



FOOD GARDENS FOR SCHOOLS AND ECDS

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Thousands of South African households are impoverished and food insecure. Children and teenagers depend on refined, purchased white maize-meal for their daily energy and very few families consume an adequate diversity of fruit and vegetables - suffering from malnutrition as a result.

A lack of vital nutrients can impact a child's learning and performance, and can lead to stunting in small children (South Africa is one of only 12 countries in the world where stunting has increased). Many children also have the extra demands of walking long distances to school which creates a much greater need for energy and so they depend on their school feeding schemes to keep them alert and attentive during lessons.



WHAT DO WE DO?

- We establish food gardens at schools, Early Childhood Development Centres (ECDs) and community centres – to date we have helped 83 schools and 34 ECDs, reaching 35,000+ learners.
- We grow a variety of crops, herbs and fruit trees to supplement daily feeding schemes with macro and micro and nutrients and prevent malnutrition.
- We provide training to children, teachers and parents on healthy eating and caring for their gardens.
- We provide mentorship, rainwater harvesting systems, nurseries, worm farms and other supportive infrastructure to keep the gardens growing.
- We provide outreach work to parents, and help them to establish their own healthy gardens at home.
- We teach environmentally friendly techniques, like natural fertilisers & pesticides, crop rotation and companion planting which create healthy environments and healthier produce.



WHY ARE GARDENS IMPORTANT?

- Gardens are a wonderful way to support bees, butterflies and other important elements of natural eco-systems.
- Gardening provides an opportunity for children to learn valuable lessons like teamwork, communication, responsibility and patience.
- They provide an ideal classroom for students of all ages – gardens can be used to teach about everything from insects, to the seasons, to ecosystems and photosynthesis.
- Children are more likely to value vegetables and healthy eating after growing their own – and gardening is good exercise.
- The school is diversified and beautified, instilling a greater sense of pride.

