



North Dakota Junior Master Gardener Program

ANNUAL SUMMARY 2021

NDSU

EXTENSION



Introduction

Our Greatest Resource

The greatest natural resource that any country can have is its children.¹

Our children in North Dakota are great and precious, but they are also undernourished and inactive. Recent surveys of high school children in our state show:

- 99% do not eat the recommended amount of vegetables daily.²
- 31% are overweight or obese.
- 74% are not physically active on a daily basis.³

Poor diets and unhealthy lifestyles limit the potential of our kids. Let's lend them a hand—and a garden trowel.

Our Response

Gardening programs can help. Children who grow their own food are more likely to eat vegetables and have healthy eating habits throughout their lives.⁴ Gardening programs can sharpen skills in science, raise awareness of the environment, build self-esteem, and help youth learn to work together.⁴

The COVID-19 pandemic in 2021 created challenges, but our project leaders adapted to the circumstances. These dedicated persons provided gardening experiences to 4,060 children, one of our highest totals ever.

The following is a description of our gardening programs this year including their impacts on youth and their communities.



The North Dakota Junior Master Gardener Program provides hands-on activities that lead to healthy kids and strong communities.

North Dakota State University is dedicated to helping children enjoy healthy, active lives.

¹Danny Kaye, humanist and entertainer.

²Moore, L.V., F.E. Thompson and Z. Demissie. 2017. Percentage of youth meeting federal fruit and vegetable intake recommendations, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, United States and 33 states, 2013. *J. Acad. Nutr. Diet.* 117(4): 545–553.

³Centers for Disease Control. 2017. Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System results for 2017. North Dakota data. Accessed online.

⁴Univ. of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center. 2009. Benefits of gardening for children.

At-A-Glance

The North Dakota Junior Master Gardener Program provides **hands-on activities** that lead to **healthy kids** and **strong communities**.



North Dakota State University

NDSU awarded \$22,500 to 54 projects for gardening supplies. Funds were provided by the North Dakota State Legislature. NDSU provided educational support to all projects and led 22 of them. Thirty-seven of the projects would not have been started without JMG funds.



Partners

New partnerships were forged and existing partnerships were strengthened. Over 170 local businesses and organizations worked with NDSU Extension in these projects. Support came in the form of human resources, access to land and water, plants, tools, fertilizer, transportation, classroom space and food.



Impacts on Youth

Approximately 4,060 children (3,200 young children and 860 teens) participated in JMG activities. Project leaders reported that youth developed skills in gardening and enjoyed the physical activity. Children learned how to eat a healthy diet and gained experiences in helping others through public service.



Food Security

JMG projects assisted in the production and donation of an estimated 16,000 pounds of fresh vegetables. The produce went to food banks, churches, family shelters, veterans, elderly, shut-ins, New Americans and other needy families. Students grew and donated produce for their school lunch programs.



Beauty

JMG kids beautified schools, day care centers, senior care centers, churches, parks, fairgrounds and along city streets. They enhanced the landscapes of a city hall, courthouse, hospital and two community zoos. Flowers were grown and donated to hospitals and senior care centers.



Special Projects

JMG kids constructed raised beds at senior care centers. At-risk youth and deaf children learned how to grow their own gardens. Youth conducted research to identify superior vegetable varieties. JMG gardening activities supported pollinator gardens, songbird habitat, sensory gardens and a summer reading program.

For more information, go to www.ag.ndsu.edu/jrmastergardener/

Summary of Projects

PROJECT	COUNTY	HIGHLIGHTS
Beautification Projects		
4-H Maddock Beautification	Benson	Cared for flower beds; provided planters for businesses.
Das Leipzig Kinder Patio Project	Grant	Constructed raised beds with flowers for a care center.
Divide County JMG Service Project	Divide	Planted flowers in pots for residents at a care center.
Flowers for Regent	Hettinger	Built a flower bed at city hall; provided planters for shops.
Hillsboro Beautification Project	Traill	Planted flowers in large pots located along business fronts.
Medina City Park 4-H Flower Bed	Stutsman	Renovated the major flower bed at the city park.
Missouri Valley Bunch 4-H Club	Morton	Beautified courthouse; built raised beds for care facility.
Selfridge Main Street Planters	Sioux	Planted flowers in pots placed along Main Street.
Community Gardens		
4-H Field to Fork	Barnes	Learned how to grow and preserve vegetables.
Cavalier Evangelical Free Church	Pembina	Built a raised bed; grew veggies; planted trees at playground.
Cleveland Comm. Youth Garden	Stutsman	Constructed a youth garden and grew veggies at a park.
Makoti Community Garden	Mountrail	Grew vegetables and beautified a city park with flowers.
McKenzie County JMG Program	McKenzie	Grew veggies and flowers in pots; donated flowers to elderly.
Mountrail County Comm. Garden	Mountrail	Grew veggies and flowers in raised beds; donated produce.
Nativity Community Garden	Cass	Built lighting system to start seedlings for needy families.
Plant the Seed Learning Garden	Stutsman	Renovated youth garden; grew and harvested vegetables.
Towner County Comm. Garden	Towner	Learned of gardening; grew food for needy; decorated rocks.
UND Learning Gardens	Grand Forks	Created garden beds for local schools and UND.
Day Care Gardens		
Beautification by Growth	Rolette	Beautified a care center; grew vegetables for crafts and meals.
Building Blocks Learning Center	Bottineau	Built raised beds; grew and enjoyed eating vegetables.
Fessenden Child Care Garden	Wells	Established a garden to teach youth about the environment.
Future Gardeners of Oakes	Dickey	Learned about growing vegetables and healthy eating habits.
Head Start Raised Garden Bed	Benson	Established a garden to teach youth about gardening.
HOPEful Kids and Beginnings	Grand Forks	Grew and ate vegetables at a local church's garden.
Langdon Daycare Vegetable Garden	Cavalier	Grew and sampled vegetables; toured a research center.
On the Move with Gardening Fun!	Cass	Increased their awareness of nature through gardening.
Environmental Stewardship Projects		
Chahinkapa Zoo Gardens	Richland	Grew vegetables for zoo animals; beautified zoo grounds.
Flasher Songbird Garden	Morton	Built nesting boxes; planted bird-friendly plants in courtyard.
Junior Master Gardener Camp	Grant	Created gardens; made crafts; enjoyed healthy snacks.
MetiGROWshe Garden	Bottineau	Learned sustainable gardening practices; donated produce.
Roosevelt Park Zoo Garden	Ward	Grew vegetables, fruits and herbs for zoo animals.

PROJECT	COUNTY	HIGHLIGHTS
Food Security Projects		
2021 Nutrition Month Activity Kits	State	Taught families how to grow and enjoy spinach.
Hay Creek Hunger Free Garden	Morton	Grew potatoes for local food pantries and shelters.
Helping Hands Hunger Project	Stark-Billings	Grew organic vegetables for a local charity.
Produce for Wahpeton Food Pantry	Richland	Grew and donated vegetables for low-income families.
Home Projects		
Backyard Gardening Contests	Logan	Competed with each other to grow giant vegetables.
HMB Grow Boxes	Emmons	Learned how to sow and grow spinach.
Home Garden Variety Trials	State	Evaluated promising vegetable, herb and flower varieties.
School Gardens		
Anamoose-Drake School Garden	McHenry	Grew vegetables for their school and a local food pantry.
Garden Fun	Ransom	Learned gardening basics; grew vegetables at home.
Hankinson Elementary Garden	Richland	Grew and processed vegetables; shared with community.
Harvesting Fun	Burleigh	Designed garden beds; grew vegetables in raised beds.
Jamestown Afterschool Garden	Stutsman	Learned about nutrition and how to grow a garden.
Kids and Plants	Burke	Learned to identify seeds and grow plants in containers.
Seed to Flower to Seed	Stutsman	Dissected seeds and flowers; planted window gardens.
Transition Class Garden Project	Barnes	Learned how to grow and cook vegetables.
Wahpeton FFA Raised Garden Beds	Richland	Grew vegetables in new raised beds; donated produce.
Special Needs Projects		
Dunseith Nursing Home	Rolette	Renovated and built new raised beds at a nursing home.
Garden to Table Community Serv.	Ward	Youth-at-risk learned how to grow vegetables.
Growing & Giving Smiles	Burleigh	Grew veggies and flowers; donated to needy and elderly.
Sign Language for Young Gardeners	Grand Forks	Did videos showing gardening practices in sign language.
Lettuce Do Lunch	Burleigh	Decorated and planted pots of veggies for the elderly.
Stutsman-Barnes JDC Garden	Stuts.-Barnes	Youth-at-risk grew vegetables and enjoyed the outdoors.
Therapeutic Gardening	Burleigh	Developed skills in gardening; enjoyed therapeutic benefits.



Feedback From Project Leaders

Several project leaders shared personal comments in reports. In most cases, these were expressions of gratitude. Here is a sampling of comments:

“This was an amazing project! I feel the kids not only learned from it but also it made them feel good to do something for the community! The people of the Regent community were very grateful!”

Amy Herberholz, Dakota Sunrise 4-H Club

“Thank you for providing these grant opportunities that allows us to make a difference in our communities!”

Lynnette Vachal, NDSU Ext. – Mountrail Co.

“Thank you so much for this amazing opportunity to receive funds to plant a garden. Without this opportunity, North Valley 4-H Club would not have explored the options of planting a garden.”

Emma Olson, North Valley 4-H Club

“The Junior Master Gardener funds have greatly enhanced our zoo gardens and our educational efforts! This is a very worthwhile program! Thank you.”

Joan Zettel, Chabinkapa Zoo

“It was a great project with lots of hands on learning and we are very grateful for the support!”

Sheldon Gerhardt, NDSU Ext. – Logan Co.

“We absolutely loved this project. We look forward to filling our garden boxes for years to come!”

Jenn Bendel, HOPE Church



Our team of JMG project leaders are helping youth to enjoy healthy, active lives.

“Thank you for supporting the NDSU Center for Child Development with this gardening grant. When our parents are asked in a Family Survey the things they like about our program or would like to see continued, they ALWAYS say gardening for the children. This grant has helped develop in children healthy eating and the love of gardening from an early age! Thanks!”

Debra Habedank, NDSU Center for Child Development

“The Junior Master Gardener Grant is an amazing opportunity for children! We would not have pursued this project otherwise. Everyone agrees this was one of the best projects we have taken on for our children and are excited to continue the gardening project for summers to come. Thank you!”

Virginia Gramlon, Tiny Tornadoes Daycare



“We believe this program has a lasting impact on the students that get to participate in the program. We have also seen since starting this program our gardening section at the Ransom County Fair has grown tremendously. Thank you for the funds to be able to keep this program going.”

Brian Zimprich, NDSU Ext. – Ransom Co.

“We are forever grateful. It is a challenge being in a care facility, in a small community, serving underprivileged families, in the huge pandemic ... this was the best way to help us keep focused on learning and helping.”

Grace Brown, Rolette Community Care Center

“We have been fortunate to continue the garden for a few years now and see the excitement that has continued to grow with students that were here when we started. They now tell younger ones about the garden and share their knowledge. It is rewarding to see this impact continue to grow through the years. ... Your support and belief in this program makes a difference. Thank you.”

Tammy Mewes, Jamestown Parks and Rec.

“This JMG project was successful beyond our expectations. Anticipation for the coming year is high.”

Cecelia Collins, Master Gardener

“Oh my gosh, we witnessed quiet students interacting with students that they would not even approach in school. Students laughed, conversed and interacted so well together. The adult volunteers also did a wonderful job encouraging the students. Thank you for your financial support!”

Anne Biewer, Hankinson Public Schools

“With the help of the Junior Master Gardener Project, I was able to show my administrator that we can continue to fund this project. ... Helping me out as a teacher opened up avenues of teaching that I am so grateful to the Junior Master Gardener Program. We love our indoor garden!”

Kalyn Botz, Sheyenne Valley Area Career and Technology Center

“I am extremely grateful to, as an individual, be able to utilize these funds to help bolster environmental/gardening education with children in my community.”

Caitlin Stegmiller, Flasher Girl Scouts

“Thank you! We are grateful to have received the funds through this grant. They truly helped to benefit our program and our ability to provide education, life skills and food to the youth we serve.”

Talbott Pollert, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch

“Thank you for this wonderful gardening experience for the Cleveland youth. This project wouldn’t have been able to happen without the funds available. The success of our community garden project was outstanding. Helping children to love gardening will be invaluable throughout their lives. Our community looks forward to future opportunities.”

Lori Helm, Master Gardener

“Receiving this grant gave life to our project! ... One of the children saw a person cry at the food pantry when they picked up their food; they were so happy to get it. The mom said: ‘It was kind of unexpected.’ ”

Karen Weber, Helping Hands 4-H Club

Contact

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Credits

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More Information

Please contact a member of the Leadership Team or go to our website: <http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/jrmastergardener/>.

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