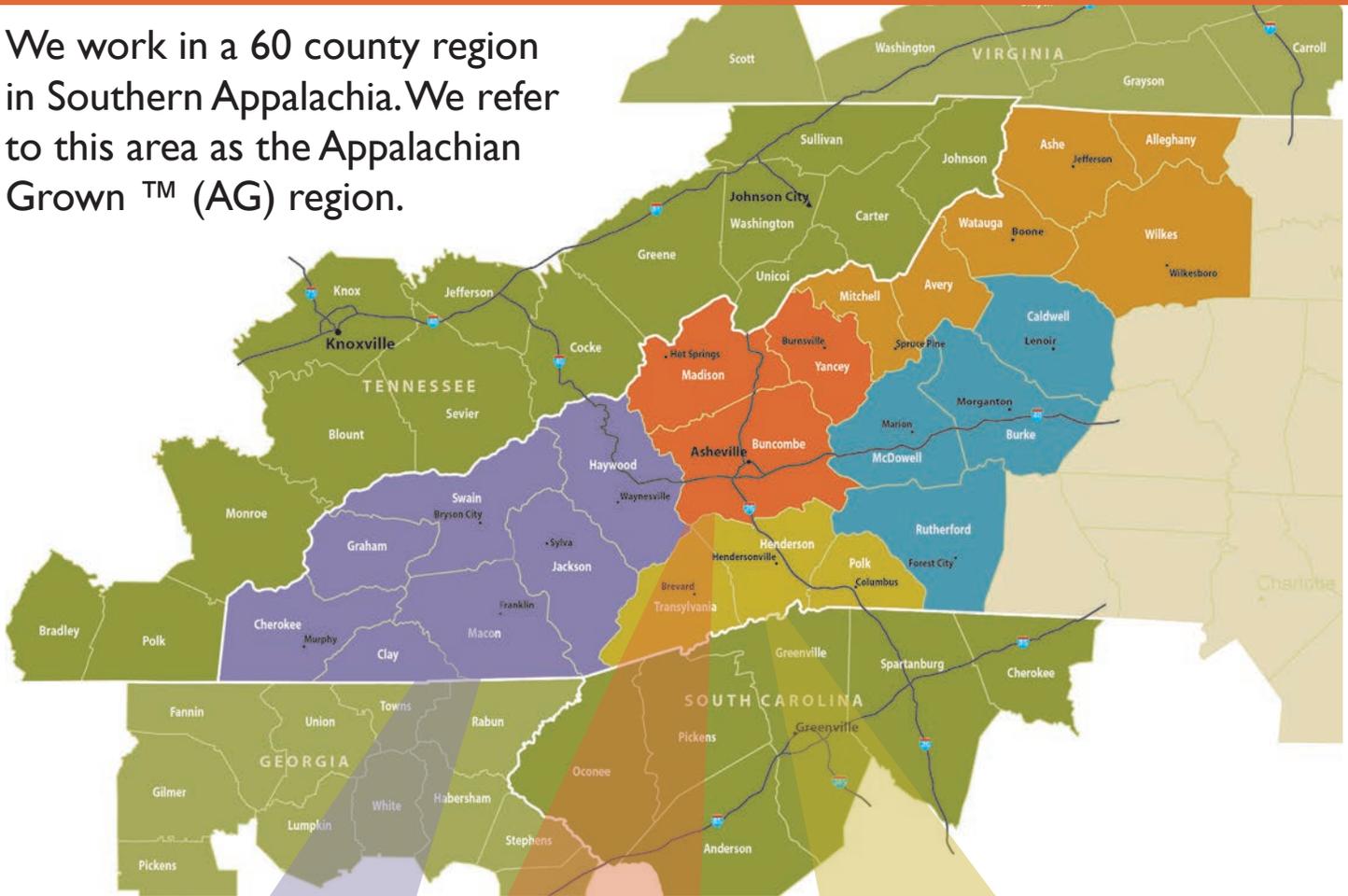


Thanks to our sponsors for a great year!



Our Work

We work in a 60 county region in Southern Appalachia. We refer to this area as the Appalachian Grown™ (AG) region.



Students at Cullowhee Valley School in Jackson County prepare the garden for spring planting.



Cafeteria staff at Emma Elementary in Buncombe County portion local cherry tomatoes for a Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program snack.



Atkinson Elementary students in Henderson County enjoy a local sweet potato stick taste test with their families during Thanksgiving lunch.

Our Impacts

Locally grown food is made more accessible to all segments of our society resulting in stronger local food economies and healthier children.

We work to make locally grown food more accessible through hosting and participating in community events, supporting farm field trips and in-school farm to school activities, our Growing Minds @ Market program, and by helping school districts source locally grown products.

By the Numbers:

14,249

individual children had

31,805

farm to school experiences

in **21** Appalachian Grown counties.



Local Products Sourced:

154,194 lbs

Buncombe County

18,848 lbs

Haywood County

47,441 lbs

Henderson County



Community systems are equipped to sustain farm to school efforts.

In addition to our annual Farm to School Conference which attracts 150 individuals from across the country, we conduct trainings and workshops throughout the year in order to equip individuals to teach children about local food and farms through hands-on activities. We create and provide promotional materials like recipe cards, stickers, and cafeteria posters to complement these activities. In addition, Growing Minds staff serve on a number of community committees dedicated to improving children's health and educational experiences.



By the Numbers:

9,056

recipe cards distributed

26,925

“I tried local...” stickers distributed

69

trainings and presentations conducted with

2,176

participants trained

Our Impacts

Schools provide positive experiences with healthy, locally grown food through evidence-based practices.

We provide resources such as seeds for school gardens, farm field trip and garden mini-grants, a lending library, cooking stipends, and cooking equipment. Our Growing Minds lesson plans (available for download on our website) have connections to the Common Core State and NC Essential Standards, and age-appropriate literature.

Garden Resources



By the Numbers:

7,523 children

including

631 preschool children

received

531 seed packets

Website Resources

Most popular lesson plans:

Edible vs non edible - 1,945 downloads

All about worms - 1,049 downloads

What plants need (preschool) - 1,002 downloads

Veggie crowns - 724 downloads

Colorful plate (preschool) - 729 downloads

Eating in season - 527 downloads

By the Numbers:

56,546

unique users visited the Growing Minds website

18,173

unique lesson plan views

68,901 total sessions

6,720 sessions from users

who visit site more than 3 times a year

Mini-grants and Stipends

In the 2014-2015 school year, Growing Minds supported activities throughout the region through mini-grants and stipends. We distributed funds to 17 teachers and community health professionals, impacting 3,776 children.



Enka High School and Preschool Enka, NC Field trip to Adelbert Farm

“Our trip to Adelbert Farm was perfect. We were greeted with a huge welcoming smile by Kimberly the farmer and her dog. We were invited to sit under the apple trees while Kimberly explained a little bit about the farm and the animals that lived there.”

The children had a blast. They were able to explore the chicken coop that housed not only chickens, but turkeys and ducks as well.

We then visited the pigs. The students were invited to collect apples to feed the pigs, grind grain, plant wheat, and pet the fowl. All of the activities were extremely appropriate for their age group. After a fun-filled morning, Kimberly then suggested a great park for us to eat lunch at on our way back. It was the perfect ending to a great day.”

Mountain Discovery Charter School Bryson City, NC Cooking stipend

“We had a lovely end-of-the-year garden party. The menu included several local items: kale, romaine lettuce, leaf lettuce, broccoli, and chard (from the school garden) and carrots (purchased from the grocery store). I also handed out recipe cards and stickers to all of the students. The school garden currently involves grades K-3 (approximately 80 students).”



Special Projects



Taste Tests

For the 2014-2015 school year the Growing Minds taste test program was run by Dietetic Interns (DIs) through our Growing Minds @ University project.

The DIs selected, scaled, and prepared the recipes for monthly taste tests at four area schools. They distributed the samples in the school cafeterias and educated students about the local products and how they grow.

We crunched the numbers and the taste tests averaged between 2¢ and 5¢ per child, depending on the complexity of the recipe.

By the numbers:

2,300 students
impacted

3¢ - average cost per
child per taste test

\$15 - average cost
per taste test



Growing Minds @ Market

Asheville City Market Downtown
Buncombe County

Growing Minds @ Market (GM@M) is a space at a farmers tailgate market set aside for children and families so that children can engage in fun projects focused on local food and farms. In other words, it's ASAP's Growing Minds program at tailgates instead of schools. Activities include fresh local food tastings, local food- and farm-based arts and crafts, and physical activities and games.

By the numbers:

424 children
attended

299 parents
attended

8 community partners
engaged

In working with Western Carolina University and Lenoir-Rhyne University, ASAP has integrated local food and farm to school experiences and training into university undergraduate and graduate curricula. The local food activities and trainings that students experience through Growing Minds @ University (GM@U) have built the capacity of future teachers, Registered Dietitians, and health professionals to incorporate local food- and farm-based experiences in their work.

Project Goals:

Higher Education System:

Local food and farm to school is institutionalized into university curriculum and students are provided with resources and training to prepare them to integrate local food- and farm-based practices into their future professional teaching or nutrition-related careers.

Preschool/Elementary Education System:

Head Start and elementary school “learning labs” are model local food and farm to school environments (weekly local food tastings, monthly local food cooking classes and school garden sessions) where higher education students have the opportunity to observe how local food activities impact children.

By the Numbers:

In 2014-2015...

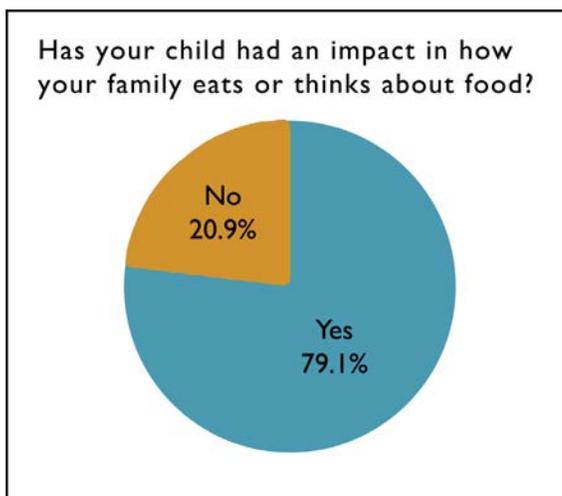
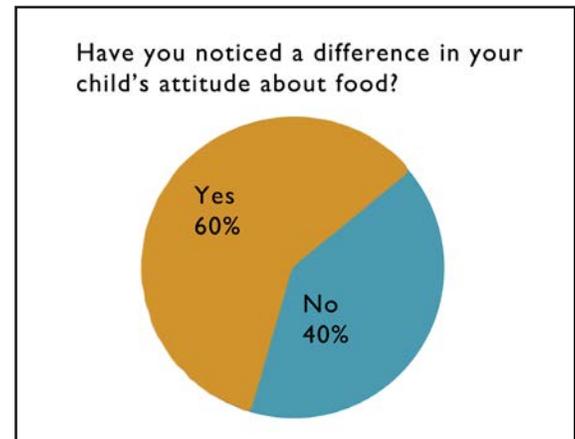
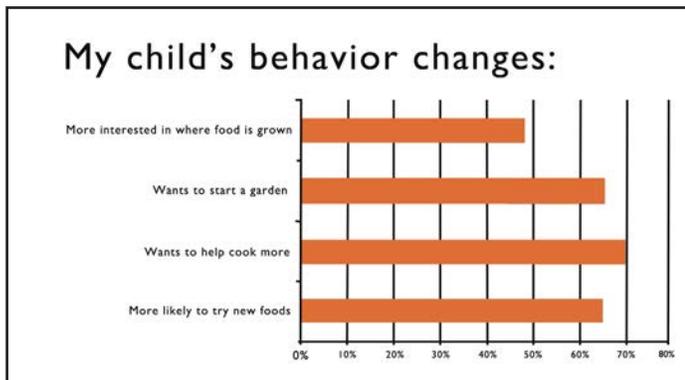
83 nutrition, education, and Dietetic Interns from WCU and LRU participated in farm to school activities at learning labs and area schools.

Together they logged **1,458** volunteer hours conducting farm to school activities.



Family Survey Results

Our special projects not only help teachers to provide farm to school experiences to their students, but they also give us the opportunity to see how farm to school impacts students and their families.



“My child was very excited about the activities, especially the taste testing! She now enjoys foods I never thought she would try, much less eat.”

- Elementary school parent

“She learned life cycles of several plants and animals along with many interesting facts that our family was able to learn FROM HER! She was always super excited each time she tried food that was offered by ASAP in the cafeteria at lunch time and any dishes that were a result of cooking activities.”

- Elementary school parent

Results are based on 67 responses from K-2 parents at Cullowhee Valley School..

Growing Minds Schools

Since 2002, ASAP's Growing Minds Farm to School Program has provided support for hands-on local food experiences for thousands of children at hundreds of schools in the Appalachian Grown region. In 2015 we launched our new Growing Minds School certification program to honor the fantastic work being done throughout the region at these schools. Here's the first round of awards:



Cherokee Central Schools
Cullowhee Valley School
Emma Elementary
Estes Elementary
Evergreen Community Charter School
Fairview Elementary
Furman University Child Development Center
Glenn C. Marlow Elementary
Isaac Dickson Elementary
Kneedler Child Development Center
North Buncombe Elementary
St. James School for Little Folks
Summit Charter School

Should your school be on this list? To apply, visit our website: growing-minds.org.

Looking Forward

Highlights of the upcoming year...

- expansion of Growing Minds @ University to work with more Dietetic Intern programs
- expanding the Growing Minds @ University model
- expansion of monthly taste tests
- creating more farm to school resources
- farm to school conference in November
- continued emphasis on farm to preschool
- another fantastic season with Growing Minds @ Market
- launch of the statewide NC farm to preschool coalition



Get Involved

Want to support farm to school in the Southern Appalachian region? It's easy to get involved with Growing Minds. Simply log on to our website: www.growing-minds.org and get started!

There you will be able to:

- Download ready-to-use lesson plans with supporting materials
- See examples of farm to school in action on our blog
- Learn more about our annual conference, including how to become a sponsor
- Find out how to donate and support our work
- Sign up for our monthly farm to school enews and our bi-monthly Southeast enews
- Contact us for farm to school presentations and consulting

Fresh Tomato Salsa

Ingredients

- 1 green pepper
- 2 pounds ripe local tomatoes
- 1 medium onion
- 1 bunch cilantro
- 1 jalapeno pepper or other hot pepper (optional)
- 1 clove garlic (optional)
- salt and pepper to taste

Directions

Remove seeds from green and jalapeno peppers. Chop the green pepper, jalapeno, and onion and place in a large bowl. Dice the tomatoes, removing the stem and hard center and add to green pepper mixture. Finely chop cilantro and garlic. Mix all ingredients in your large bowl. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Find more recipes at www.growing-minds.org





get
Local
@school

Our Get Local @ School materials are an effective strategy for introducing local, seasonal fruits and vegetables to students. These materials complement the lesson plans and other activities available on our website.

Class sets of materials are available for FREE to individuals in the AG region. If you are outside our region, please contact us for pricing and availability.

Let us hear from you!

www.growing-minds.org

www.asapconnections.org

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Asap
Local Food
Strong Farms
Healthy Communities