

“Student Growers Cooperative”

Agripreneur Training Program Description

Program Objectives:

- To provide high school students with hands-on agricultural and entrepreneurial training using high tunnel greenhouses to produce vegetables.
- To provide students and parents food preservation skills.
- To increase awareness and consumption of locally-grown vegetables by students and parents.

Year 1 - Tomatoes

Year 2 – Cucumbers, Green Beans, and Melons?

Program Overview:

The “Student Growers Cooperative” is a student run program involving the production and sale of an agricultural product at each of five school districts (Ashland, Washburn, Bayfield, South Shore, Drummond) using each district’s high tunnel. Between May 15 and September 15 each year, two student apprentices at each district will work with a district liaison and the regional Farm-to-School support team to plan, plant, manage, harvest, process, and sell an agricultural product. Each district will grow the same crop each year. This will allow for collaborative information sharing and efficiency of delivery of educational programming across the districts.

Production and Product Sales:

Each school district will use the tunnels for short-season cold-hardy crops in classroom teaching from March 15 to May 15 and from September 15 until dormancy. The “Student Growers Cooperative” Program will use each high tunnel from May 15 through September 15 (Appendix 1). A portion of product grown between May 15 and September 15 will be marketed fresh direct to parents on a pre-order basis with the remaining used to make value-added products (tomato sauce, pickles, green beans) for sale or use by the school district. Each district will determine the best mix of product use with respect to how much is sold fresh, how much is used by the district, and how much is processed and sold. In general, the program will make more money if product is sold to parents and staff at market prices. If the school district wants to use the product, but cannot pay comparable market prices, then the school district may have to subsidize the apprentice stipends.

If a district wishes to process the tomatoes into sauce, cucumbers into pickles, or green beans into dilly or frozen beans, then each district will have to determine logistics for making it happen including determining licensing and liability requirements. At a minimum, the Farm-to-School Support Team will organize and implement one processing “party” at each district in the tomato year. This will include assembling volunteers, providing training, assembling ingredients and supplies, and assisting with batch processing.

In the tomato year, one option is for all #1 tomatoes to be sold and all #2 tomatoes be frozen as harvested and then processed the second week of September. This would require each district to provide kitchen space periodically during the growing season to allow the apprentices to pre-process the tomatoes as well as freezer space to store roughly 200 lbs of tomatoes. During the cucumber and pickle

season, all product harvested during a designated one or two weeks of the season could be processed with all other product being sold fresh. This would require providing kitchen space one or two days during the processing week(s).

Program Staffing:

Student Apprentices

Two student apprentices at each district will be chosen to participate in the Program running from May 5 through September 20 of each year. Students will be freshman, sophomores, or juniors as of September 15, 2016. During the first year of the program (2015), each student received a \$500 stipend upon successful completion of the Program. A similar student stipend will be given at the discretion of each school during the program's second year (2016). Apprentices will be expected to provide 3 hours of labor each week during the school year and roughly 8 hours per week during the summer.

Apprentices (and parents of the apprentices) will sign an apprenticeship agreement clearly specifying the duties and obligations of the apprenticeship. The apprentices will report to the district liaison and each district will be responsible for the application, screening, hiring, and supervision process.

Suggested application and agreement forms will be provided by the Farm-to-School Team (Appendix 2).

The Farm-to-School Support Team will organize group training opportunities during the growing season including: crop-specific production, pest scouting and management, finances and bookkeeping, and marketing and sales. The Team will coordinate transportation with the goal to provide rides in County-owned vehicles for the apprentices, however, the district liaisons may also be asked to provide rides to the training events.

District Liaison

Each school district will designate a staff or parent liaison to the Program. This person will be responsible for direct oversight of the 2 student workers and work with the Farm-to-School Support Team in development and implementation of each year's production, harvest, and marketing plan. The liaison will also be responsible for management of the Program finances at their district. Each district shall be responsible for providing funds for the district liaison, if necessary.

Farm-to-School Support Team

The Farm-to-School Support Team will work with the apprentices and liaisons to develop a production plan for each year. The production plan will include an enterprise budget, production timeline, food safety and worker safety plans, crop variety recommendations, and pest management plan. A member of the Team will visit each high tunnel at least once per month during the program to answer questions and assist with management. In addition, the Team will organize and implement trainings and field tours for the apprentices and liaisons. Transportation will be provided by Team members.

2016 Team Members: Jason Fischbach, Matt Cogger, Lilly Soshnik-Tanquist, Ian Meeker

Program Financials:

Each district was provided a high-tunnel greenhouse through a grant from the Bayfield Regional Food Producers Cooperative. Each district also received \$1,500 of funding for the 2015 program year to pay for the apprentices and initial supplies. These funds were intended to cover the first year of production, so that a profit could be generated to fund the next year. There are no additional funds available to the districts through the Bayfield Regional Food Producers Cooperative.

Appendix 1: Production Plans and Timeline

Note: All dates shown are approximate and will vary depending on the season.

Cucumbers

Seeds planted: by June 1

Ideal spacing: High tunnel arranged in five rows. Middle row planted with cucumber plants at 12" plant spacing and 4' row spacing

Varieties: Corinto (slicer), Excelsior (pickling), Katrina (slicer), Socrates (slicer), Vertina (pickling)

Trellising: Cargo net fastened to soil and greenhouse structure

Fertilizer: Soil tested prior to planting, potassium sulfate and rock phosphate added as necessary, calcium nitrate applied twice per year

Weed control: Manual weeding, plastic mulch, or landscape fabric, school choice

Management Timeline:

May 13 - 15 – prep soil, layout drip irrigation, apply mulch, install trellis netting

May 15 - June 1: plant (June 1 at the latest)

5 days after planting: fertilize with calcium nitrate and water-in

May 20 – September 15: manage temperature daily, pull weeds 2 times/week, train laterals 2 times/week

July 15 – September 15: harvest 3 times/week

September 15: target date for removal to accommodate transplanting of fall greens

Green Beans

Seeds planted: by June 1

Varieties: Jade

Ideal spacing: High tunnel arranged in five beds each 2' wide. The two beds on either side of the cucumber bed, direct seeded with two rows of bush green beans

Trellising: none

Fertilizer: Soil tested prior to planting, potassium sulfate and rock phosphate added as necessary

Weed control: Manual weeding

Management Timeline:

May 13 -15: prep soil, layout drip irrigation

May 15 – June 1: Begin planting 1 row of green beans every 2 weeks (There will be two rows in each bed = 4 rows total)

July 15 - Sept 15: harvest 2 times/week

September 15: target date for removal to accommodate transplanting of fall greens

Melons

Seeds planted: by June 1

Ideal spacing: High tunnel arranged in five rows. Outer two rows planted with melon plants at 12" plant spacing and 4' row spacing

Varieties: EarliChamp, Halona

Trellising: None

Fertilizer: Soil tested prior to planting, potassium sulfate and rock phosphate added as necessary, calcium nitrate applied twice per year

Weed control: Manual weeding, plastic mulch, or landscape fabric, school choice

Management Timeline:

May 13-15 – prep soil, layout drip irrigation, apply mulch

May 15 – June 1: plant (June 1 at the latest)

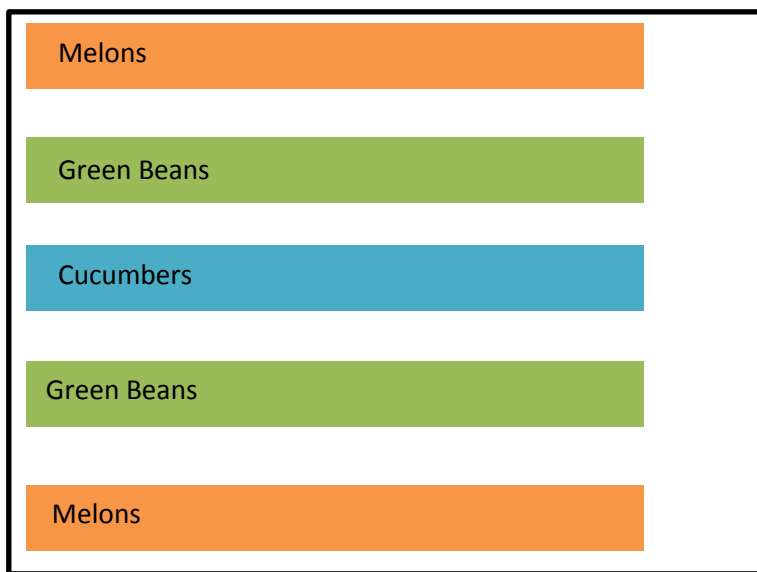
May 20: fertilize with calcium nitrate and water-in

May 20 – September 15: manage temperature daily, pull weeds 2 times/week

August 1 – September 15: harvest 3 times/week

September 15: target date for removal to accommodate transplanting of fall greens

Example high tunnel planting:



Appendix 2: Apprenticeship Hiring Forms

XYZ School Student Grower's Cooperative Agripreneur Apprenticeship Program

POSITION: Agripreneur Apprentice

APPRENTICESHIP SITE: XYZ School High Tunnel

SUPERVISOR: XYZ School Liaison

Duties

- Work cooperatively with School Liaison and Farm-to-School Support Team to manage the school's high tunnel greenhouse for production of vegetables
- Perform weekly maintenance in the high tunnel including planting, weeding, pruning, trellising, watering, and harvesting
- Develop a marketing and sales program for sale of harvested produce
- Develop an enterprise budget and conduct bookkeeping for management of the high tunnel finances
- Assist Master Preservers and School Food Service Staff in processing produce
- Participate in trainings, hands-on learning sessions and farm and facility tours

Hours and Days

- Program Dates: May 2nd 2016 - September 30th 2016
- 3 hours/week afterschool for 5 weeks (May 16th – June 17th) (15 hours)
- 5 hours/week for 8 weeks (June 20th – August 12th) (40 hours)
- 8 hours/week for 4 weeks (August 15th – September 9th) (32 hours)
- 3 hours/week afterschool for 3 weeks (September 12th – September 30th) (6 hours)
- Total of 90-100 hours of work for the season
- Schedules can be flexible to account for vacations, summer jobs, or other commitments as long as the necessary work is completed

Qualifications

- Must be entering 9th-11th grade or equivalent in September 2016
- Enthusiasm for farming/gardening
- Interest in learning about production and sales of produce
- Work well with others and enjoys working independently on a task
- Punctual and reliable attendance
- Ability to conduct moderately strenuous agricultural work such as planting, hoeing, hand-weeding, pruning, and harvesting

Compensation and Benefits

- \$500 stipend to be awarded at the end of the apprenticeship
- Opportunity to earn additional income depending on success of production and sale of produce
- Opportunity to take home fresh produce throughout the growing season
- ½ School Credit Given

XYZ School District
Application for Student Growers Cooperative
Agripreneur Apprenticeship Program

APPLICATION *(Due by April 1st, 2016)*

Name: _____ Birth Date: _____
Student Grade: _____ Social Security #: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____ Cell: _____
Email: _____
Parent Name(s): _____ Phone #s: _____

Why are you interested in the Agripreneur Apprenticeship? (400 words or less, use additional paper as necessary)

Describe your experience related to gardening, farming or food production. (400 words or less, use additional paper as necessary)

Work Experience

Employer: _____ Supervisor's Name: _____
Address: _____ Phone: _____
Job Title: _____ Dates of Employment: _____
Describe your duties: _____

Employer: _____ Supervisor's Name: _____
Address: _____ Phone: _____
Job Title: _____ Dates of Employment: _____
Describe your duties: _____

Will you be employed anywhere else during the time of your apprenticeship? If so, how do you plan to manage the two schedules?

References:

Please supply 2 references, 1 teacher and 1 community Member (not related to you!)

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

*Student must complete all employment forms
prior to starting an apprenticeship position.*