

2015-2016 Growing Minds Report Card



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 served as the Southeast Regional Lead for the National Farm to School Network from 2007 - 2016. To learn more about the network, visit www.farmtoschool.org.

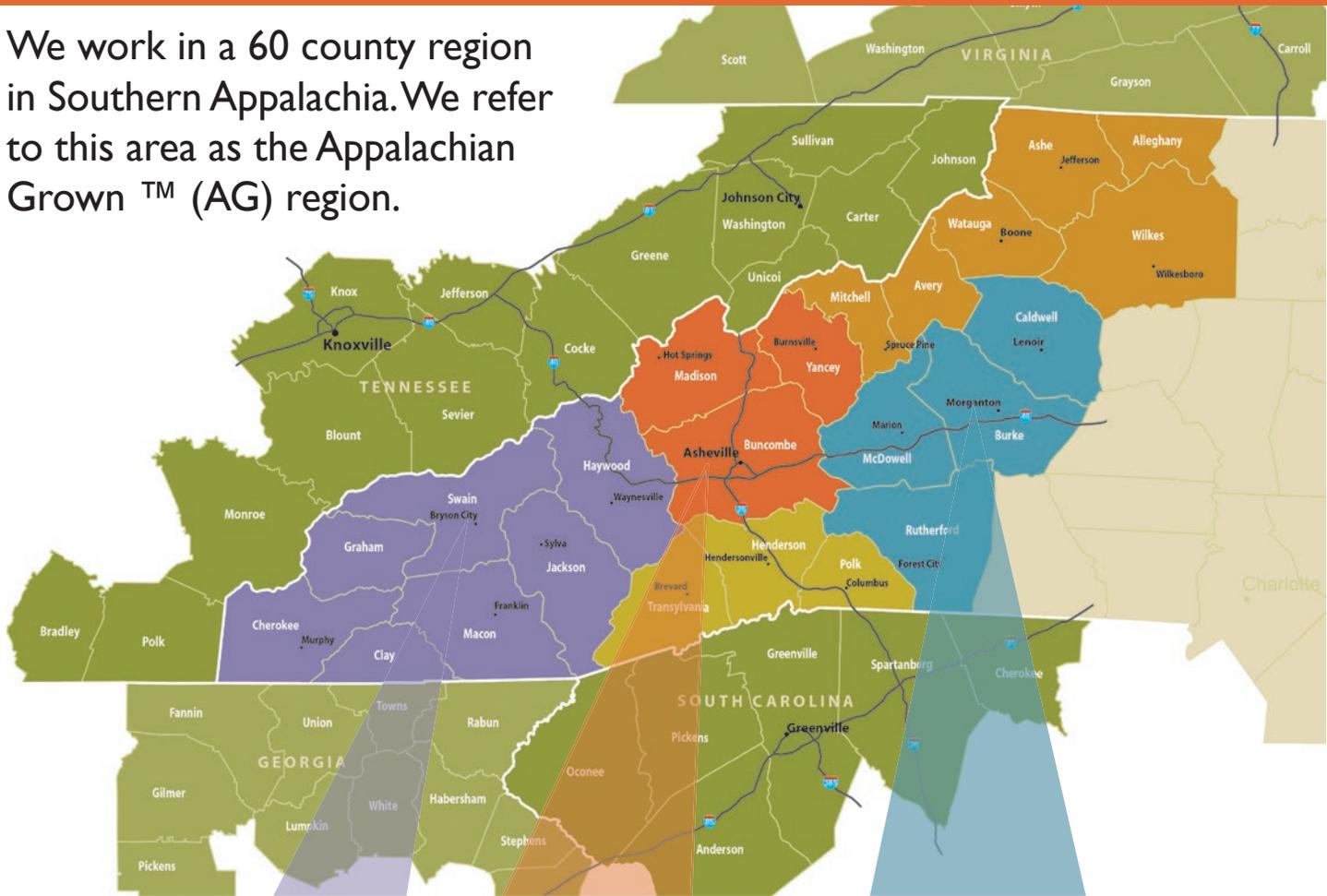


Thanks to our sponsors for a great year!



Our Work

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



Mountain Discovery Charter School in Swain County serves up kale soup from the garden.



A student at the Child Care Center of First Presbyterian Church of Asheville makes a snack using local veggies after a class trip to the French Broad farmers market.



Mountain Crest Elementary students in Burke County enjoy a taste test of local strawberry salsa in the school cafeteria.

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:

8,008

individual children had

16,486

farm to school experiences



Counties sourcing local products we are currently working with:

Buncombe County

Haywood County

Henderson County

Burke County

Cherokee Central Schools

Madison County Schools

Jackson County Schools



Community systems are equipped to sustain farm to school efforts.

In addition to our annual Farm to School Conference which attracts over 200 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:

13,298

recipe cards distributed

19,100

“I tried local...” stickers distributed

42

trainings and presentations conducted with

795

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 and *This Week in the Garden* activity guides (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:

4,612 children
including
488 preschool children
received
308 seed packets

Website Resources

Most popular lesson plans:

Edible vs non edible - *3,085 downloads*
Watering the garden - *1,598 downloads*
All about worms - *1,366 downloads*
What plants need (preschool) - *1,158 downloads*
Colorful plate (preschool) - *1,006 downloads*
Garden alphabet book - *802 downloads*
Searching the garden - *781 downloads*

By the Numbers:

73,537
unique users visited the Growing Minds website (a 30% increase over last year).

34,869
unique lesson plan views (a 90% increase over last year).

91,133 total sessions

8,915 sessions from users who visit site more than 3 times a year

Mini-grants and Stipends

In the 2015-2016 school year, Growing Minds supported activities throughout the region through mini-grants and stipends. We distributed funds to 13 teachers and community health professionals, impacting 2,453 children.



Watauga High School Boone, NC School Garden Grant

“My students planned the garden, built the bed, planted the plants. They also created the tags that identify the plant and contain a QR code that links to information about the etymology of the plants name, how to care for the plant, and a personal connection that explains why we chose to plant this specific plant.”

Besides being something exciting and different for the students I believe the experience of creating something that will stay at the school was empowering for my students. The garden has connected them to the school in a different way and helped them to feel like more of a stakeholder in the school.”

Eliada Child Development Center Asheville, NC School Garden Grant

“The project really brought out a sense of teamwork in the preschoolers. Even though they are small, they helped pull and push bags of dirt onto their playground for planting. They worked together to shovel mulch, plant and weed regularly. When their tomato plants fell over from a rain storm, they all felt very sad and worked together to straighten them out with trellises. All of their tomato plants survived!”



When the preschoolers harvested snap peas they opened them up and recognized that the peas look very similar to the seeds they planted earlier in the year. They took their peas and planted them on the other side of the playground and are waiting to see if anything happens!”

Special Projects



For the 2015-2016 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 eight 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

By the numbers:

4,500 students
impacted

3¢ - average cost per
child per taste test

\$15 - average cost
per taste test



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:

662 children
attended

617 parents
attended

10 community partners
engaged

In working with Western Carolina University, Appalachian State University, University of North Carolina Asheville, 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:

Preschool and elementary school “learning labs” are model local food and farm to school environments (local food tastings, 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 2015-2016...

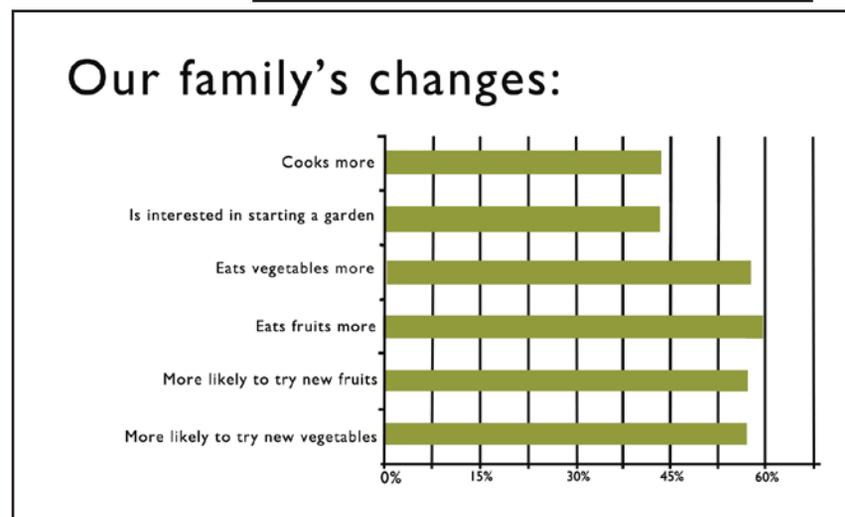
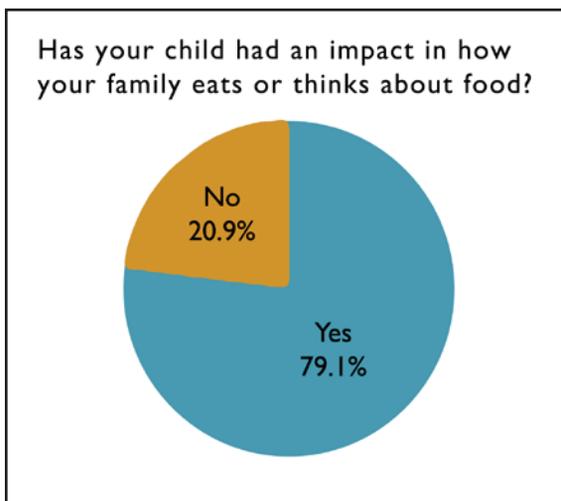
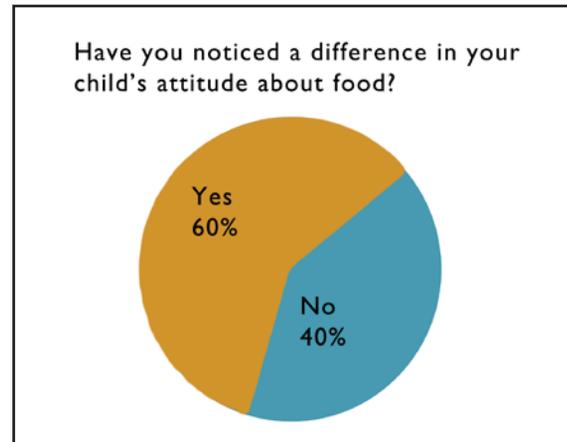
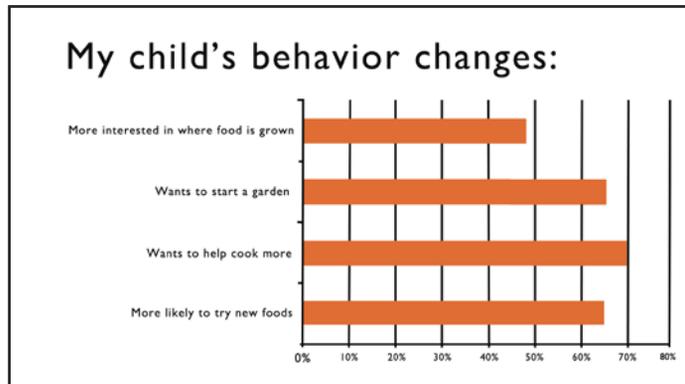
51 nutrition, education, and Dietetic Interns participated in farm to school activities at learning labs and area schools.

Together they logged **1,360** 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.



“She tasted some new things and got very excited every time there was a recipe. She even had us make some of the recipes at home. As a result, we’ve made her own recipe notebook at home.”

- 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.

43 schools from the Appalachian Grown region were certified during the 2015-2016 school year from 13 districts in NC, SC, and TN.

Looking Forward

Highlights of the upcoming year...

- Expansion of Growing Minds @ University to work with more Dietetic Intern programs
- Creating more farm to school resources
- Southeast regional Farm to School Conference in September
- Continued emphasis on farm to preschool
- Continuing to grow the statewide NC Farm to Preschool Network



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
- Download farm to preschool resources including our F2P Toolkit and preK *This Week in the Garden* activity sheets
- Find out how to donate and support our work
- Sign up for our monthly farm to school enews
- Find out how we can assist you through 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.

Please consider donating to ASAP!

www.asapconnections.org

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Asap
Local Food
Strong Farms
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