HEALTHY FOODS for HEALTHY kids
THE FIRST STATE SCHOOL GARDEN EXPERTS

Longwood Foundation's generous 3-year grant is helping HFHK build 10 new schools per year through 2028!

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PROGRAM UPDATE

Six New Partner Schools launch Garden Education Program

Fall 2025 was a season of incredible growth for HFHK. After having their brand-new gardens built over the summer, the five schools listed below officially joined our HFHK family.

An additional 2,500 students planted, tended, harvested and enjoyed an array of vegetables – over 230 pounds of turnips, radishes, and leafy greens – before tucking their beds in for winter.



Hartly | Maclary | Brennen | East Dover ECC | Lake Forest South

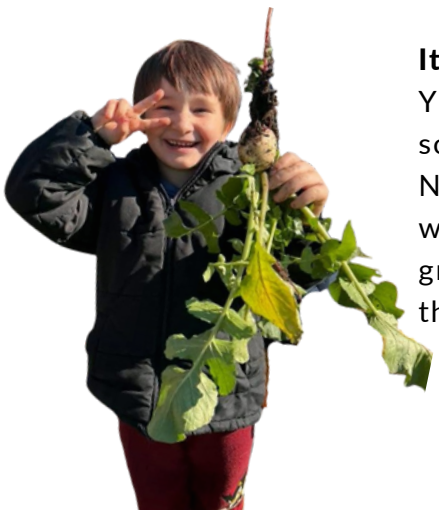
Record Breaking Program Expansion

HFHK's Program Team maintained a rigorous schedule, building another four new school gardens and rebuilding the aging garden infrastructure at longtime partner, Lombardy Elementary.

Nearly 3,000 students at these schools will begin planting in March, reaping the benefits of hands-on, collaborative STEM education as they apply classroom science to growing their own food.



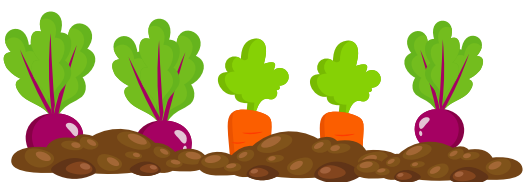
Laurel | Beacon Middle | David E Robinson | Lombardy | Brick Mill



It Takes a Village

YOUR engagement brings HFHK's vision to support a school garden in every school closer to reality.

Notably, 167 volunteers dedicated ~922 hours of hard work from July 1 - Dec 31, 2025 to bring the joy of growing and eating fresh vegetables to children across the state. Your support matters; contribute today!





HFHK AROUND THE STATE

Fall 2025 Highlights

5 new partner schools

2 new school districts

2,565 additional students reached

2 school gardens rebuilt

232 pounds of vegetables harvested

167 volunteers

922 service hours

New Castle County



- Howard High School Teacher Academy students partnered with Stubbs Early Education Center to assist young gardeners with their school garden.
- HFHK and University of Delaware conducted a research project in fall 2025 to measure the impact of HFHK's garden education program on students. Thank you to participating schools: **Booker T. Washington, Hartly, Joseph E. Johnson, Maclary, Silver Lake, and Southern Elementary.** Look out for research findings in our next newsletter.

Kent County

- HFHK is grateful to Senator Buckson and Representative Yearick who joined other volunteers to build school gardens at Robinson Elementary and East Dover ECC.





Sussex County

- HFHK is thankful for Representative Claire Snyder-Hall's steadfast support. She joined us at our Meet Our Heroes Sussex gathering and continues to champion hands-on garden education for students across Delaware.



MEET OUR HEROES - SUSSEX COUNTY CELEBRATION

In November, Healthy Foods for Healthy Kids hosted its second Meet Our Heroes gathering in Milford, DE. The event brought together a close-knit community of educators, volunteers, and supporters who champion garden education across Sussex County. The evening was filled with heartfelt stories of school gardens becoming places of connection, healing, and hands-on discovery — "classrooms without grades" where children find joy, pride, and the power of growing something themselves. It was an inspiring reminder of the lasting impact these gardens have on students and the communities around them.

Thank you to our incredible sponsors for making the event possible

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Lydia Sarson, HFHK executive director, with Our Meet Our Heroes speakers. From left to right: Don Ott, Sussex Academy, and Harmony Ostram-Tuxward of Lake Forest South ES, Lydia Sarson, Doris Person, Rehoboth ES.

HFHK BOARD NEWS

In Memoriam: Gary Linarducci



Healthy Foods for Healthy Kids honors the life and service of former board member Gary Linarducci who passed away peacefully on December 27, 2025 after a long battle with cancer. Gary joined the HFHK board in 2022 and quickly became a cherished part of our community. At his first meeting, he joked about being a famously picky eater who avoided "green things," but he believed deeply in HFHK's mission. As a social security disability attorney, he witnessed daily the impact essential programs like HFHK have on building healthier communities—and he wanted to support the people doing the work.

Gary lived a life rooted in service, contributing his time and heart to HFHK, the Kalmar Nyckel, Delaware Greenways, and many other organizations. His generosity, humor, and steady presence made a lasting impact.

Welcoming HFHK's new board member: Phillip Gerecke



Phillip Gerecke, is an accountant with Belfint, Lyons & Shuman, P.A., specializing in international tax compliance and is currently pursuing his CPA license. Originally from Germany, he experienced nature-based education firsthand as a student through school gardens and as an adult by working in early childhood education at a Waldorf pre-school. Phillip is excited to contribute his professional expertise to our organization and share his enthusiasm about HFHK's mission with his community in Delaware.

2025 REGIONAL GARDEN-BASED LEARNING SUMMIT

In October 2025, our programming team joined garden educators from across the Mid-Atlantic at the Regional Garden-Based Learning Summit in Baltimore, MD. With 119 participants from 64 organizations, the Summit was a vibrant space for collaboration, creativity, and shared learning.

HFHK Program team returned inspired by fresh ideas—from new teaching strategies to student-leadership concepts like Compost Captains—and energized by the strong network of partners working to grow school gardens across the region. Jen and Hannah shared Lightning Talks highlighting Delaware's expanding district partnerships and the connection between our work and the statewide Food is Medicine movement.



THANK YOU TO OUR FALL 2025 MAJOR DONORS ($500+)

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St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Special thanks to the Longwood Foundation for their support of HFHK over the next three years!

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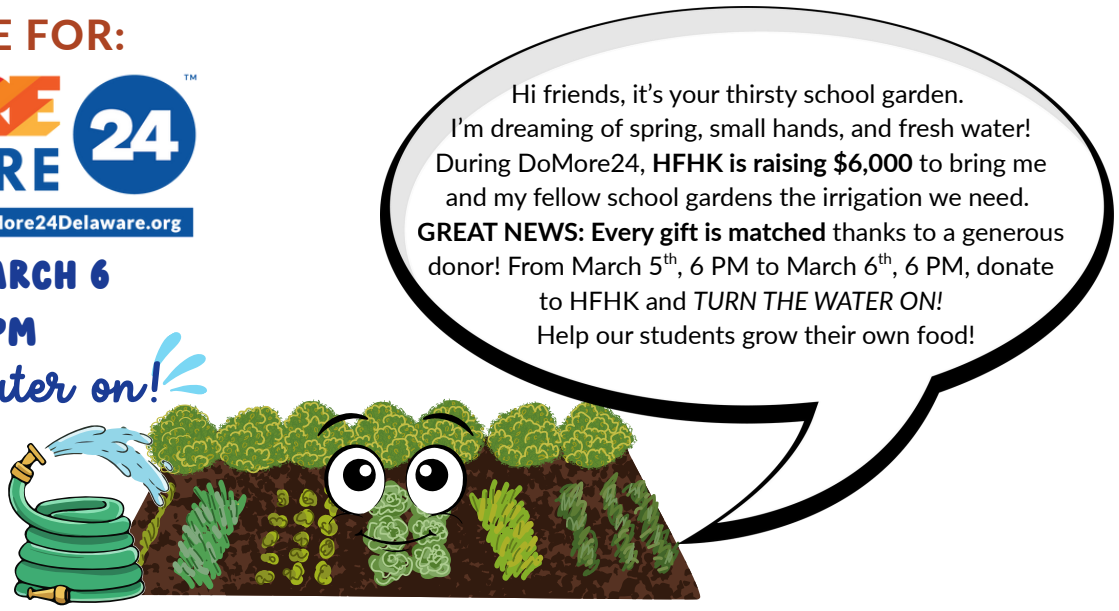
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THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR DONORS FOR GROWING WITH US

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MARCH 5 - MARCH 6
6 PM - 6 PM
Turn the water on!



www.domore24delaware.org/fundraisers/healthy-foods-for-healthy-kids

COMING UP NEXT FOR HFHK

Feb 19-22 - HFHK Staff attends SGSO National Conference in Phoenix, AZ
Feb 20 - Delaware Youth Environmental Summit, Chase Center in Wilmington, DE
March 5th, 6pm - March 6th, 6 pm - DoMore24 Delaware - "Turn the Water On"
March 16 - planting season begins, 5 new partner schools launch the HFHK garden program
May - June: Harvest Celebrations across the state

DO YOU WANT HFHK TO PRESENT AT YOUR EVENT?

Send us an email at info@hfhk.org to learn more!