Welcome! We are thrilled to gather together and to strengthen our network of teachers, parents and others committed to helping kids make the connection between food, health and the environment.

We believe that by sharing best practices and supporting a garden in every school, we create opportunities for our children to discover fresh food, connect to a living environment while applying academic standards and to develop social emotional skills. Students are also introduced to career options for the future.

School garden projects nurture community spirit, common purpose and cultural appreciation by building bridges among students, school staff, families, local businesses and organizations. Let’s work together to create a garden in every school in America’s Farm-to-Fork Capital.

Gratitude to Our Growing Circle of Support!

Sponsors:

Kit Kirkpatrick

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Special Thanks:

Lyndsey Waugh, Sprouts Healthy Communities Foundation ● Cyndi Neaves, Kyrstie Neumann & Kelsey Nederveld, Nutrition Services, SCUSD ● Dave & Maxine Clark ● Fred & Betsy Weiland ● Jessie Ryan School Board President, SCUSD ● Ellen Cochrane School Board Member, SCUSD ● Patrick Kennedy, Sacramento County Board of Supervisors ● The Plant Foundry Nursery & Store ● Talins Nursery ● Ann Marie Kennedy, Grant Union High School ● Michael Dittmer, Mesa Verde High School Art Program ● General Produce ● Jon Merriman ● Janel Inouye & Ed Roehr ● Chocolate Fish Coffee ● Chris Lewis ● Wild Birds Unlimited
Saturday, March 10

8:00–9:00 AM Registration & Breakfast
Provided by Magpie Café, Chocolate Fish Coffee and the Sacramento Natural Foods Co-op. Healthy snacks and coffee will be available throughout the day on the Kitchen Patio.

9:00–9:45 AM Opening Session
SCHOOLHOUSE
Welcome & Announcements
Janet Zeller, Founder & Co-Director, Soil Born Farms
Shannon Hardwicke, Youth Education Manager, Soil Born Farms
Video Project • Bee News Room 23
Lisa Bettencourt’s 4th Grade Class, Pacific Elementary
Meet the Soil Born Farms Youth Education Team

10:00–11:00 AM Workshops
Insect Anatomy, NGSS-Aligned Unit for Grades 3–5
Shannon Hardwicke, Soil Born Farms
Is it an insect? How do I know? What are the stages of an insect’s life cycle? How different types of insects compare/contrast? Discover ways to engage students in critical thinking about insects and their creative adaptations.

Educating the Next Generation of Eaters
Chef Brenda Ruiz, Slow Food Sacramento
Eating slowly means being connected to and understanding where food comes from, knowing how it’s grown and how to prepare and share with others. Learn about FREE Slow Foods resources and make a simple recipe.

School Gardens as a Tool for Behavior Management
Vanessa Forwood, Soil Born Farms
School gardens are the core of the school community and have the potential to provide a space for behavioral development outside of the traditional classroom environment. Explore how gardens can be used to benefit students who have difficulty staying on task in the classroom.

Connecting Youth to the Natural World, Themselves and Each Other
Alyssa Kassner, Soil Born Farms
Discover how to connect your students to nature, the garden, themselves and each other in simple and meaningful ways. Participants will learn ways to awaken sensory awareness as well as how to use child passions to create connections to the natural world.

Seasonal Planting for School Gardens
Alex Morton, Soil Born Farms
Learn which vegetables to plant and in what season. We will also cover which vegetables grow best from seed and from nursery starts, perennial vegetables, grains, and low maintenance herbs that grow well in our area.

11:15 AM–12:15 PM Workshops
What Happened to the Bees, NGSS-Aligned Unit Grades 3–5
Lisa Bettencourt, Pacific Elementary SCUSD
The NGSS-aligned curriculum will give you a framework to help students discover bees and to plan a student designed habitat that will support our buzzing friends throughout the year.

Student Led Garden Tours
Ann Marie Kennedy, Grant Union High School
Learn about Grant High School’s garden tours for elementary schools and how to create cross-age teaching and lessons in the garden at your school. GHS students and staff will share three garden activities that older students can teach to younger students and how to integrate NGSS standards.

Regenerative Growing Practices
Tyler Stowers, Soil Born Farms
Learn how to grow an abundance of nutrient dense food while simultaneously building healthy soil.

Building with Recycled Materials
Edwin Wagner
Learn how to use pallets and recycled materials to create enhancements for your school garden on a budget. Come ready to swing a hammer.

Flower Garden Power
Margaret Cooper, UC Davis
This workshop will focus on the integration of flowers to teach science to classrooms of all ages. The topics will include flower management, habitat, pollinators, plant life cycle, flowers’ colors, shapes, and patterns, and edible flowers. Includes a hands-on activity for further application.

12:30–1:15 PM Lunch & Networking
Lunch ingredients are provided by Sprouts Healthy Communities Foundation with support from Magpie Café, Freshpoint, Soil Born Farms and General Produce. Cooked with love by Cyndi Neaves, Multi-Site Supervisor/Luther Burbank High School and Kyrstie Neumann, Nutrition Services, Sacramento City Unified School District. Enjoy your lunch in the outdoor theater or the barn (weather permitting).

1:30–2:15 PM Student Panel: An Alumni Student Perspective
Participants:
Kianni Ledezma, Monterey Bay State University, Environmental Science
Angie Cha, CSUS Recreation, Parks and Tourism Administration
Briseyda Guzman Perez, ARC with plans to transfer to CSUS or UC Davis
Ashlinily Xiong, ARC with plans to transfer to CSUS or UC Davis
Facilitated by: Janet Zeller, Soil Born Farms
2:30–3:30 PM Workshops

Plant Parts, Seeds, Needs and More, NGSS-aligned for K–2
Michele Rossi, SCUSD Science Coach
This unit presents 10 weeks of lessons about plant life cycle through fun, engaging, hand-on activities as well as teaching tools and assessment.

Back to Our Roots
Gao Ly Yang and Michelle Sikora, Soil Born Farms
Create a home in the garden, not just for vegetables, but for our students and community members too. We will brainstorm various culturally representative plants and how to design and start your own multicultural beds. We will also cook some cultural recipes with these vegetables.

Special Education Garden Programing
Aaron McClatchy, Luther Burbank High School
Collaborate, share best practices and stories of gardening with students who have disabilities. Particular focus may be given to the following topics: autism, vocational and independent living skills development.

Empowering Students Through Work
Stephen Payne, Sacramento Waldorf School
As the popularity of school gardens grow, so does the recognition of its benefits. This workshop will look at the many intellectual, psychological, and emotional qualities gained by school children who have the opportunities to work outside gardening.

Compost 101
Jenn MacLeod, Soil Born Farms
Learn the basics of starting and maintaining a healthy, happy compost.

3:45–4:45PM Workshop

The Multi-Cultural Garden: Acknowledging and Celebrating Heritage in Agricultural Education Spaces
Marisa Coyne and Abraham Cazares, UC Davis Children’s Garden
We will focus on cultural sensitivity in farm and garden spaces and discuss our experience working with the themes of equity and inclusion at the University of California, Davis (UCD) Student Farm. This workshop will include suggestions for in-class and in-garden activities, planting recommendations and additional reading/lesson plan resources.

Tips and Tricks to Food Adventuring
AmeriCorp Volunteers, Food Literacy Center
Find out how we teach our kids to not only try vegetables but to enjoy them. Make a Food Literacy-style recipe and discuss your own personal barriers to vegetable consumption.

Cultivating Environmental Stewardship with Youth Leadership
Carrie Strohl, Pueblo Vista Magnet School, Napa
Enlisting students during extracurricular times of the school day is a viable way to build youth leaders and maintain a school garden at the same time. This session will share the success stories of three garden clubs at an environmental science magnet school.

The Power of Planting Trees
Nick Anicich, Soil Born Farms
Learn how to utilize the power of tree planting to improve community health and increase parent and community involvement at your school site. From navigating school facilities and district approvals, to engaging students in tree siting and planting, this workshop will help you plant and care for fruit, shade and evergreen trees on your school campus.

5:00–6:00 PM
Sunset Happy Hour & Networking
KITCHEN PATIO

8:30–9:00 AM Breakfast
KITCHEN PATIO • Provided by Magpie Café, Chocolate Fish Coffee and the Sacramento Natural Foods Co-op.

9:00–9:45AM Brainstorming & Sharing
SCHOOLHOUSE

10:00 AM–12:30 PM
Digging Deeper: Hands-On Workshops

Practice, Play and Create
Shannon Hardwicke and Alyssa Kassner, Soil Born Farms
Practice and experience lessons from the Growing Together Curriculum while creating helpful tools of the trade for your classroom and garden. Learn games and songs that facilitate learning, take home great materials, use your creativity and be ready to act like a kid.

Gardening 101
Nick Anicich and Gao Ly Yang, Soil Born Farms
Dave Chapell, Sacramento Food Bank
Learn the basic in composting, bed prep, seeding, transplanting, fruit tree care and vermicomposting. If you are an educator who is starting at ground zero, this is the workshop for you.

Herbs: A Powerful Learning Tool
Jenn MacLeod, Soil Born Farms
Herbs are sustainable and easy to grow in a school garden. Learn about their uses, cultural connection and how they attract beneficial insects plus make an herbal salve.

Sowing Seeds of Serenity
Amy Green, MFA and Community Educator
Learn to address the epidemic of childhood anxiety, anger and worry with meaningful ways to teach resiliency skills to children using the garden and art. Leave feeling relaxed and optimistic with an action plan to plant your seeds of serenity for those who need it most—our youth.

Eat Your Veggies: Cooking with Garden Fresh Ingredients
Michelle Sikora, Soil Born Farms
Learn how to cook delicious, seasonal, simple recipes with students in the classroom or the garden. We will go over useful materials that can fit any budget. We will dig into several hands-on cooking activities featuring recipes we use at the school campuses we visit and send you off with a pack of kid-friendly recipes.

12:30–2 PM Lunch & Networking
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Our mission is to create an urban agriculture and education project that empowers youth and adults to discover and participate in a local food system that encourages healthy living, nurtures the environment and grows a sustainable community.

www.soilborn.org • 916 363.9685
connecting food, health & the environment
Speakers

Nick Anicich, Soil Born Farms
Nick is the Neighborhood Manager for Soil Born Farms where he oversees the connection between school garden initiatives and urban fruit tree gleaning in South Sacramento and Rancho Cordova. He is an experienced garden educator who focuses on relationship building and creativity in the garden through mindfulness, community building and collaboration.

Lisa Bettencourt, Pacific Elementary
Lisa is a classroom teacher at Pacific Elementary. Using the school garden and related learning in the classroom combined with mentoring other classes has made her work really fun, has made students more engaged and enthusiastic and transformed the way she teaches.

Jessica Bolaños, Soil Born Farms
Jessica is a Youth Education Assistant at Soil Born Farms and has worked with youth of all ages in diverse settings, including forests, rural communities in Nicaragua, gardens, public schools and summer camps. She approaches work through an equity lens and values creative, culturally responsive teaching in outdoor spaces.

Abraham Cazares, UC Davis
Abraham is one of the staff coordinators for the Community Table Project at the U.C. Davis Student Farm as well as a part-time farmer at a local, organic farm. He is a recent UC Davis graduate with a degree in Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems.

Dave Chappell, Sacramento Food Bank
Dave is the manager of the Sacramento Food Bank and Family Services Demonstration Garden. He has worked with over 20 schools in Placer County assisting in setting up school gardens and teaching garden programs for grades K–6 in Auburn and has spent over three years developing community gardens for groups and two food banks.

Margaret Cooper, UC Davis
Margaret is a third year Environmental Science Management major with a Spanish minor at University of California, Davis. She has worked on the flower project at the Student Farm for 2 years beginning as an intern and is now currently the lead student floriculturist.

Marisa Coyne, UC Davis
Marisa is a graduate student in Community and Regional Development interested in advancing experiential education equity in the outdoors. She has served as a teaching assistant and graduate student researcher at the U.C. Davis Student Farm for the past three years and is passionate about plants, cycling and creative learning modalities.

Vanessa Forwood, Soil Born Farms
Vanessa began teaching in school gardens because of her desire to provide access for all to healthy, local food. She views the school garden as an endless resource for educational and emotional growth and as the mecca of the school community. Her favorite garden activity with kids is listening and helping them build upon their knowledge.

Amy Green, Community Educator
With a Master’s of Fine Art degree, a long history of teaching adults and children in a variety of settings, and more than 20 years of experience studying mindfulness meditation, Amy brings a unique perspective and creative support to educators. Her background includes Lazeur-painting for school settings, project management, writing and marketing.

Shannon Hardwicke, Soil Born Farms
Shannon is the Youth Education Manager for Soil Born Farms. She began this work at Theodore Judah Elementary starting the Science Alive program and now manages garden support for 10 schools in our region through the Growing Together Program. Her vision is to change policy and process so that all schools can benefit from the power of hands-on garden learning.

Alyssa Kassner, Soil Born Farms
Alyssa has been working with youth of all ages for over 8 years in a variety of settings including classrooms, forests, gardens and farms. Her current role is as the Youth Education Assistant Manager for Soil Born Farms. She leads youth experiences for the Roots and Wings program.

Ann Marie Kennedy, Grant Union High School
Ann Marie teaches Agriculture and Natural Resources in the GEO Academy at Grant Union High School.

Jenn MacLeod, Soil Born Farms
Jenn is a Youth Education Assistant at Soil Born Farms. She works on the ground connecting kids to their school garden spaces and healthy food through garden based projects and kinesthetic learning.

Aaron McClatchy, Luther Burbank High School
Aaron is a Special Day Class Teacher for students with autism at LBHS. He has supported the growth of the Burbank Urban Garden program over the last 8 years while encouraging expansion of the regional school garden movement.

Alex Morton, Soil Born Farms
Alex is the Greenhouse Manager for Soil Born Farms and the school garden coordinator for Alice Birney Waldorf Methods K–8 School. Previously, she worked with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in conservation planning.

Stephan Payne, Sacramento Waldorf School
Stephen Payne has been farming with children for the past 23 years. He has been working at the school farmer and garden teacher at the Sacramento Waldorf School since 2001.

Michele Rossi, Sacramento City Unified School District
Michele was an elementary teacher for 15 years in the Sacramento City Unified School District. She is currently the district’s science coach for elementary schools. Michele is an advocate of hands-on science and allowing curiosity to lead the learning, which is a foundational piece of garden education.

Chef Brenda Ruiz, Slow Food Sacramento
Culinary Professional Brenda Ruiz has been working in Sacramento area top restaurants since 1996. Ms. Ruiz serves on the Executive Board of Slow Food Sacramento as Director of the School Garden Coalition and Chair of its Youth and School Projects.

Michelle Sikora, Soil Born Farms
Michelle joined the Soil Born Farms team in 2013. She graduated from Sacramento State University with a degree in Food and Nutrition and a minor in Child Development. She also earned a certificate from CSUS in Family Life Education. Michelle has a passion for cooking with veggies and loves teaching children how to cook out of the garden.

Tyler Stowers, Soil Born Farms
A first generation farmer originally from the Sacramento suburbs, Tyler caught the farming bug after college. He worked in Northern California and Southern Oregon for several years and returned home in 2015. He has held the position of Farm Manager at Soil Born Farms since 2016.

Carrie Strohl, Pueblo Vista Magnet School, Napa
Carrie is a former classroom teacher specializing in curriculum and professional development. She works with teachers at the intersection of science education, school gardens, and culinary arts instruction. She is a Master Gardener volunteer and the chair of the Napa County Local Food Advisory Council.

Edwin Wagner, Volunteer Extraordinaire
Edwin first learned to garden on a small farm in Wilton, CA in 1968. After serving in the Army he began backyard gardening. He volunteered at Oak Ridge Elementary for 6 years supporting the school garden and currently volunteers for Soil Born Farms and Fern Bacon Middle School.

Gao Ly Yang, Soil Born Farms
Gao Ly graduated from UC Davis with a degree in anthropology. She began work at Soil Born Farms as an intern at Pacific Elementary School in 2015, and currently is a Youth Educator Assistant teaching students in school gardens in South Sacramento and leading programs at the American River Ranch.