HEALTHY FOODS for HEALTHY kids
THE FIRST STATE SCHOOL GARDEN EXPERTS

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UPCOMING EVENTS

NEW CASTLE COUNTY

Skyline Middle School's new garden was built in March by volunteers who braved freezing temperatures. Huge thanks to Brown Advisory, AstraZeneca, and The Wawa Foundation for funding the garden.

KENT COUNTY

Governor Matt Meyer and Secretary of Education Cindy Marten visited East Dover ECC's school garden on Earth Day, joining students to water plants and enjoy reading time in the garden.

SUSSEX COUNTY

Volunteers from the Village Improvement Association in Rehoboth Beach packed over 1,300 spring seed packets for our partner schools. We're so grateful for their support!

SPRING SCHOOL GARDEN UPDATES

Curiosity comes alive when kids step into the garden, and this spring HFHK was thrilled to welcome five new partner schools and 3,500 additional students into our program — including two brand-new middle school gardens.

Skyline Middle School's garden came to life thanks to generous volunteers from Brown Advisory Group, community members from the Red Clay Consolidated School District, and dedicated school staff and students. Within just a few weeks of the build, students were already digging into the soil and discovering what they could grow.

Thanks to the support of the Delaware Department of Education, four more schools joined the HFHK family: Laurel Elementary, Beacon Middle, David E. Robinson Elementary, and Brick Mill Elementary. With this exciting expansion, an estimated 3,000 more students gained firsthand experience learning how to grow their own food and the science behind it!

Gardens established during the fall season proudly entered their second growing season, with more than 85 educators participating in garden trainings designed to incorporate edible education into the classroom.

Students at all of our partner schools were curios and excited to learn in their garden. For some, lessons connected to gardening experiences at home. For many others, it was their very first chance to plant a seed, harvest a vegetable, and discover where fresh food truly comes from.





Brick Mill Elementary Welcomes Special Guests for Spring Harvest

Brick Mill Elementary's garden was full of energy and excitement on May 28 as students, staff, and visiting stakeholders came together for a celebratory spring harvest. Students picked an impressive 97 pounds of produce — a record for the school — including lettuce, rainbow chard, spinach, carrots, and sugar snap peas.

Guests Kyle Brolis from the Food Bank of Delaware and Katie Coombes from ChristianaCare joined the harvest and had the chance to see HFHK's seed-to-cafeteria program in action.

The morning was filled with proud smiles, curious questions, and plenty of "look what I picked!" moments.

We are grateful for the Delaware Department of Education for funding this garden.

Growing School Gardens Summit 2026



In February, **our team joined more than 500 garden educators and partners at the Growing School Gardens Summit in Phoenix, AZ**—a national gathering supporting 19,000 schools and more than 10 million students. The Summit offered inspiring sessions on fundraising, early-childhood nutrition, composting, and creating inclusive garden spaces, along with tours of school and community gardens across the Phoenix area.

A highlight was a **Solution Seeking Session led by Executive Director Lydia Sarson and Program Manager Jen Cipolla,** where attendees explored strategies for bringing garden-grown produce into school cafeterias.

We are grateful to the Summit organizers—Sprouts Healthy Communities Foundation, the School Garden Support Organization Network, and Life Lab—and to the Delaware Department of Agriculture for supporting this valuable learning opportunity. Our team returned energized and ready to bring new ideas back to Delaware's school gardens.

Celebrating 20 years of school gardens

Did you know the very first HFHK school garden was planted 20 years ago at Springer Middle School in Wilmington? That milestone calls for a celebration! This fall, HFHK will host a Harvest Festival at Springer Middle School to honor two decades of growing healthy habits with Delaware students.

More details coming soon, stay tuned.



USDA Patrick Leahy Farm to School Program

BIG ANNOUNCEMENT

HFHK Awarded Major USDA Farm to School Grant

Healthy Foods for Healthy Kids has been awarded $294,390 through the USDA's Patrick Leahy Farm to School Grant program—our third, and largest, award from this program since being selected for USDA's inaugural cohort of recipients in 2012.

We are proud to be **the only Delaware nonprofit among 52 national recipients in this record-breaking round of funding, in which 8% of applicants received awards.** Over the next two years, this award will allow HFHK to have greater on the ground presence, bringing more consistent, high-quality school garden education to as many as 20 additional partner schools across Delaware, totaling 83 partner schools by June, 2028.

FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE

2026 FARM TO SCHOOL GRANTEE

HFHK Staff Selected for National School Garden Leadership Institute

Two HFHK staff members have been selected to represent HFHK alongside 19 other School Garden Support Organizations (SGSOs) from across the country to attend the School Garden Leadership Institute this June in Santa Cruz, CA — an annual retreat hosted by Life Lab, Whole Kids, and the SGSO Network! Attendees will gather for a week to discuss key issues facing our programs, share promising practices, create organizational action plans, and develop resources to share more broadly with SGSOs across the country. We look forward to bringing these lessons back to Delaware — and sharing more soon!

LIFE LAB

HFHK Honored at the 16th Annual DAEE Conference



In February, Healthy Foods for Healthy Kids was proudly recognized at the 16th Annual Delaware Association for Environmental Education (DAEE) Conference, where both our organization and our Program Director, Jen Cipolla, received awards for excellence in environmental education. **HFHK received the Exemplary Partnership Award and Jen was honored as an Outstanding Field Educator.**

This year's conference theme, "Working Toward a Sustainable Future," brought together educators and partners for a full day of learning, connection, and fresh ideas about getting students outdoors and weaving environmental education into the school day.

Our Program Coordinator, Nathan, also led an engaging and informative session on building community support through volunteers—an essential part of sustaining school garden programs.

We are incredibly proud of our team and grateful to be part of a community that believes deeply in the importance of human and environmental connection.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPRING 2026 MAJOR DONORS ($500+)



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THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR DONORS FOR GROWING WITH US

Thank you for

Turning the water on!



We are grateful for all DoMore 24 donors who supported our campaign this spring and helped raise $6,000 for irrigation systems.

HFHK in the Community



From volunteer fairs, environmental summits and health & wellness events to school nights, plant sales, and Earth Day celebrations, HFHK has been everywhere this season—sharing veggie wellness, connecting with families, and spreading the magic of school gardens.

If you'd like HFHK to join your upcoming event, we'd love to be there. We'll bring our prize wheel, seed bar, and our biggest smiles to engage your attendees.

To invite us to your event, reach out to nellis@hfhk.org.

UPCOMING GARDEN BUILDS

06/30 (Rain Date 07/02) - Claymont Elementary
07/07 (Rain Date 07/15) - Keene Elementary
07/14 (Rain Date 07/16) - Mispillion Elementary
07/21 (Rain Date 07/23) - Albert H. Jones Elementary
08/04 (Rain Date 08/06) - Springer Middle School
08/11 (Rain Date 08/13) - Leasure Elementary



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