



Youth Farmers' Market Handbook

A resource of the Denver Youth Farmers' Market Coalition

The Youth Farmers' Market Handbook was created by The Denver Youth Farmers' Market Coalition, which is a partnership between Denver Urban Gardens and Slow Food Denver.

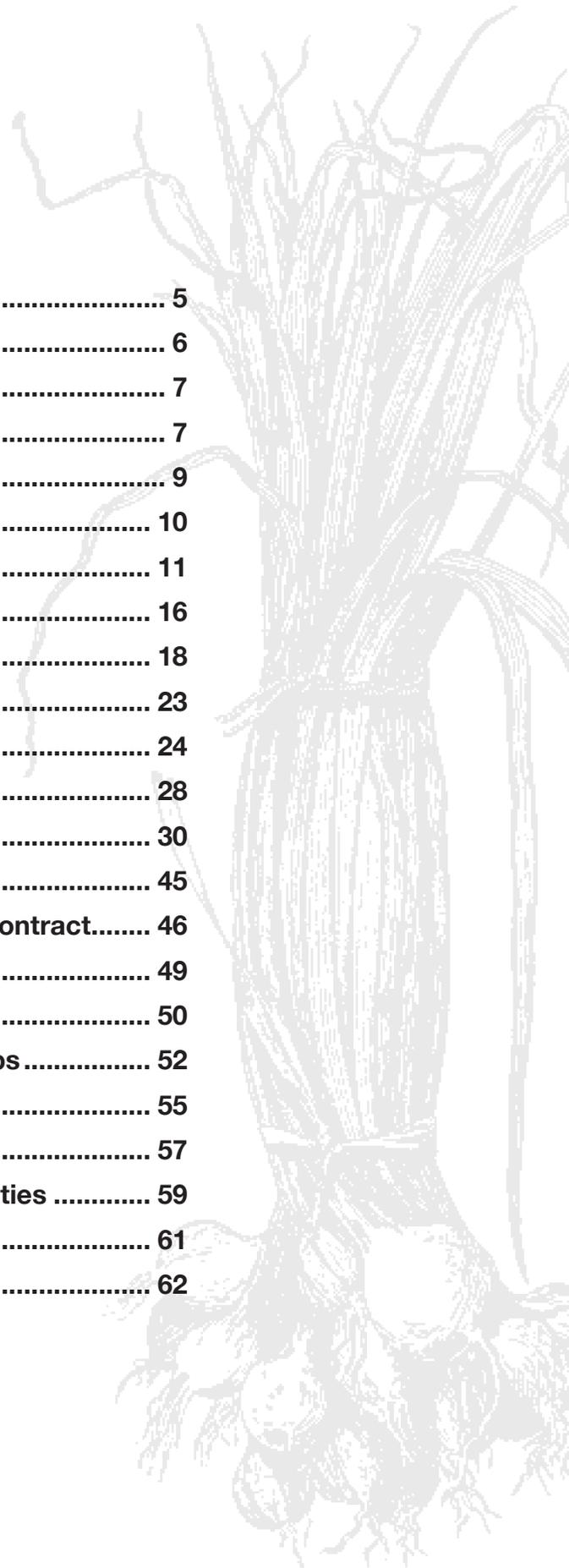
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Introduction



About Us

This manual was created by the Denver Youth Farmers' Market (YFM) Coalition, which is a partnership between Denver Urban Gardens (DUG), Slow Food Denver (SFD) and various Denver Public Elementary Schools. DUG and SFD, in partnership with Learning Landscapes, have collaborated for over a decade to deliver school garden programs to Denver Public Schools. The Denver YFM Coalition was created in 2008 to provide a practical and effective way to offer YFMs to all of our school garden programs. In the first year three schools participated in the Denver YFM Coalition. This number has grown substantially and in 2011, only four years later, 32 sites held a total of 139 markets across Metro Denver.

The Denver YFM Coalition promotes opportunities for schools to bring fresh, locally grown produce to their communities by involving youth in school gardens and markets, thereby promoting healthy eating. The Coalition collaborates with culinary and nutrition professionals and community residents to provide healthy cooking lessons using the produce offered at the markets. The flexibility of the YFM model allows each school to tailor programs and events to its community.

YFMs are programmatic. Because DUG and SFD are not-for-profit, these markets serve as an opportunity for training youth, promoting healthy eating and fundraising for garden programs and infrastructure. These markets are not for personal economic gain; therefore, all profits from the YFMs go back into each school's garden program.

DUG is a 501(c)3 nonprofit, that has been *growing community – one urban garden at a time* since 1985. As of 2011, DUG has 115 community gardens, about 30 of which are located on the grounds of local elementary schools, with one to three new school gardens in various stages of planning each year.

SFD is also a 501(c)3 nonprofit, whose mission is to strengthen the local food community by offering educational experiences to all ages; connecting consumers, producers and partners; and transforming food policies on a local, regional and national level. SFD's school garden program, The Seed to Table School Food Program, is currently involved with over 35 schools.

Learning Landscapes is a forward thinking program at the University of Colorado Denver that connects the design and construction of urban public spaces with healthy initiatives, including the renovation of over 85 Denver Public School yards, most with school gardens. Their efforts have helped create the spaces for the YFMs to operate within.

What is a Youth Farmers' Market?

A YFM is a single-vendor farmers' market on or near school property that is run by the youth of that school. It is appropriately titled a "Youth Farmers' Market" because often many of the youth selling the produce have grown the produce in the school garden. Beyond this basic definition, each YFM program is unique based on the needs and resources of the community and youth.

A YFM program can provide:

- Education, by reinforcing traditional academics, such as math and science, and building life skills such as customer service, conflict resolution and entrepreneurship. Youth also have the potential to learn how to grow their own food and share what they are learning with the broader community.
- Nutrition, by promoting healthy eating habits to help increase intake of fresh healthy produce.
- Community-building, as they serve as mini communities, modeling inclusive ways to teach the strength of diversity.



As YFM programs are extremely adaptable, they can engage many different age groups of youth as "farmers." The Denver YFM Coalition has worked primarily with elementary-aged students. However, YFM programs can easily be adapted to middle and high school-aged students. Various entrepreneurial and business-based training programs can be incorporated to appeal to the interests of older youth.

Purpose of this Handbook

The following document was created as a resource for teachers, community members, parents and others who are interested in starting or improving YFM programs in their community. Since 2008, the Denver YFM Coalition has gained insight into the inner workings of youth-run farmers' markets and this manual shares the knowledge gained from the various markets DUG and SFD have been involved with.

Getting Started



Defining Your Goals

A youth-run market program must grow like a garden, slowly. Begin with the basics first, uncovering new places and ideas each year, making improvements before moving on to other projects. For example, starting with one to four markets the first season will be much easier to handle than committing to a weekly market for the entire season.

Defining your market's primary goals and priorities are essential because without a clear direction the YFM can easily fall apart. Think of creating a mission statement for your market, which may seem difficult but is definitely worth your time. A mission statement should be short and easy to understand. Why does your YFM program exist and what does it hope to accomplish? By clearly identifying the purpose of the market early on, you can make sure everyone involved is on the same page from the get go. Also, defining your goals first will make some of the following sections in this manual much easier, particularly planning.

If more than one goal makes sense for your market, make sure to prioritize. Remember the goal(s) you choose will affect how your market will be run. For example, if your primary goal is fundraising your market will have to turn a profit. However, if your goal is to increase access to affordable produce in your community, your market may run on a deficit or break even.

Common Goals

- To provide affordable fresh produce and to increase healthy eating options for the community
- To provide leadership and entrepreneurial training for the youth
- To fundraise for the garden program
- To provide education to youth about the importance of eating healthy
- To bring awareness to the school garden program and other health-related programming in the schools

Community Support

One of the first steps in building a YFM program is to assess and simultaneously cultivate community support. Identifying and developing leadership among teachers, youth, parents, community members and others who have the potential to be advocates for the market will make your market much stronger and more sustainable in the long run. Get ready to employ your community organizing skills here. Networking with individuals and partner programs and organizations will be necessary to share the initial idea of a YFM program and to begin building support. This is also a great way to learn about your community and what their needs may be in relation to a YFM program. Listening is an important part of building trust with community members, as is letting go of preconceived notions of what you think they need. The market will not be successful without community support, so pay particular attention to the community's needs and desires. Be prepared to discuss the benefits of YFM programs as you reach out to individuals and organizations. It is important to engage individuals in ways that are meaningful and appropriate for them. There are many opportunities for individuals and organizations to support your efforts, so be open to non-traditional ways of involvement.

Once you recruit your community support team, plan a meeting to ensure that everyone involved is on the same page. By having the community involved in creating the original goals and mission mentioned above, ownership and buy-in is encouraged.

Youth

Youth are generally very excited about taking on fun responsibilities and special jobs, such as working at a farmers' market. Recruitment is rarely a problem, especially if the market is part of a class project. The number of youth that can physically work at a market is limited, though others can still be encouraged to participate as customers and marketing experts to their parents and community members. Working with the same group of students each week encourages learning in the marketplace. Youth can be recruited from one classroom if you have identified a teacher as a primary partner, or from multiple classrooms. Some schools recruit youth on the basis of teacher recommendations or on a first come, first serve basis. Some schools have taken it a step further, where youth formally apply for a position at the market. Depending on your educational goals, the market setting is typically more appropriate for students third grade and above.

For the youth that will be working at the market, make sure to send home an informational sheet and permission slip to parents explaining the market project. Include a market schedule so that parents can accommodate transportation for their child on market days. Ask for emergency contact information and invite or even require the parents to be involved.

Community

Community support is essential to a successful YFM, so make sure you reach out to local residents. Often neighborhoods and communities have a neighborhood association where you may be able to assess community support. Other possible places are local community centers (senior or recreation centers), churches, other schools (neighborhood high schools or colleges) or a neighborhood green team. Ask the school if there are any regular volunteers whom you can contact as well. By asking community members to participate in running the market, you are encouraging a stronger connection between the school and the neighborhood and engaging residents in the wellbeing of the school and students.



Partnerships

Identify various community-based organizations that are allied with health, nutrition and economic access or social justice concerns. Find people to work with whose skill set complements your own and who share similar goals and strategies. Childcare facilities, afterschool programs, health clinics and neighborhood police officers can often help with both marketing and strengthening your support system. There may be school initiatives that are complementary to a YFM program such as afterschool clubs or green teams. You may even be able to hold a pilot market as a part of an existing afterschool club for your first year. Other potential partners include local markets and community gardens.

Teachers

Teachers play a critical role in YFMs because education is central to the market. Supporting current school curriculum standards is a great way to encourage teacher support. By discovering what teachers are currently teaching in their science or math classes, it is possible to integrate the market into a class as a project. Doing a brief presentation at a school staff meeting is an easy way to reach multiple teachers at once and identify who wants to get involved. Let the teachers know that there are many ways to support the market. While not every teacher will be able to help facilitate the actual market, they can get involved with marketing to the students and parents. Teachers also make some of the most consistent and patient customers while students practice their math and customer service skills.

Parents

Parental involvement is a great way to gain local support for a YFM. Parents are often customers, fundraisers and facilitators of the market. If your market is afterschool, parents may be key in helping to set-up the market while teachers wrap-up the school day. Consider sending flyers home in school folders that parents regularly read (ask for help from the main office to accomplish this). Attend P.T.A. meetings and school events, such as Back to School Night, to present the YFM idea and recruit interested parents. Teachers can often recommend parents from their classroom that may be interested or available to support the market. If a parent is not able to attend the market, they can still help to market, fundraise and garner support for the program as their schedule allows.



Spotlight on Community Support

Teachers

“As a classroom teacher my schedule is so full that at times I think that one misplacement will cause everything to fall out of place. Despite the chaos in my endless responsibilities, I have been extremely committed to our youth farmers’ market because of the community development and parent involvement that it brings later in the year. It can be difficult to foresee rewards in a time when setting up tables and vegetables eats up your entire science lesson, yet the payoff is endless later down the road. Ever since setting up our first farmers’ market in the fall, I have had more parent involvement during regular classroom activities (field trips, celebrations, preparing for assessments, parent/teacher conferences, etc.) than I ever had before. Additionally, the farmers’ market has been a way to bridge not only the school/parent gap, but to also gel us together more collaboratively as a school. During the market season all of the classroom teachers, regardless of grade level, ask about and encourage the development of our community efforts. The farmers’ market originally branched from our community garden, both of which intrigue, inspire, and excite other community members. My principal recently told me that every applicant he has interviewed since the garden began has mentioned it as a reason for wanting to work at our school. I realize that there is a lot of front-loading for the garden and farmers’ market, but they both help us to connect as an entire community to make positive change for kids.” –Tabitha Jones, Johnson Elementary 3rd Grade Teacher and Garden Leader.

Youth

At Steele Elementary, a different class is selected each year to be the YFM class. The entire class participates in the marketing aspects of the YFM, including designing posters for the neighborhood and flyers that go home to parents. Each week, only 6-8 students from the class are involved in the execution of the market. The group of students rotates each week, so across the typical YFM season each student has the opportunity to work the market 2-3 times.

At Fairview Elementary, youth that want to participate in the YFM and summer gardening program are asked to apply. Writing clearly thought out paragraphs describing what they will do to be the best summer garden and market worker and why they would like to work in the garden and YFM reinforces the lesson of responsibility. The application also covers specific information for parents such as youth work days and hours, responsibilities and the necessity to be present and an active participant during the entire season of operation. In the application, parents are asked to work four times throughout the summer, alongside their child and to ensure that their child attends each day. An example application and contract are included in [Appendix A](#).



Spotlight on Community Support

Partnerships

In Denver, the formation of the Youth Farmers' Market Coalition has allowed the program to grow rapidly to include 32 sites and 139 markets in 2011. After many years of operating individual markets, DUG and SFD realized the potential benefits involved in working together alongside various school communities. The Coalition members now collaborate much like a cooperative. The Coalition members write grants, streamline the purchasing of produce and the cost of transport and refrigerated storage, share in the labor of unloading and sorting produce, collectively promote one another's markets, seek out chefs to enable cooking demonstrations and generally share resources and materials. Equipment such as canopies, tables, banners, brochures, etc. are shared to reduce costs. By sharing resources, the Coalition is able to at times access bulk or bundled produce at more affordable prices, as well as share in the collective wisdom of the group. A YFM contract has been drafted, which includes the responsibilities expected of each organization and school partner. Through this creative process, best practices are shared and encouraged, strengthening the overall work and success of the Coalition. See [Appendix G](#) for a copy of the contract.

Parents

At the afterschool Johnson Elementary School Market, parents, who had not traditionally been involved in their student's classrooms, took an active role in the market from day one. Parents were contacted directly by their students' teacher, who described the idea of an afterschool market where fresh produce was to be sold. As a result of their student's participation, parents were encouraged to attend each mar-

ket and work alongside their child as a mentor. Parents helped to model customer service skills, checked calculations and helped to keep the kids focused through the entire process of setting up, running and breaking down the market. Parents at Johnson were so enthusiastic in their participation that the market time had to be broken up into shifts, to ensure the youth were able to take a leadership role in their market and so there were not too many parent volunteers at one time.

Community

At Fairview Elementary the initial idea for the farmers' market came from the 5th grade students who were exposed to an intensive, weekly nutrition/gardening program. DUG had received funding from LiveWell Colorado to explore ways in which community gardens could help increase access to healthy food and promote an activity-based lifestyle. The community identified the need for a venue that could provide fresh produce and wanted to create a 'market stand' that would bring back memories of similar places in their native countries. For many of the immigrant community residents, the marketplace takes on the important role of a community gathering place, bringing together diverse cultures, traditions and experiences. DUG worked with other community-based stakeholder organizations to help assess interest in such a market and also worked with the school to distribute interest flyers to all parents and residents within the community.

Planning

As with any large project, spending time planning your market before you make financial investments can save a lot of energy and stress later on. If you keep your mission in mind while planning, it will be easier to determine what needs to be done and what is not a priority. Colorado State University Extension (<http://www.coloradofarmers.org/images/AB-MR-Feb05-01.pdf>) has outlined four major areas to consider when planning for a farmers' market: marketing, organization and logistics, human resources, and financing. These four areas can easily be applied to any size market, including a YFM.

Planning for marketing requires that you know your constituents. One of the best ways to recognize the specific needs and desires of your neighborhood is to make a community food profile. A food profile provides a snapshot of the food system in your neighborhood, which assesses current food use, availability and need.

To begin your community food profile, look at the demographics of your neighborhood (<http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>); population, income, age and race are particularly pertinent to the snapshot. Beyond the demographics, try to answer the following questions: What are the eating habits of your population? What kinds of foods are already available? What kinds of foods are produced in the general area? How large are the fruit and vegetable farms? Are there any local and/or organic growers? If so, what are they growing?

If your market is part of a class project consider making the community food profile a sub-project. Including a survey in the project will help your class determine what kinds of products the community, parents, teachers and school administrators would be interested in buying. Determining what your customers want is the basis of any marketing campaign. For more on how to reach your customer base, see [Marketing](#).

If done thoroughly, the community food profile can later be used as an educational resource for people attending the market or for potential funders. It is a great way to demonstrate which items your market chose to sell/grow and why.

For logistical and organization planning it is helpful to make an action plan. For your action plan, determine all of the steps required to plan out your YFM. Some questions to think about include: When will you start preparing and planting your garden? How will you recruit the youth to run the market? How will you let people know when and where your market is happening? Will you supplement your garden produce with produce from other farms or markets? How will you stock your market early in the season before your garden's produce is harvestable? Where and how will you obtain all the necessary materials? The rest of this manual will help you answer many of these questions.

Once you have a list, develop a concrete method for how to accomplish each step. This

should include making a realistic estimate of how long each step will take. You will also need to consider what resources are needed and who can help with each step. YFM programs are a large responsibility with many tasks, small and big. Be reasonable about what can be accomplished. Try to break up tasks so that the work is spread out between several people. When developing methods for accomplishing the tasks consider the strengths within your team. Who can most easily accomplish which tasks? Avoid getting burnt out before the fun gets started!

The third section that CSU touches on is human resources. As already discussed, it is important to assess and develop community support, including parents, teachers, youth and the neighborhood. In the planning phase, you will want to make an outline of the necessary roles and requirements of each person. This is discussed in more detail in [Participants](#). Also, think about if you will have the resources for stipends for your youth and market manager.

Finally, do not forget your finances. The next section discusses ways to go about funding your YFM program, but before getting there, create a budget. Your budget should include two sections: one-time cost items and reoccurring cost items. One-time cost items will include such items as tables, tents, coolers, baskets, etc. Your reoccurring costs will include stipends, supplemental produce and seeds and plants for your garden. See [Appendix C](#) for an example of a budget.



Funding

Your funding needs will depend upon the mission you created for your YFM program and what your budget looks like. Your mission will determine if your market needs to make a profit, while your budget will determine how much start-up capital and season-long capital you will need. Before taking any steps to secure funding make sure these two items are established. If your budget seems too large, have a brainstorming session on how to cut costs. Remember that fewer well-run programs are better than trying to do everything. Return to your mission often and determine what is really necessary for it to be fulfilled.

The following are the most common sources of funding for YFM programs. Depending on your needs and resources, you may only need to use one source of funding, but be prepared to consider multiple avenues.

Partnerships

Establishing relationships with other gardens and markets allows supplies to be shared, which will cut your costs. The one-time cost items, such as tables, tents and display containers are often some of the most expensive and will require money before any produce can be sold. You may also want to ask your school if these types of supplies are available to borrow. Working with other youth markets you may be able to buy supplemental produce in bulk, which reduces costs and shares the expense of distribution (more on this in [Supplementing Produce](#)).

Partnerships are also helpful for securing other sources of funding. Often, funders would rather give a lump sum to projects with the same purpose than give to each small project individually. Securing grants can be a time consuming task; partnering with other similar projects will cut down on the amount of work required from each person. A fiscal sponsorship from a nonprofit or government agency is another partnership that may reduce your costs.

Grants

Grant funding is available for almost any type of project, even farmers' markets. Make sure to research grants from development organizations, health institutions, neighborhood revitalization projects, public space organizations, universities, school garden projects, etc. Explore private, corporate, foundation and government avenues.



Spotlight

The Denver YFM Coalition has received funding from the Colorado Department of Agriculture, which receives money from the USDA and then makes it available in the form of Specialty Crops grants. The purpose of these grants are “to enhance the competitiveness of growers of fruits, vegetables, and other horticultural crops in areas such as marketing, promotion, education, research, trade and nutrition.” Projects like the YFMs are ideal for the Specialty Crops grant as the markets are promoting Colorado-grown produce in neighborhoods that do not normally have access to local produce.

Grants are often where many groups believe they will find answers to all their financial woes. This can be the case, but before spending all of your time pursuing grant funding there are a few caveats to consider. Private funders are often cautious of supporting a project that will need funding year after year. A grant is a great way to pay for your first year or your start-up costs. Eventually though, you may need to make your market economically self-sustaining. Also, many grants require a lengthy application process and a follow-up report, which sometimes makes them more hassle than they are worth. Consider how much time you realistically have to devote to such endeavors, particularly if you are not being paid.

Donations

Donations for YFM programs can come in various forms—cash donations from individuals and/or corporations and in-kind donations of supplies or produce, all of which will reduce your need for outside funding. Do not underestimate the power of donations. Remember that many donations are mission-driven, so share yours with potential donors.

Many corporations set aside a donation budget for local programs. Look into local or corporate garden supply stores, grocery stores and health agencies. By law, local bank branches are required to make charitable contributions to organizations in their area. To find out what is available and how to apply, contact your local bank or savings institution.

In-kind donations may come from local gardening supply stores, grocery stores or other community partners. Spend time at local farmers' markets and farms meeting with local producers to develop relationships.

Selling Other Products

Some YFMs choose to sell products besides fruits and vegetables at their market, which can generate a small amount of capital. Some items include youth-created cookbooks, bookmarks using pressed flowers from the garden, grapevine wreaths with herbs and dried flowers, youth market t-shirts designed by the youth and seed packets with garden-collected seeds. If you decide to go this route stick to hand-made only products and avoid selling prepared food, which needs to be certified by the health department. Also, make sure to keep it youth focused. Your market is for the youth, not for general community members to make a profit.

Garden Preparation (optional)

If you have space for a garden, you will need to assess your resources and the time you have to devote to its care and maintenance. The most successful youth gardens grow slowly, both in physical areas cultivated and actual crops planted. In the garden, youth can develop a sense of ownership and a set of skills that are not only garden-based, but also carry over into other areas of life. There are many great resources on how to start a garden (a few have been listed in [Additional Resources](#)), but below are a few things to consider that are specific to a YFM program.

It is advisable to divide growing areas into plots of a manageable size (10 ft. x 15 ft. works well) and then further designate internal pathways that are wide enough for young feet to stand and cultivate the plants. Straw is an inexpensive and natural pathway marker. Each plot could be divided into thirds or quadrants. Between each plot, the garden may have 2-foot wide pathways—leveled areas that are first mulched with black plastic then spread with a layer of crusher fines.

Have youth help dig in 2-3" of compost into each plot before any planting occurs. As many inner-city gardens are deficient in organic material, plan on sprinkling extra compost around all garden plants several times during the season. A garden's yield strongly depends upon the health of its soil and a first year garden cannot be expected to reach ideal production goals. Constant attention to soil amendments, including adding a compost education program for the youth, is well worth any added effort.

If there are no plans to engage students in the garden in the summer time, consider planting seeds and seedlings in the ground

as late in May as possible so that the students are still involved in planting. If the garden is planted in late May or early June, it is more likely the majority of the crops will be ready for harvesting when the students are back in school in mid-August. Be sure to check seed packages for specific crop information.

All transplants or seeded areas should be clearly labeled, with variety name and planting date. As with any garden, research what grows well in your climate. For Colorado growers, here is a great resource: <http://www.denverplants.com/veg/html/safplt.htm>. This type of plan is available online for most states.

Also, consider succession planting. In this technique, small amounts of quickly maturing vegetables, such as lettuce, spinach, radishes and peas are planted every week so that they mature at different times. The same strategy can also be utilized for carrots and beets, in spring, and for beans as the season progresses. Many of the same spring salad vegetables can be replanted for a fall garden. This provides a continued source of these vegetables for your market.

A youth garden should be colorful, accessible and fairly easy to maintain. It should not attempt to duplicate the variety nor complexity of design exhibited in many home or commercial gardens. It is beneficial, both visually and for horticultural reasons, to include flowers and herbs within each plot. Complement a mix of colorful vegetables that mature at different times with flowers such as marigolds and zinnias and strong smelling herbs such as garlic, chives, cilantro, sage and oregano. The flowers attract beneficial

Garden Preparation (optional)

predator insects, while the herbs can help repel pest insects. Gardens require daily care, attending to soil health, watering, pest patrols, planting, thinning, harvesting, and most importantly, educating the youth who are involved in its evolution. Stress the process, not the product.

When planning your garden for the market, consider what plants will work best. Fast growing and prolific producers are great. Some items that work well include, herbs, particularly basil, greens, which are easy to grow in quantity and summer squash, which tends to be quite fast growing and prolific.



Components



A YFM is essentially no different in appearance than any other neighborhood or city-led farmers' market, with the exception that a YFM is run by students with appropriate adult supervision and can be used as a fundraiser for the school garden program. Before starting a YFM, consider what type of program you would like to run and what can realistically be accomplished with the resources you have. There are endless possibilities as to how your program can be executed, but keep in mind the three main components of any YFM program: education, garden and market.



Spotlight

At Fairview Elementary each week Don Diehl's 5th grade class attends a one-hour long nutrition and/or gardening lesson throughout the school year. In the fall the class is often held in the school garden, in the winter the focus is on nutrition and the spring is for starting seeds and learning the plant life cycle. During the summer, ten youth from this 5th grade class apply to participate in a summer gardening program, which is held twice a week in the garden for two hours. Part of this summer program involves a youth-run farmers' market held every Sunday during the summer and early fall.

Education

Education is a central and crucial component of YFM programs. Teaching youth about the importance of making healthy eating choices along with helping them grow their own fruits and vegetables provides a method of integrating academic disciplines and hands-on environmental education. It provides the adult program leader(s) a way to expand learning from the spoken word or written page and involve the youth in their own process of learning. When youth are valued as active partners and encouraged to participate in all facets of the experience, they remember far more than words and gain a more profound understanding of the subject. There are multiple ways to approach education in a YFM program and the range is quite broad.

On one end of the spectrum there are YFMs that are part of a larger gardening and/or nutrition curriculum. A program like this might include weekly or bi-weekly nutrition and gardening lessons during the school year in addition to a summer gardening club or program, which includes business training and a weekly YFM. This type of model may not be ideal for first year markets because of the resources and community support required to make it work.

A less intensive educational model may include one or more of the above aspects. Nutrition and gardening lessons can

easily be integrated into established classroom lessons and curriculum. Many gardening curricula acknowledge the importance of state mandated academic standards and therefore often indicate which standards are taught in each lesson.

An afterschool garden club or a summer gardening program is a great way to integrate education into your YFM. Both of these programs could entail a seasonally based curriculum, much of which could be geared towards the caring of a garden. Often these programs meet once a week for one to two hours, depending on the goals of the program and the needs of the garden. Garden clubs and/or summer garden programs also provide opportunities for parental involvement and mentoring, which allows for a broad-based sharing of life skills.

Education related to YFM programs can extend beyond nutrition and gardening to incorporate other areas of interest, including education in customer service, basic notions of micro-enterprise, marketing, group dynamics and working with diverse community residents. All of the aforementioned educational trainings can be incorporated into the classroom, garden club, YFM or other summer programs.



Spotlight

Harrington Elementary School started with a small summer gardening program. Five youth met once a week for two hours in the garden for hands-on lessons, which also included caring for the garden. When school started, the summer gardening program turned into an afterschool gardening club, which included lessons in the garden and every other week a youth-run market.

Garden

If you are fortunate enough to have a garden at your program site, it can be a very powerful educational tool and there are countless ways to use it. DUG and SFD look at the YFM model as an extension of the learning opportunities in the school garden. The garden provides students with many opportunities to learn how plants are grown from seed, either in pots in the classroom or directly in the ground. Students get first-hand experience nurturing the growth process and how to troubleshoot when things go wrong, for example, addressing water needs or combating common garden pests. For more information about the garden component see [Garden \(optional\)](#).

Classroom

Integrating the garden and market into the current curriculum can easily be done. Explore science concepts through life cycles, basic plant growth and plant part identification. Proper nutrition can be reinforced in the classroom through exploring the benefits of the produce being sold at the market. Explore math concepts by measuring plots and laying out planting areas, measuring portions for recipes, calculating amounts on nutrition labels, creating a budget for the garden or market and calculating the total bill for a customer and the required change. Explore geography by connecting the food to where it comes from and

trying different cultural recipes. There are a multitude of interdisciplinary garden lessons and projects for whatever areas you wish to focus on (see [Additional Resources](#) for our favorite garden-based curricula). Classroom time can also be used to begin marketing the YFMs to the communities as well as practicing handling money. See [Market Training](#) and [Marketing](#).



Empowerment

Empowering the youth (and all interested participants) will make them feel valued and have more personal investment in the market. Asking the youth for their input during the planning and implementation phases of the markets will create natural leaders and encourage their engagement with the market over time. Youth bring a unique set of ideas to the table that the adult planners may not have come up with on their own.

Running a market provides lasting life and job skills, while reinforcing healthy eating and living habits at an early age. Youth learn about communication skills, self-discipline, cooperation, problem solving, teamwork, dedication, perseverance, vegetable identification and knowledge of where food comes from (seed to table). In addition there are opportunities for creative expression (designing signs, labels, art projects to sell, etc.). Running a market exposes youth to new people, allowing them to discover new perspectives about people, work, life and themselves.

Market Training (mock markets)

Classroom training for market days can include business, public speaking, marketing and math training, as well as customer service experience for the students. Role-playing the interactions that will take place in a market helps prepare the youth for running the market and also provides skill building opportunities. Many classrooms have fake money for their math curriculum so it is easy to set up money-handling practice sessions. If you are working with older students, encourage them to do the math in their head instead of using a calculator. Ideally all of your market prices will be based on a quarter and one dollar bills so the math is fairly easy. Set up some mock transactions and have the students role-play being the customer and salesperson. If you have real money available, let the students handle the actual bills and coins. Expand the youth's understanding of business by looking at your costs and how to price merchandise in order to make a profit. Include youth in the planning stages of the market to build entrepreneurial skills and the youth's sense of ownership of the market.



Spotlight

The YFM at Alsup Elementary School in Commerce City started before there was even a school garden. While school officials were going through the planning process for the garden with the district, community members recognized that a YFM could increase interest from parents in the project. The Alsup YFM was so successful in bringing Colorado-grown fruits and vegetables into a food desert neighborhood that several families signed up to be volunteers once the garden was opened. During the second year of Alsup's YFM, the new school garden opened.

Garden (optional)

Utilizing a school-based garden site as part of your YFM program provides a living laboratory for experimenting with biology, botany and entomology. Such sites allow youth to participate in experiential education as they plant and nurture seeds that can culminate in the harvest of the building blocks for good health. Although few school gardens are extensive enough to provide all the produce needed to supply the market, they instill a sense of pride and understand that working together as a group plants the seeds for future success.

The primary lessons in the garden should focus on allowing youth to develop skill sets and feel a strong sense of connection with the earth. To help foster the sense of ownership, make sure to include the youth in as many aspects of the garden as possible—planning, planting, watering, harvesting, etc. Gardens can help develop strong leaders with confidence in their decision making abilities, the willingness to ask for help when needed, and the belief that what they nurture will come to fruition.

YFMs that operate without an on-site garden will need to have a consistent source of locally grown produce to supply their market. In this case, you can still benefit from the hands-on lessons gardening provides by using several containers, in which youth can experiment with soil mixes, compost and smaller varieties of garden vegetables. Following the life cycle of a plant—seed, seedling, flower, fruit, harvest, decomposition—allows youth to gain appreciation for the important process of daily nurturing that must occur before the first ‘carrot’ can be eaten. See more on procuring outside produce in [Supplementing Produce](#).

Gardens that are the most successful begin with a careful consideration of resources, space and time that are available. See [Garden Preparation](#) for more on these topics.

If your garden is a shared space, there may be others who are also using the garden. In this case it is a good idea to involve whoever works in the garden with your market, whether it is different classrooms, an afterschool program or community members. Invite them to help run or advertise for the market or donate some of their produce.

Remember that your garden will not likely be productive enough to provide all of the produce for the market. Focusing too much on the production can distract from the process of experiential learning that leads to discovery and true learning. Try to focus more on how the youth in the program are growing rather than on what vegetables are growing. If your garden does not provide enough food to sell you can easily supplement through other local growers (see [Supplementing Produce](#)).



Spotlight

Youth are involved in all aspects of the garden at Fairview Elementary. The summer gardening program requires the youth to really get their hands dirty. Common activities include planting, harvesting, turning compost, identifying beneficial and pest insects, laying straw for mulching and of course, watering. On days when the group does not meet, youth rotate the watering responsibilities. Because youth are involved on a consistent basis in the roles and responsibilities of the garden, they develop a personal connection to it—knowing its layout, plants and configuration. It becomes a peaceful refuge from the constant cycle of change within their daily lives and has many friends keeping it safe from acts of vandalism. The occasional vandal who has been noticed by the children is invited back in, with a structured process of restorative justice—replanting areas that have been uprooted and learning the work and art of helping to provide food to a community.

Market

Markets are where the action happens. This is the time to let the youth shine—sharing their knowledge and showing off their skills. As an organizer, your role is to aid in this effort. Facilitate as much as possible, while still allowing the youth to run their market. The [Participants](#) section has suggestions for the roles of individuals during this day.

When and Where

When considering the location, dates and times for your YFM, the main consideration should be how to maximize the educational opportunities for the students as well as conducting the YFM under optimal conditions for sales and public interaction. It may be helpful to have students research when there is the most foot traffic and potential customers.

Often, first-year YFM programs start by holding one to four markets after school. This allows the program to test out the process, demand and feasibility. If successful, consider expanding your market to weekly the following year. After school is a great time to hold a market, particularly if you are also considering creating a garden club. Asking parents to bring kids back to school for a later YFM, or over the weekend, may prove to be more stressful than necessary. Engaging youth in educational and fun activities after the school bell has rung is a realistic way to keep them from sitting in front of a television or getting into trouble. Also, afterschool you have a captive audience of parents, teachers and staff for your customer base.

If your YFM is part of a larger summer gardening program, a weekend market may attract community members to be your main customer base. It may be beneficial to switch to weekdays once school starts so your market is able to capture the parents and school staff as customers. Weekend markets are particularly successful when the school is within walking distance to residences and receives regular weekend traffic.

Another factor to consider when scheduling the YFM is the number of potential customers. If most students at your school take the bus home, then an after-school YFM may not work. However, if a large number of parents come to school to pick up their child(ren) at the end of the day, then there is a “captive” audience for the YFM. Also it may be easier to arrange for volunteers to assist with the market after school if they are already onsite.



Spotlight

Fairview Elementary is one of the few schools in the Denver YFM Coalition that holds markets during the summer and fall. The market begins in July when the garden starts to produce and runs for 13 weeks, culminating in late September with a community-wide health and harvest festival. Markets are held every Sunday for two hours.

The majority of Denver YFM Coalition markets are held afterschool during the fall semester. None of our Coalition members hold markets in the winter or spring, but this does not mean it is not possible. In Colorado, fall is a great time for seasonal produce and gardens are often productive until early October.

The location of the market should try to capitalize on the flow of foot traffic on school grounds while also maximizing visibility for the surrounding community. Having the YFM close to the school garden provides the opportunity to get more exposure for the garden and the efforts of the students. Try not to place the market close to parking lots or busy streets so that kids will not be put into danger when they rush to the market. It is a good idea to work with the school administration to determine what is the safest and most visible location for the YFM.

Finally, make sure to have a defined length for your market, so parents will know when their child will be done working. If after school, an hour-long market will be sufficient. If the market is held on the weekends consider a longer window. However, longer markets may require youth work in shifts so that they do not get too burnt out.



Spotlight

At Steele Elementary the school garden sits right next to the school parking lot, which gets very congested during pick up at the end of the school day. The front yard of the school sits above the sidewalk along a busy street as people head to a local park. The YFM has been held successfully on the front yard, with a large white tent and several tables so as to announce that a market is happening.



Marketing

Consider marketing for your YFM to be a multi-level endeavor. Flyers, word of mouth, poster boards, garden or youth photos with captions, local media outlets, etc. have all been successful. Think pizzazz! Listen to the youth's ideas, and be willing to try out even the crazy ones. Remember the power of word of mouth advertising.

Make sure to have a simple handout or flyer that you can give to customers that explains the market, its mission and when and where it is held. This will help customers remember to return each week and have something they can share with their friends and family (see [Appendix E](#) for examples of a flyer and a poster).



Students love to design posters and flyers that will help promote the markets. Have the students list the key features of the markets that they will want to include on their posters or flyers to make the markets more appealing to the public. Be sure that they include the basics like dates, times and locations of the markets, as well as what is special about your market: youth-run, Food Stamps accepted (EBT), locally grown produce, affordable and organic, free cooking demonstrations and samples, etc. Allow the students to get creative and make their posters colorful and clearly written. Have the youth hold up these colorful signs during the market to get the attention of people who are passing by.

Local media sources are a great way to get the word out about your market. Reach out to local newspapers, TV stations, public radio, school newspapers and community newsletters. Have them come during the market so that they can take pictures, see how it really works and to speak with the youth. Community newspapers often have Event Calendars that can list the times and locations of area YFMs. Many newspapers have an online presence that allows community members to self-publish stories. As part of the classroom activities, work with a group of students to write a short piece about the plans of the upcoming markets to be published online. Have the students come up with other ideas for stories and have them participate in the entire publishing process.

Mobile markets are another way to do some direct marketing to the surrounding community. A mobile market can extend your presence in the community by bringing samples of market produce to community residents. The mobile market may prove useful when markets are first being established in a community. Components of a mobile market may involve: a wheelbarrow, cooler on wheels or bike with a trailer, samples of what is being sold at the market and some ice to keep the produce cool. Youth (with the help of an adult) are directly involved in both marketing and selling the produce to residents, on a 'door-to-door' basis. This provides a chance for potential customers to see what kinds of products the market is selling and also a venue to advertise special market educational workshops or festivals.

Pricing

To determine the prices for produce at your YFM you should take several factors into consideration. First, remember the mission of your YFM. Is the goal to provide affordable, fresh, locally grown produce to the community? Or is the YFM being used as a fundraiser to provide support for the school garden program? Second, it is important to know what the prices are for similar items in nearby stores. Even though the goal of the YFM could be a fundraiser, shoppers are generally savvy about food prices and will not want to pay too much more than what they can pay at the local markets. Pick up a produce catalog from a local newspaper for a local grocery store to get a sense of the going market prices. Prices will also depend on the ratio of produce you purchase to the amount you harvest. Produce from the garden offsets your overall costs.

Make sure the prices are visible for both the customers and the youth. Creating laminated labels with the name of the produce printed on them allows you to wipe off the price and reuse them from week to week. Write the price on the front and back, so customers and youth workers can both read them, and use binder clips to attach them to the baskets/bins.



Tracking

Tracking various metrics associated with markets is a great way to incorporate math and business training into the YFM educational experience for students. It is also important for funders. See [Appendix F](#) for examples of documents used for tracking numbers. The Denver YFM Coalition requires individual markets to keep track of several key metrics.

Amount of Sales in Dollars

YFM leaders have come up with several ways to track total sales at markets. At some YFMs, each sale is tracked on a worksheet that a student fills out with the customer that lists each individual item sold, the cost, the total of the transaction and the change to be given. This method allows students to closely follow a transaction with a customer through the whole process. However, it also takes a fair amount of time, which is not always available during a busy market. At other markets, the cash box is started with a known quantity of money and the amount of sales is easily calculated by subtracting the starting amount from the amount in the cash box at the end of the day.

Amount of Produce Sold in Pounds

This is one of the most important numbers to track. Being able to demonstrate the weight of local produce distributed to the community speaks strongly to the amount of support for your program and can also be used as an evaluation tool for grant writing (funders are drawn to quantitative impacts such as these).

Keeping track of the weight of produce sold is easy with a bit of foresight. On the worksheet described above, a student can mark the weight of each produce item that was sold and simply tabulate a final weight of the sale. Or the weight of all of your produce can be obtained at the start of the market and compared to the weight of what is left at the end of the day. It is also a good idea to separately track the weight of produce sold from your garden.

Number of Customers

Using the worksheet, the number of customers is simply the count of the worksheets used during the market. At some markets, students make hash marks on a note card at the cash box for every sale they conduct. At the end of the day, a student can count all the marks for a total count of customers.

Amount of Profits

Using the Market Totals Form in [Appendix F](#), it is easy for an adult to calculate profits and many other relevant numbers. For students, it may be difficult to grasp the concept and calculation of profits. At the end of the market, allow students to count the money in the cash box. Then have the students fill up the cash box with the amount of money that was in it at the beginning of the market (now the cash box is ready for the next YFM). Next, have the students count out from the remaining money any expenses that went into the start of

the market. Such expenses could be the cost of farm produce that was used to supplement the school garden produce, cost of any cooking or nutrition demonstrations and any incidental costs for the market. The remaining money after expenses represents the profit of the market.

Number of Volunteers

It is important to keep track of the adult and student volunteers for each YFM. A good way to record the volunteers is to keep a YFM logbook and have each volunteer sign the logbook at the start of each market. The logbook is also a good place to record all the sales data.

Cooking Demonstrations

On the day of the market, one of the best ways to encourage customers to buy items is to engage their sense of taste and smell. Most people like to sample items that are being sold and it is very easy to set this up at a YFM. Samples are also a great way to introduce new or unusual produce varieties to the community. A very basic cooking demonstration set up would be one or two tables offset from the selling tables that allows the cook plenty of room to work but in close proximity to the market. Emphasize local and seasonal cooking, and inform people that they can purchase the produce from your market. Creating pre-made bags of cooking demonstration ingredients and a recipe is a fun marketing strategy.

Invite professional chefs, parents, teachers and local residents to give a cooking demonstration. Prior to the day of the market talk to the cook about what kind of produce items will be available at the market so that he/she can plan for a recipe that includes those items. It is highly advisable to have plenty of cut vegetables, necessary spices and equipment prepared in advance. Once the customers start to arrive at the market and see that there will be samples, there is not enough time to do much else but cook. The recipe should be

Cooking Demonstration Supplies

- Portable propane cooking stove (\$20-\$50)
- Several cooking pots: sauté pan and a sauce pot (\$50-\$100)
- Mixing bowls and cooking utensils (\$25-\$50)
- Small canopy (\$50 - \$200)
- Trays (\$20-\$40)
- Cutting knives (\$2-\$50)
- Cutting board (\$10)
- Sample cups and utensils (\$10-\$30)
- Plastic gloves (\$5-\$10)

a simple one with only a few ingredients. Things like sauces or vinaigrettes can be prepared ahead of time to allow for quick assembly of the recipe.

Engage student helpers to dish the prepared recipe into tasting cups for the customers. Try to use serving dishes that are small so that the food will go a long way. Have a couple of students walk around the YFM area with samples on trays that the customers can try.

It is very important to consider food safety rules when conducting tastings and cooking demonstrations. Any item that will be sampled by the crowd should be washed thoroughly prior to being cut. A clean cutting board and knife is also very important. For cooking demonstrations, the majority of the preparation should be done on site and not transported to the school. If the person cooking requires some prep time prior to the start of the market, try to arrange a space in the school with a sink that the cook can use. Any food prepared at the school for tastings should either be consumed at school or thrown away at the end of the demonstration. Transporting the leftover food off-site increases the risk of food safety issues.

As a side note, it is also very important that no food prepared off-site be sold at YFMs. In most cases, local health codes are not concerned with the sale of whole, raw, fresh produce items at farmers' markets. The situation becomes a lot more precarious when food items, like salsa or a quick bread, are prepared at someone's house and then sold. Most likely, your county health department will require a license for such sales and may require that the food be prepared in a commercial kitchen. While it would be nice to sell prepared items, the food safety risks far outweigh any advantage these items present.



Supplementing Produce

Most school gardens do not grow the quantity or range of produce to stock a full farmers' market. Customers that have been to farmers' markets in the past will come to the YFM with an expectation of a range of produce and a high degree of quality. There are a few ways to provide supplemental produce for the YFM to give the community a quality experience.

The Denver YFM Coalition feels it is important to feature locally grown produce as much as possible as part of the educational experience for students and the community and to financially support the local farming community. Good places to start are to ask your local Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Farms. They often are willing to support such a program and may even be able to deliver for you. Check out the local traditional farmers' markets in your area. Building relationships with the local farmers increases your understanding of what is available and who may be the best person to work with. If you visit a market late in the day, there is a good chance that a farmer may sell you a bushel quantity of a vegetable at a reduced price so it does not have to be trucked back to the farm. You may also want to do a little research outside of your direct community. Consider looking into farm stands in rural areas adjacent to your community.

A few questions to consider when doing research for your supplemental produce: How will the produce get to your market? Will it need to be in cold storage before the market and if so, where? Is organic important or will it be too expensive for your community? Who will be in charge of deciding what to order?



Spotlight

Since the Denver YFM Coalition deals with such a large number of YFMs (roughly 30), we have developed an aggregation and distribution process to bring locally grown produce to Denver for multiple markets. During the YFM season, individual markets order quantities of fresh fruits and vegetables from a list of available produce generated by the Coalition. On Wednesdays, the Coalition rents a 16-foot truck and drives to three different farms north of Denver. The three farms represent a traditional conventional farm stand, an organic farm and a commercial farm operation. Between these farms we are able to get a wide variety and quantity of fresh fruits and vegetables at wholesale prices. The truck brings the produce to a central Denver location where DUG operates a large walk-in cooler. Volunteers from the markets meet the truck at the cooler. The produce is then divided into each school's order and stored in the cooler. Representatives from each school come to the cooler to pickup their produce order and their invoice. After that day's YFM is finished, the market leader sends a check to the Coalition to pay for the farm produce. This system has worked well for three years to bring in a variety of farm produce to schools. In 2011, the Coalition truck purchased over \$16,000 of local produce for the YFMs.

EBT Machines and SNAP Benefits

If you are working in a lower socio-economic community, having the ability to accept SNAP benefits (formerly known as Food Stamps) can be incredibly powerful. This truly creates access to healthy local produce for poorer communities who traditionally have fewer options.

Having an EBT (electronics benefit transfer) machine (which may also allow the opportunity to accept debit and credit cards) is an expensive tool so you may need to seek out funding or partner agencies to help procure one. If you are able to provide EBT access, be sure to market this in all of your flyers and banners. It is also a good idea to do focused marketing in communities where SNAP benefits are commonly used. Food and Nutrition Services can also provide you with free signage to promote your EBT status. To learn more about getting an EBT machine and accepting food stamps, contact the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services.



Spotlight

Denver Urban Gardens has access to three EBT machines. These machines are shared among as many sites as possible, to allow SNAP benefit users to buy produce at the markets with their EBT cards.

In 2011, DUG received a grant from Wholesome Wave to implement a Double Value Coupon Program at five of our youth farmers' market sites. This grant allows the markets that use the EBT machines to provide SNAP benefit users to receive double the produce they pay for. This program allows low-income families access to more fresh, locally-grown produce in their neighborhood.

Garden-Based Festivals

If you have a garden, host a festival to fundraise for or launch your youth market. Recruit local musicians and health organizations, have children's activities and samples from the garden. Introduce the idea of a community marketplace and let people know how they can get involved. Harvest festivals at the end of the season are a good way to focus upon youth efforts, celebrate the final farmers' market or launch an initial market and involve school and community-based organizations in the promotion of healthy living strategies and services.



Spotlight

At the Fairview Harvest and Community Wellness Festival, representatives from Denver Public Schools and Colorado State University's nutrition education program, local education, youth, health and recreation centers, transitional living facilities, health and human services, community credit unions, local community activist programs, the city council office and planners showcase their programs and services at an all-day music, art, dance and culinary celebration that brings over 200 members of this diverse community together. The police department is present with mounted patrols that allow youth and adults to become familiar with the local officers as supportive personnel. Local residents and volunteer professional chefs create culturally appropriate garden-based dishes that provide taste education and affordable ways of utilizing seasonal produce. Local farms contribute pumpkins and over-sized vegetables that are utilized for carving and decorating. Faith-based organizations provide music, parks and recreation have organized outdoor activities and ropes courses and Whole Foods Markets have donated fruit baskets as prizes for participating in all of the learning stations at the festival. The festival has become a centralized location for educating the community about local services and healthy living.

Participants

Make sure that everyone involved is clear on each person's role in the YFM program and for the day of the market. The following are suggestions on how to delineate roles and what is appropriate for adults and youth.

Adult Program Leaders and Collaborators

Adults may include teachers, parents, community members or mentors. A YFM is a perfect place for adults to model leadership, respect for differences and team-building activities. The market is a place of relationship building and social networking. Encourage collaborative planning and working together. Recognize and assert intergenerational and multicultural differences as strengths.

Reinforce to your adult support team that this is a youth-run market, where the key is teaching the youth leadership and responsibility. Think about how many people you want working at the market. It is good to have enough bodies to keep things running smoothly but too many can create chaos and leave some people feeling they are not needed. Design strategies to keep adults involved so they feel needed without them running the show. Appropriate adult tasks may include taking money, assisting kids with math calculations and supervising to make sure youth are staying on task and safe. Ask adults to share their favorite healthy recipes in a cooking demonstration at the market. Volunteers will need to set-up the afterschool market, so that the market is ready when the bell rings. Youth farmers' markets are an excellent forum to strengthen the relationships between youth and adults.

Relationship building activities

- Teach youth how to harvest
- Support youth with planting projects and identifying plants
- Help youth set-up or take down the market
- Give garden tours with youth
- Work through math calculations together
- Help youth advertise by holding up signs or assisting with the mobile market

Market Manager

A market manager is the person who will oversee the day-of-market operations. This person should be willing to be there during setup, open hours and take down of the market. The initiator of the market does not have to be the manager. Some markets try to find involved community members, parents or teachers to take on this role. If funding allows, consider providing a stipend for your market manager because of the responsibility and time commitment required.

The day of the market, the manager makes sure that everyone is fulfilling his or her appointed tasks. Are the youth engaged? Are the adults letting the youth have enough responsibility? Is the market set up correctly? Is everything cleaned up at the end of the day?

Finally, at some markets the market manager is in charge of the money. The market manager should make this decision. Some markets have found that it is better to have the adults run the cash register. That way if money does go missing the blame will not be on the youth. However, having the youth work directly with the money provides them with a real life experience. Regardless of who handles the actual money, make sure that the youth are doing the math—calculating the bill and the change needed.

Youth

Youth are really the stars of this program. On the day of the market define a variety of roles to ensure that all the youth feel involved and important. Create different teams or job titles; for example, marketing expert, sales representative, display master, customer service guru, etc. During the market, have youth give garden tours and explain the benefits of eating a rainbow of deeply colored fruits and vegetables. Consider youth attention spans and vary tasks. Youth will make it clear when they are ready to move on to something new.

Have to-do lists for the kids to refer to for market setup, running the market and market breakdown. This way the youth can learn responsibility by using the list to take care of what needs to be done versus always waiting for adult delegation. See [Appendix D](#) for examples of “To-Do Lists.”

Often, after several markets the novelty of running the market can wear off, so have some ways to keep the youth’s energy and excitement high. Stipends for youth are an incredible incentive. If funding is not available for stipends, create other incentives for youth. See if there is a school wide ‘super citizen award’ or some sort of service learning incentive that

already exists in the school for which working at the market makes them eligible. Ask the students' teachers if there can be extra credit points earned. Have the youth sign a contract for how many markets they will work (treating them like a young adult increases the responsibility they will have towards the commitment) and have a special prize for those students who complete their contract agreement.



Spotlight

After years of running markets, Fairview Elementary has developed a great system for market day. The youth work the Sundays in shifts, starting with a group coming in the morning to care for the garden and harvest what is going to be sold that day. The second shift helps setup the market and works the first hour. The final shift is in charge of working the second half of the market, taking down and cleaning up once the market closes.



Spotlight

Connecting Generations, a joint partnership between DUG and the University of Colorado School of Public Health, is an intergenerational mentoring program that brings older adult volunteers into schools to support and expand DUG's school garden programming. The broad goals of the Connecting Generations program are to: strengthen school-based programming around gardens; support teachers and increase use of gardens year round; support school science curriculum and improve academic achievement; improve the health and well-being of both the children and older adults; increase fruit and vegetable intake and physical activity; and strengthen social networks in the school community.

Some schools utilize the Connecting Generations model to support the market and to make it an educational space for youth. Mentors are recruited from within the neighborhood and from surrounding areas when schools are in need of additional support. Participating in a YFM program provides mentors an opportunity to engage with their community, and in the quiet moments of the market, a wonderful sharing occurs between the generations.



Appendices



Appendix A: Example Youth Application and Contract

Fairview Youth Farmers' Market Job Application

The Fairview Youth Farmers' Market needs enthusiastic young people like you to grow and sell fresh vegetables to the community!

Youth Market Entrepreneurs will:

- Grow vegetables in the Fairview School Garden
- Harvest these vegetables to sell at the Fairview Youth Market each Sunday
- Learn how to run the market each Sunday
- Learn about marketing and promoting healthy eating in the community
- Work with other youth and adults and have a lot of fun

Garden workdays are held every Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday mornings (rotating shifts on Sundays) all summer. They start on Tuesday, May 31st. The Fairview Youth Market starts on Sunday, July 3rd and the market happens each Sunday until the end of September.

To work at the Fairview Market, you need to be able to work:

- Every Tuesday 8am-10am, from May 31 – August 9
- Every Thursday 8am-10am, from June 2 – August 11
- Sunday mornings 10am-12pm, rotating schedules, not the same people every week June-August
- Sunday Market Days 12pm-3pm, from July 3 – September 25

Student's Name: _____

Parent's or Guardian's Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone number: () _____

Is there anything that will get in the way of you completing this program from start to finish (vacations, day-care, appointments, etc.)?

Student Commitment: I would like to apply for a youth market entrepreneur position for summer 2011. I commit to work on the days and times listed above. I will be on time, responsible and do my best work each day.

Student signature: _____

Parent Commitment: I support my child applying to work at the Fairview Youth Market this summer. I will make sure my child attends each day of work listed above. I will work, myself, four times throughout the summer, along with my child.

Parent signature: _____

Please turn in your application to your teacher by Friday, April 29th, 2011. He will interview the top applicants after that date. This year we will only hire 10 of the best applicants, so make sure you do your best job!

You know that a lot of students want to work in the garden this year. Not everyone can get the job, though. Answer these two questions. Make sure your answers are well written and well thought out. Try your best to show why we should pick you over somebody else.

Why would you like to work in the garden and Youth Farmers' Market this summer?

What will you do to be the best summer garden and market worker that you can be?

Fairview Youth Farmers' Market Contract

Congratulations! You have been accepted to be a member of the Fairview Youth Farmers' Market team! This will be an exciting summer, and we are glad to have you.

All of the Youth Market Entrepreneurs work together to make the garden and the market a success. If you miss a day of work, you let your teammates down. This is an important job and we expect you to act as you would for any job.

Goals of the Youth Market program: (1) To teach youth garden and market skills. (2) For young people to provide fresh vegetables and fruit for the community. (3) To work together and have fun!

This is a contract to show your commitment to the program and to your teammates. Please read and sign.

I commit to attending all training and garden work days and markets on the following days:

- Every Tuesday and Thursday from 8:00 am -10:00 am, June 1 - August 5
- Every Sunday 10:00 am - 4:30 pm, June 27 - September 28, often 1.5 hour rotating shifts

If I cannot make it for some reason, I will call the market manager in advance. I understand that if I miss work without calling, or break any regular school rule while at work, or have any behavior problems at work that I can be fired and I do not get paid for prior work. I will respect ALL adults and other student workers who work with me in the garden.

Independent Contractor Agreement: Your signature below indicates your understanding of your position as an independent contractor. Your signature below confirms that you will provide the afore-mentioned services within the time frame established, for the agreed upon compensation. As an Independent Contractor, you understand that you are not an employee of Denver Urban Gardens (DUG) and are therefore not entitled to receive any employee benefits provided to DUG employees including, but not limited to, medical/dental insurance, Unemployment Insurance, or other employer-related payroll tax benefits

Release of Claims: You assume full responsibility for any injuries which may occur to you during work activities and do hereby fully and forever discharge and release the land owner, or Denver Urban Gardens, their employees, executive directors, board members, officers, agents, authorized volunteer helpers, representatives, consultants, insurers and sureties, and their successors and assigns (collectively, the "Released Parties"), from any, claims. "Claims," as used in this document, means any and all claims, demands, damages, rights of action or causes of action, present or future, whether the same be known, anticipated or unanticipated, resulting from or arising out of your presence or the presence of your family members and guests on the Delaney Farm or DUG office or garden sites, activities at the Delaney Farm or DUG office or garden sites, the use or intended use of the Delaney Farm, office or garden sites, and/or participation in activities connected with DUG including, without limitation, any of the foregoing resulting from or arising out of the negligence of a Released Party. Further, you hereby waive any and all claims against a Released Party.

Student's Name: _____

Signature: _____

Parents: I support my child being a Youth Market Entrepreneur at the Fairview Youth Market this summer. I will help him/her be at work on time, and I commit to my child attending each day of work listed above unless an important conflict comes up. I will provide transportation or allow my children to walk to school and home. I will help with the garden or market at least four times so that I can learn about my child's work at the market.

Parent Name: _____ Phone number: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Appendix B: Suggested Materials

Look over the materials suggested below and begin to calculate what you can borrow, get donated, do without or need to purchase. Visiting your local thrift store is a great way to re-use and keep your costs low.

- Bank (money to make change with)
- Banner (or other marketing signage)
- Calculators (optional)
- Canopy (or other shade structure)
- Containers to display food (baskets, tubs, big bowls, etc.)
- Cooking kit for cooking demonstrations (propane stove, cutting board, knife, serving spoon, bowls, sample cups, plastic ware, etc.)
- Cooler (for ice to keep produce or drinks cool)
- Flyers (with future market dates and explanation of the program)
- Moneybox (cash box or an old cookie tin works well)
- Nametags (for student workers)
- Pencils/pens
- Note cards (laminated to be able to change prices each week)
- Clothespins (to clip prices to containers)
- Recipes
- Scale (to weigh produce sold for tracking purposes)
- Shopping bags
- Tablecloths
- Tables (see if the school can help provide these)
- Tracking sheets (receipts, etc.)
- Water (for the workers)
- Ziploc bags (for packaging small produce)

Appendix C: Example Budget

| Item | Estimated Cost | Notes |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|------------------------------------|
| Canopy Tent | \$115 | |
| Tables | \$0 | Borrow from school |
| Display Containers | \$50 | From second hand stores |
| Tablecloths | \$15 | |
| Cooler | \$35 | |
| Money Box | \$5 | Can use any kind of container |
| Food Scale | \$20 | |
| Calculators | \$0 | Borrow from school |
| Subtotal (one-time cost items) | \$220 | |
| | | |
| Water Bottles | \$10 | Reusable for the season |
| Price Labels | \$5 | |
| Computer Paper | \$5 | For customer forms, flyers, etc |
| Small Produce Bags | \$5 | |
| Grocery Bags | \$0 | Have students bring them from home |
| Name Tags | \$5 | |
| Pens/Pencils | \$5 | |
| Subtotal (reoccurring cost items) | \$35 | |
| | | |
| Total Market Costs | \$225 | |
| | | |
| Cooking Demo Costs | \$303 | |
| | | |
| Total Costs | \$558 | |

Cooking Demonstrations Budget

| Item | Estimated Cost | Notes |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Cooking Stove | \$70 | Portable propane |
| Cooking Pots & Pans | \$70 | |
| Mixing Bowls | \$15 | |
| Small Canopy | \$80 | Optional |
| Cutting Board | \$10 | |
| Cutting Knives | \$15 | |
| Subtotal (one-time cost items) | \$280 | |
| | | |
| Sample Cups | \$10 | |
| Sample Utensils | \$5 | |
| Plastic Gloves | \$5 | |
| Propane | \$3 | |
| Subtotal (reoccurring cost items) | \$23 | |
| | | |
| Total Costs | \$303 | |

Appendix D: Youth-Created Market To-Do's and Customer Tips

To-Do's: SETUP

Market Setup

- Set Up Tents
 - Carry tents from shed to sidewalk - get help to do this
 - Have one person at each leg to gently walk out and spread tent out to full width
 - Now push the tent up while pulling down the legs, work with all four corners to do each step up at the same time.
 - When legs are out all the way push tent all the way up, it will snap into place
- Carry out the tables and chairs and set them up under the tent
- Spread the table cloths over all the tables
- Rinse out all the produce buckets and then set out on tables
- Fill up spray bottles with water
- Hang banners, pictures and posters up on fence (need twine, scissors and tape for this)
- Put street signs up (one at North corner, one at South corner and one across from Decatur apartments front doors)
- 3 signs hung from tent
- Make sure we have a cooler with ice in it
- Have dry erase board and markers out by table

Table Setup

- Set up produce tubs on tables
 - Large round one and two oval ones fill with one inch of ice
- Carry produce from Ms. Judy's car to place into produce tubs
 - Check for additional produce in cooler and for daily garden harvest to place into produce tubs
- Arrange produce in tubs on table
- Place produce that needs ice into ice tubs
 - Broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, lettuce, spinach, collards, green onions, cilantro, radish, carrots
- Place produce signs next to matching fruits and veggies

Final Steps

- Write updated price list of produce
- Arrange fruits, veggies and flowers on table attractively
- Set up recipes and 5-a day health info near cash box
- Place small produce bags along chairs behind table
- Place larger bags by cash box chair
- Arrange any crafts (seed balls, wreaths, book marks etc.) on available table space

To-Do's: DURING MARKET

- Customers ALWAYS come first!
- Mist all produce on ice every 15 minutes (set up kitchen timer)
- Check ice and replace from cooler if needed
- Make sure table is always neat and clean (use a damp rag to wipe tablecloths when needed)
- As produce is sold rearrange fruits and veggies to make buckets look full
- Advertise the market in creative ways
 - o Wave signs
 - o Carry and wave produce
 - o Dance in the median
 - o Pass out flyers to passersby
- If the market is slow and no customers are around:
 - o Write in your journal
 - o Pick up trash on sidewalks near the market and garden
 - o Dig damaged produce into the compost pile

To-Do's: CLOSING

- Collect street signs from North and South corners and from Decatur Place
- Take down banners, posters, pictures from fence and fold banners nicely and place in crate
- Sort and arrange left-over produce
 - o Check with adult to see what can be stored in the cooler and what you can take home
- Rinse out produce tubs, stack and place by shed
- Wipe table cloths clean, fold and place in crate and put crate by shed
- Place recipes and health info into file box and place by shed
- Collect crafts and place into crate and place by shed
- Fold tables and chairs and carry to shed. Ask adult to help you place into shed
- Take down the tent
 - o Have 4 people, one at each leg
 - o Bring tent top down as far as possible at the same time
 - o Bring the legs down as far as possible at the same time
 - o Gently walk towards center at the same time
- Place all posters in shed along west side
- Stack all crates in shed
- Rinse out cooler and place in shed
- Take trash to dumpster
- Do a final check for forgotten items at the market and garden
- Make sure shed and tool box are locked
- Final check if garden needs watering
- Checkout with an adult

CUSTOMER SERVICE MARKET TIPS

OPENERS

- My name is _____. May I show you the garden?
- Welcome to the Fairview Market, the veggies are less expensive than at the store.
- How can I make your time here a great experience?
- Hello, welcome to our vegetable market. We have all kinds of vegetables and plants.

CONVERSATION

- May I help you bag your vegetables?
- Our garden is organic.
- Our vegetables were grown with love.
- We, the employees, grew the vegetables ourselves.
- Thank you for being patient, we'll be right with you.
- May I help you?
- I'm sorry for making you wait, we'll be with you as soon as possible.
- I don't know the answer, let me get one of my co-workers.
- Would you like to take a tour of the garden?
- I appreciate your patience.
- How did you hear about our market?

CLOSERS

- Thank you for stopping by our market.
- Please come back again.
- Please come again and bring your friends and family.
- Please spread the word about our market and thanks for coming.

BODY LANGUAGE & BEHAVIOR

- Smile!
- Look at customers' eyes.
- Speak loudly.
- Be kind.
- Pay attention to customers.
- No eating while talking to customers.
- No chewing gum.
- Helping the customer always comes first.
- Ask if customers need help.
- Restock and clean area during the shift.
- Offer to give tours.
- Don't get mad at customers, just ask for an adult's help.

Welcome to our Bradley Youth Farmers' Market

*Come and support
the school gardening program!*



Featuring fresh, locally grown produce.

**The Denver
Youth Farmers' Market Coalition
is made possible through a partnership of:**

With funding from:



Swansea Elementary Youth Farmers' Market

Thursday, September 21 and 28
3:00pm - 4:00pm

**Get 50% off fruits and vegetables
when you use your food stamps**

Also accepting debit cards

Cooking demonstrations!

Please join us in front of the school



Escuela Primaria Swansea Mercado de Niños Agricultores

Jueves, 21 y 28 de Septiembre
3:00pm - 4:00pm

**¡Descuento del 50% al usar sus
Cupones para Alimentos (SNAP) en
el mercado!**

También aceptamos tarjetas de débito

¡Demonstraciones de cocina!

Ven y únete al mercado en frente de la
escuela



Appendix F: Example Tracking Forms

Customer form for youth to fill out

| Name of Item | How many items (#)? | One item costs...(\$) | Total Cost (# x \$) |
|--------------|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | Total Bill | |

| Name of Item | How many items (#)? | One item costs...(\$) | Total Cost (# x \$) |
|--------------|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | Total Bill | |

2011 Youth Farmers' Market Tracking Sheet

SCHOOL:

| | week 1 | week 2 | week 3 | week 4 | week 5 | week 6 | week 7 | week 8 | TOTAL |
|--------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| Date | | | | | | | | | |
| Cash | | | | | | | | | |
| EBT/Credit | | | | | | | | | |
| Total | | | | | | | | | |
| Cost of Produce | | | | | | | | | |
| Other Expenses | | | | | | | | | |
| Profits | | | | | | | | | |
| Total Lbs Sold | | | | | | | | | |
| # of Sales | | | | | | | | | |
| Cooking Demo (Y/N) | | | | | | | | | |
| # of Kids | | | | | | | | | |
| Notes: | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |

Appendix G: Example Coalition Responsibilities

Denver Youth Farmers' Market Coalition

In 2011 the Denver Youth Farmers' Market Coalition (YFMC) consists of leaders from Denver Urban Gardens (DUG), Slow Food Denver (SFD), and school gardens throughout the city. The Denver YFMC promotes opportunities for schools to bring fresh, locally grown produce to their communities by involving youth in school gardens and markets, thereby promoting healthy eating. The YFMC collaborates with culinary and nutritional professionals to provide lessons on how to cook fresh produce using healthy ingredients and cooking techniques. The flexibility of the YFMC model allows each school to tailor programs and events to its school community.

Youth Farmers' Markets are programmatic. Because our organizations are not-for-profit, these markets serve as a training opportunity for the youth, health promotion for the community and youth, and a fund-raising opportunity for garden programs and infrastructure. The YFM program includes summer training with students from the school to grow produce for the market, to teach students gardening skills, to introduce business skills, and to hold markets. A school may choose to meet all of these objectives or pick and choose. Some schools choose to spread the training out over the whole growing season, while others focus on the weeks of market sales.

These markets are not for personal economic gain. For this reason, it is not appropriate to include outside food vendors. YFMs are not permitted to sell prepared food. All produce must be sold raw and whole (no cutting or preparation). It is expected that all profits from the YFMs will go back to the school's garden program.

The following are the primary roles and responsibilities critical to successfully running a YFMC season:

Denver Urban Gardens (DUG)

- Will pay utility costs for a walk-in refrigerator to be used to temporarily store the YFMC produce.
- Will provide a template for weighing produce and tracking sales.

Slow Food Denver (SFD)

- Will contact local farmers to negotiate the best deal available to obtain YFMC produce.
- Will provide to school leaders current price lists from farmers by Saturday 5pm via email and will accept weekly orders from each youth farmers' market by e-mail on Monday 8 pm.
- Will provide a driver for the rental truck on a weekly basis, whose task will be to pickup produce from local farms and deliver it to the walk-in refrigerator on Wednesday by 12 pm.
- Will collect payments and reporting information on a weekly basis from each Youth Farmers' Market.

Youth Farmers' Market Leaders

- Will attend a required training meeting in August.
- Will promote the YFMC in local newspapers and media, as well as in school announcements.

- Will contribute “dues” of \$25 for a seasonal market / \$10 for a one time market. This money will provide a small fund to help with marketing and other expenses. Please contact a coalition leader if this is a hardship.
- Will provide a volunteer to assist SFD twice during the YFMC season on a Wednesday from noon – 1:30 pm to help sort and store produce orders at the walk-in refrigerator.
- Will place an order for produce no later than Monday, 8 pm of the week they intend to operate their Youth Farmers’ Market.
- Will record and report the approximate pounds of produce sold, the retail value, of the produce sold and numbers of customers for each market. The information will be used for current grant reporting, future grant applications and promotions.
- Will redistribute any unsold produce to school families in need, a local food pantry, or to another YFM through the walk-in refrigerator.
- Will help to maintain the walk-in refrigerator space by keeping the school shelves tidy and free of spoiled produce.
- Will provide payment for purchased vegetables in a timely manner. Each school is responsible for the cost of the vegetables they ordered. Payment can be made at the time of the pickup or mailed to a coalition leader.

School or YFM Site

YFM Volunteer Signature

Date

Denver YFM Coalition Season for 2011

First Produce Pickup: August 17, 2011

Last Produce Pickup: October 26, 2011 (tentative, depends on growing season)

Additional Resources

Gardening

- Soil Testing: www.soiltestinglab.colostate.edu
- Crop Calendar: www.coloradofreshmarkets.com/crop_calendar.html
- Organic Gardening: www.organicgardening.com
- The GardenWeb: www.gardenweb.com

Grants

- www.kidsgardening.org/grants-and-awards
- USDA Hunger and Food Security: www.csrees.usda.gov/nea/food/sri/hunger_sri_awards.html

EBT and SNAP Benefits

- www.pps.org/pdf/SNAP_EBT_Book.pdf
- www.pps.org/articles/seven-steps-snap-ebt-market/

Nutrition and Gardening Curriculum

- Denver Urban Gardens: www.dug.org/school-garden-curriculum
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/012/i1118e/i1118e00.htm>
- Kids Gardening: www.kidsgardening.org
- Slow Food Denver: www.sfdseedtotable.org

Program Examples

- The Food Project, Boston, MA: www.thefoodproject.org
- Red Hook Farmers Market, Brooklyn, NY: www.added-value.org
- The Michigan Youth Farm Stand Project: www.miyouthandfood.msu.edu
- Youth Farm and Market Project, Minneapolis, MN: www.youthfarm.net

Denver Youth Farmers' Market Coalition Partners

- Denver Urban Gardens: www.dug.org
- Slow Food Denver: www.sfdseedtotable.org

Other

- <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>
- www.farmersmarketcoalition.org/
- www.marketumbrella.org/marketshare

Sources

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- Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont. “Engaging the Community for Farmers Market Success.” May 2010. www.nofavt.org/sites/default/files/Community%20Support%20Manual.pdf
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