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Assessment Kit for Garden Startup

The Yellow Tractor Program advocates for sustainable growth by clearing a path for food security, building opportunities for healthier life skills, and providing a safe place for children to grow not only food, but themselves

Yellow Tractor Program (YTP) is a non-profit organization dedicated to **creating and facilitating the use of vegetable gardens** for school-age children. By partnering with various volunteer organizations, YTP **connects workforces with garden projects**. We align, connect, and can provide the gardening **organization, supplies, and resources** needed for volunteers and communities who want to establish or maintain a garden project. We provide **garden-related curriculum meeting national standards** in Math, Science, History, Art, Social Studies, Language Arts, and Health and Nutrition. The Yellow Tractor Program **advocates for sustainable growth** by clearing a path for **food security**, building **opportunities for healthier life skills**, and providing a **safe place for children to grow not only food, but themselves**.

The inspiration behind the Yellow Tractor Program comes from the **desire to help children eat healthier**, thinking about what is good for their bodies, and providing the opportunity to **make healthy choices** for themselves. This creates the essential fuel needed for a **food-secure and nutrition-rich community**. The growing garden movement recognizes the importance of promoting a **connection to the earth**, to our food, and to preserving outdoor space for students. **Raising eco- and agriculturally-literate children**, who are nutritionally rich is the focus of the Yellow Tractor Program. Implementing the Yellow Tractor Program program helps to encourage **healthy eating** at home and at school; **a significant strategy for health organizations and school wellness programs**. We call this the "Circle of Health." Yellow Tractor Program provides a platform for additional learning: science, math, the values of **respect, responsibility and cooperation**, and the sense of accomplishment that can be gained individually and as a group. MORE ON HEALTH CARE COMPONENT

Please complete this form, ASSESSMENT KIT FOR GARDEN STARTUP
and fax back at 301.774.4270
or complete online at: www.yellowtractorprogram.org

Any questions? Please call Amy Fox 847.899.8964 or Theresa Mezebish 240.994.2474
email questions? amybrownfox@yellowtractorprogram.org
and tmmez@yellowtractorprogram.org

Food Banks and Food Dispersal Agencies



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Why do you want to start a garden?

GARDEN HARVEST RECIPIENTS

- Is it going to be a community garden for clients to grow their own food?
- Have you received feedback on desire or request for a garden from local participants?
- Will it be a garden that will yield produce for agencies, a community kitchen?
- Will the produce grown be given to clients?

STAFFING

- Who and how many staff do you have to help manage the garden?
- Is your garden year round (staff)?
- Is your garden seasonal (staff)? What months will you need staff for the garden?

OUTSIDE RESOURCES

- How will you incorporate volunteers?
- Are there resources within your community for financial help? Tool donation? Volunteer help?

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EXISTING RESOURCES AND APPLICATIONS

- What existing supplies do you have for the garden (hoses, storage, etc.)
- Will you need any type of fencing for security reasons?
- Can you utilize the garden with a Kids Cafe Program? How can you manage it successfully?
- Is there a RECIPE 4 SUCCESS PROGRAM available to your participants?
- Are you aware of grant opportunities and utilizing community resources?

COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- What is your communication message to maximize the impact your garden has on the community?
- Can you engage local schools and students in your gardening efforts?
- How might you be able to incorporate the garden into your nutritional programs?



Align your Organization

- Through after school programs (Kids Café) implementing a garden and utilizing YTP curriculum.
- With corporate sponsorship and donation partnered with labor sources (volunteers, local farmers, employees, etc) for needy areas.
- Through alignment with various outreach community organizations (like Boys and Girls Clubs, Boys and Girl Scouts, Rotary, etc.)
- With Interfaith Organizations.
- With Sister church alignment and partnership.
- With Sister school alignment and partnership.

How to Start and Sustain The Basic Overview with Keypoints for a Successful Garden

- Desire
- Location: 6-8 hours of sun daily
 - close to water source
- Size: 50 x 50 feet optimally
- Supplies and Volunteers
- Volunteers needed to sustain a garden project
- Who needs to approve

A **desire** within the community for a healthier, more sustainable lifestyle will drive the successful implementation of your garden. It may be a desire to eat healthier or less expensively, by growing our own fruits and vegetables. It may be a way to give back to the community through teamwork. It may be to change eating behaviors in addressing the healthcare issues of obesity. All you need is a plot of land, a rooftop, a sunny windowsill, or even numerous pots on steps. Even Parking Lots work for Raised beds.

Yellow Tractor Program recommends utilizing raised beds to avoid issues of soil toxicity and allow for ease of use for all in the community. Buildout for eight garden beds requires approximately one (5-hour) days of work outdoors (with approximately 10 volunteers). If you would like to also include the recommended fruit trees and bushes, add another 5 hour day for planting (with approximately 10 volunteers.)

When starting your garden, the **location** needs to be decided first. The garden must be close to a water source and get between 6-8 hours of sun everyday. Generally, a garden in most areas of the country runs for between 6-9 months out of the year. The busiest times of the gardening season are April through October.

Garden development includes:

- determining location which gets 6-8 hours full sun and close to a water spigot
- assembling your raised beds
- mixing and preparing the soil



- ordering and planting seeds or plants
- tending the garden (weeding and watering)
- harvesting the garden, and finally preparing the garden for rest (usually winter).

It takes about 5-10 **volunteers** (the more the better!) to build out 8 beds. You will also need a rotating group of volunteers like students, teachers and/or parents to tend to the various duties of the garden. The supply list can be found on our website.

A group of at least **20 volunteers** can easily run a garden with one or two leaders. Some organizations structure their garden by school, grade and or/group (Boy Scouts, retirement home, organization for special needs, etc.) Each will then care for a row, or build a specific part of the garden, or perhaps attend to a certain function of the garden (i.e. watering, weeding, compost pile, etc).

Developing your garden space may require **approval** from various entities depending upon its location. Please check with your local administrator whether it is a school principal or landlord. Many free resources may also be available from local nurseries, agricultural extension offices, and other gardening schools.

Yellow Tractor Program Provides:

- By partnering with various organizations, YTP connects workforces with garden projects.
- We align, connect, and can provide the gardening organization, supplies, and resources needed for volunteers and communities who want to establish or maintain a garden project.
- Curriculum lesson plans for grades 1 through 8 --national/state curriculum requirements are met for math, science, history, social sciences, and nutrition/health.
- Activities on Leadership and Team Building.
- We are developing project-based and work-based activities for grades 9-12 with mentoring opportunities.
- Monthly newsletter with reminders, updates, grants opportunities and book reviews. Teacher profiles and their success stories are highlighted. Helpful hints, activities, and extensions to lesson plans help ensure the success of your garden.
- Monthly To-Do list for your garden.
- Book reviews with curriculum supplementation noted for teachers, educators and parents. Feedback from educators will also be noted for specific audiences.
- Special discount pricing on garden materials and supplies through our "Taproot Partners."
- Templates/Flow Charts for starting your own garden, organizing a fundraiser, and selling at your local farmer's market.
- Educational Materials: discounts on our books to use as fundraisers or to tailor fit your own personal message/content within story (back matter and cover.)
- *Our Generous Garden*, nationally acclaimed story by Anne Nagro (also a bilingual edition)
- *Our Super Garden* by Anne Nagro. The garden-to-table treasure, where children explore eating healthy by eating what they grow. (also a bilingual edition)
- *Beginning Gardener's Companion Manual* (alliance with Chicago Botanic Garden and YTP)

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Assessment Sheet for Growing a Garden

Please fax or email back to:
Yellow Tractor Program
301.774.4270

Or enter this form online at www.yellowtractorprogram.com

Name/Organization: _____
Address/Location: _____
Street: _____
Street 2: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Postal code/zip code: _____
Phone number: _____

Contact person or person completing questionnaire: _____

Does the space get at least 6-8 hours of full sun a day? (if not, find a location that does!): _____

Please measure the space you would like to use and give dimensions (A good size to start with is 20 x 30 feet): _____

Do you have an adequate water supply?: _____ How close (feet) is the spigot to the garden?: _____

If indoors, do you have bright sunny windows that get 6-8 hours of sun everyday? (You can also garden indoors through the winter months if outdoor space is unavailable.): _____

What type of food would you like to grow? (Give a list of types of plants you would like to grow, i.e. vegetables, fruit trees, berry bushes):

What type of other things would you like to grow? (Herbs, flowers, etc.):

Will there be teachers involved if this is a school setting?: _____ Are there volunteers involved?: _____

How many volunteers? (Please have volunteers fill out the *Volunteer List provided*)

How often will children be visiting this space? Daily: _____ Weekly: _____ Monthly: _____

What ages of children will be visiting this space?: _____

What is your primary goal for the garden? (i.e. curriculum based, nutrition, giving back to community etc.):

What type of workforce will you have during the summer months? (In general for an 8 bed garden (6 x 4 feet each) you will need 5-10 volunteers to rotate through 3-5 days per week.):

Do you plan on using a garden plan to map out your garden space? (Please refer to the sample garden plan on our resource pages on www.yellowtractorprogram.com if you need help.): _____

Do you need help finding volunteers for your workforce?: _____

When do you plan on starting your garden?: _____

What garden zone are you in? (If you don't know, you can check this online or call us and we can tell you.): _____

Do you have any supplies?: _____ What are they? Please refer to our Garden Supply List (short) (*Garden Supply List provided*).

Please let us know what supplies you will need through the Yellow Tractor Program, by filling in the *Garden Supply List* with quantities.

Do you need a Request for Donation sheet? (This can help you solicit donated supplies from local vendors, families, etc. We also have supplies available through Yellow Tractor Program.): _____

Will you build a compost bin for creating healthy soil through collection?: _____ (Composting can be done all year long and is a great way to make good use of grass clipping, leaves, old fruit and vegetables, coffee grounds, egg shells, etc. The top of the line bin is about \$600, but you can easily create one with 4 Pallets or a simple aerated garbage can.)

Will you be starting your garden with plants (more expensive): _____ or seeds?: _____ Check one

Do you want this to be a completely organic garden?: _____

Can you collect data on what you have grown and how much you have harvested? (With a simple scale you can easily weigh your harvest.): _____

Do you have access to a computer?: _____

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Basic Supply List (short)

**Garden size 50 x 50 feet is approx. 8 beds, (6 x 4 feet each), 10 fruit trees, 20 fruit bushes
10 volunteers**

How many needed

- 2 Short-tined Rake (for loosening and leveling much and loose soil) _____
- 1 Hose (make sure to check distance from water source. Most hoses sold in 25 and 50 foot increments) _____
- 10 Trowels (for digging holes to plant flowers and seeds) _____
- 5 Shovels (for digging and moving soil, rocks, or dirt) _____
- 5 D-handled cutting spades (for digging and creating defined borders and can be pushed into ground easily) _____
- 1 Watering wand (long arm) and attaches to hose for gentle watering _____
- 2 Sprinklers (for watering large area) _____
- 1 Hose for drip irrigation (for laying on ground with least water waste and evaporation) _____
- 10 Pruners (for cleanup at harvest end and pruning back growth during season) _____
- 4 Watering can _____
- 1 Wheelbarrow (for moving soil, compost, plants, harvest, equipment) _____
- 2 Buckets large (for weeding) _____
- 10 **prs.** Garden gloves _____
- 2 Pitchfork (one small and one large to fluff up soil and stir compost) _____
- 20 Stakes minimum (for marking garden beds and supporting twine boundaries) _____
- 1 Twine/string _____
- 1 Scale for weighing harvest _____

Garden Size 100 x 100 feet 16 Beds (6 x 4 each) 20 fruit trees, 40 fruit bushes (20 volunteers)

- 2 Short-tined Rake (for loosening and leveling much and loose soil) _____
- 2 Hose (make sure to check distance from water source. Most hoses sold in 25 and 50 foot increments) _____
- 20 Trowels (for digging holes to plant flowers and seeds) _____
- 10 Shovels (for digging and moving soil, rocks, or dirt) _____
- 10 D-handled cutting spades (for digging and creating defined borders and can be pushed into ground easily) _____
- 1 Watering wand long arm and attaches to hose for gentle watering _____
- 2 Sprinklers (for watering large area) _____
- 2 Hose for drip irrigation (for laying on ground with least water waste and evaporation) _____
- 20 Pruners (for cleanup at harvest end and pruning back growth during season) _____
- 4 Watering can _____
- 1 Wheelbarrow (for moving soil, compost, plants, harvest, equipment) _____
- 2 Buckets large (for weeding) _____
- 20 **prs.** Garden gloves _____
- 2 Pitchfork (one small and one large to fluff up soil and stir compost) _____
- 40 Stakes minimum (for marking garden beds and supporting twine boundaries) _____
- 2 Twine/string _____
- 1 Scale for weighing harvest _____

| For 30 Volunteers | <i>How many needed</i> | |
|---|------------------------|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Short-tined Rake (for loosening and leveling much and loose soil) | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Hose (make sure to check distance from water source. Most hoses sold in 25 and 50 foot increments) | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 30 Trowels (for digging holes to plant flowers and seeds) | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15 Shovels (for digging and moving soil, rocks, or dirt) | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15 D-handled cutting spades (for digging and creating defined borders and can be pushed into ground easily) | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Watering wand long arm and attaches to hose for gentle watering | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Sprinklers (for watering large area) | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Hose for drip irrigation (for laying on ground with least amount of water waste and evaporation) | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 30 Pruners (for cleanup at harvest end and pruning back growth during season) | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Watering can | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Wheelbarrow (for moving soil, compost, plants, harvest, equipment) | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Buckets large (for weeding) | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 30 prs. Garden gloves | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Pitchforks (one small and two large to fluff up soil and stir compost) | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 40 Stakes minimum (for marking garden beds and supporting twine boundaries) | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Twine/string | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Scale for weighing harvest | | _____ |



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Yellow Tractor Program Volunteer Sign Up Sheet

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Email Address: _____

Garden Site(example, school or organization name): _____

Contact Person for Garden Site: _____

Site Address: _____

Street: _____

Street 2: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Estimated hours to devote to garden: _____

Time available(Check all that apply): Daytime: _____ Weekends: _____ Holiday Breaks: _____