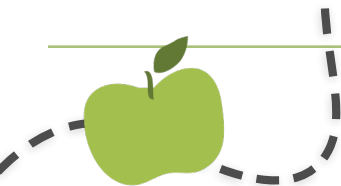


A young man and a woman are smiling and looking at each other in a garden. The man is holding a large, green, leafy vegetable, possibly a cabbage or collard green. The woman is wearing a blue denim shirt and has a tattoo on her neck. The background is filled with lush green foliage and a building in the distance.

# Lessons Learned

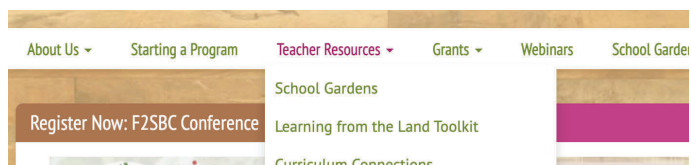


## School farms are manifestations of the connections, creativity, and collaboration of the communities that build them.

They are projects that require people, land, and intentional education to meet the specific needs of your region. We hope this guide and the **school farm case studies mentioned in Appendix A** can catalyze and support a school farm in your area.

If your school does not have the capacity to begin a school farm but would like to expand other food literacy opportunities, **visit the F2SBC 'Teachers Resources' section** for more information on school gardens and seasonal activities.

⋮ ← Visit 'Teachers Resources' section:  
⋮ <https://farmtoschoolbc.ca/>



In October 2022, dozens of school farm stakeholders (e.g. teachers, Indigenous Knowledge Keepers, farmers, not-for-profit representatives, etc.) gathered at Reynolds Secondary School in Victoria, BC for a professional development day. **Read the blog** post summarizing key takeaways from the day's discussions, panels, and activities. While the *Growing School Farms Guide* contains invaluable information on the details of starting a school farm, here are some of the takeaways from this Pro-d day and the school farm Case Studies.

⋮ ← Read the blog:  
⋮ [https://farmtoschoolbc.ca/growing\\_school\\_farms\\_pro-d/#:~:text=At%20the%20Farm%20to%20School,knowledge%2C%20experience%2C%20and%20promising%20practices](https://farmtoschoolbc.ca/growing_school_farms_pro-d/#:~:text=At%20the%20Farm%20to%20School,knowledge%2C%20experience%2C%20and%20promising%20practices)

### Key Takeaways

**for Educators from the Growing School Farms Pro-D Day!**







## Building Strong Partnerships

Creating strong relationships with partners is vital to the success of a school farm.

Remember:

- Get to know players personally at all levels of the partner/host institution and invest in these relationships early.
- Spend time aligning values and outcomes with partners.
- Emphasize strong communication, which will be integral to a farm's success as you overcome the constraints of bureaucratic systems.
- Collaborate with diverse groups to offer richer learning experiences for students outside the school in the community.
- Build relationships before contracts! These agreements reflect collaborative conversations and trust built between stakeholders in mutual agreement.

When it comes to stakeholder groups,

- Private farms have the knowledge and business strategy to run profitable food operations.
- Non-profits have administrative support and can help apply for grants.
- School Districts generally have access to land, teachers, and course funding.



Personal investments and cooperative efforts to create a school farm are as important as financial and physical planning. Spend the extra time and care to make sure your school farm is built on strong relationships, trust, and understanding between partners.



## Youth Empowerment

When developing a school farm environment, listen to student voices and give them agency and space to feel empowered in this non-traditional educational setting.

This could look like:

- Creating equal opportunities for students with different mental and physical abilities.
- Providing experiences in diverse roles in the food system (marketing, farming, community organizing, cooking, etc.)
- Giving students different opportunities to interact with the farm across their school careers (field trips, elementary school engagement, etc.).



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## Indigenous Engagement

**Develop place-based relationships with Indigenous peoples and students in your specific community, creating space for Indigenous voices and ways of knowing and being. These relationships will take time.**

There are many aspects to keep in mind:

- Connect at both the community and the administration or Chief and council level. Do your research to understand the local context as there can be multiple governance structures (for example, one Band can be made up of multiple distinct and sovereign First Nations)
- Building relationships take time – be patient.
- Focus on “with” not “for” relationships with Indigenous partners. Provide opportunities to engage in Indigenous learning with the broader community.
- Honor the time, knowledge and wisdom of Elders and Knowledge Keepers through various means including honorarium, gifts, public acknowledgements and other gestures of appreciation.

Other ways to honor the land and reflect the First Peoples Principles of Learning in school farms can be through incorporating traditional foods into school farm plans. This is an opportunity to bring Indigenous people along the journey and create an opportunity to reconnect, acknowledging the current state of disconnection of many First Nations (especially the urban Indigenous population) from their traditional food sources.



**Learn how farms have been used as a tool for colonialism in the past in residential schools and incorporate trauma-informed practice into programming that acknowledges those harms. Beware that trauma can often be associated with certain types of foods that students were forced to grow and eat through the Indian Reservation System and colonization.**

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## Summary of school farm resources

Below is a summary of the resources mentioned throughout the guide. This list is by no means comprehensive. Further resources can be found on the Farm to School BC website.

### Farm to School BC

**About:** <https://farmtoschoolbc.ca/about-us/what-is-farm-to-school/>

**Community Animators:** <https://farmtoschoolbc.ca/network/regional-hubs/>

**Food Literacy Database:** [https://farmtoschoolbc.ca/food-literacy-resources/School Gardens](https://farmtoschoolbc.ca/food-literacy-resources/School-Gardens)

Farm to School BC offers continued support through grants, workshops, Pro D Days, webinars, mentorship programs, and more. For more information visit [farmtoschoolbc.ca/](https://farmtoschoolbc.ca/)

### Indigenous Land and Food Funding & Resources:

#### Learning from the Land Toolkit

<https://farmtoschoolbc.ca/learning-from-the-land-toolkit/>

#### Agriculture as a Colonial Project Learning Module

<https://justfood.landfood.ubc.ca/module-2-agriculture-as-a-colonial-project/>

#### From "taking" to "tending": learning about Indigenous land and resource management on the Pacific Northwest Coast of North America by Nancy Turner

<https://academic.oup.com/icesjms/article/77/7-8/2472/5905140>

#### First Peoples Principals of Learning

<https://www.fnesc.ca/first-peoples-principles-of-learning/>

#### Indigenous Services Canada and FNHA's Indigenous Climate Health Action Program (ICHAP) may have funding for Indigenous food projects in schools:

<https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1100100033601/1521124611239>

<https://www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/environmental-health/climate-health-action-program>

### School Farm Resources:

#### Understanding School Farms in British Columbia research:

<https://open.library.ubc.ca/media/stream/pdf/24/1.0418455/4><https://open.library.ubc.ca/media/stream/pdf/24/1.0418455/4>

#### 2022 School Farms Pro-D Day Summary

[https://farmtoschoolbc.ca/growing\\_school\\_farms\\_pro-d/](https://farmtoschoolbc.ca/growing_school_farms_pro-d/)

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**The B.C. Land Matching Program delivered by Young Agrarians can help**

- connect partners and people to land
- facilitate negotiations between entities
- develop mutual agreements between entities, with legal review
- <https://youngagrarians.org/tools/land/bc-land-matching-program/>

**Rural Development Network released a FarmEd Toolkit, based on rural school farms in Alberta, to help guide schools and educators through the process of implementing small-scale school farms and agriculture education programs.**

<https://www.ruraldevelopment.ca/initiatives/agri-food>

## Course Accreditation

**Board/Authority Authorized (BAA) Courses**

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/administration/legislation-policy/public-schools/board-authority-authorized-courses>

**Submitting BAA Courses**

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/administration/legislation-policy/public-schools/board-authority-authorized-courses>

**Leadership Programs**

<https://reynoldscommunityleadership.weebly.com/course-details.html>

**Work Experience Program Guide**

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/kindergarten-to-grade-12/teach/pdfs/curriculum/appliedskills/wex-guide.pdf>

**Independent Directed Study**

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/support/graduation/getting-credit-to-graduate/independent-directed-studies>

**Create an IDS Study Plan**

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/support/graduation/getting-credit-to-graduate/independent-directed-studies>

## Other Useful Resources

**Farmer Spreadsheet Academy provides all sorts of guidance and many extremely useful spreadsheet templates for all aspects of farm planning and operation.**

<https://danbrisebois.com/category/farmer-spreadsheet-academy/>

**Young Agrarians' Farm Resources section includes resources related to apprenticeships, business resources, and more, as well as an interactive map of resources.** <https://youngagrarians.org/tools/>



