Planting the Seed: Harvesting Connections

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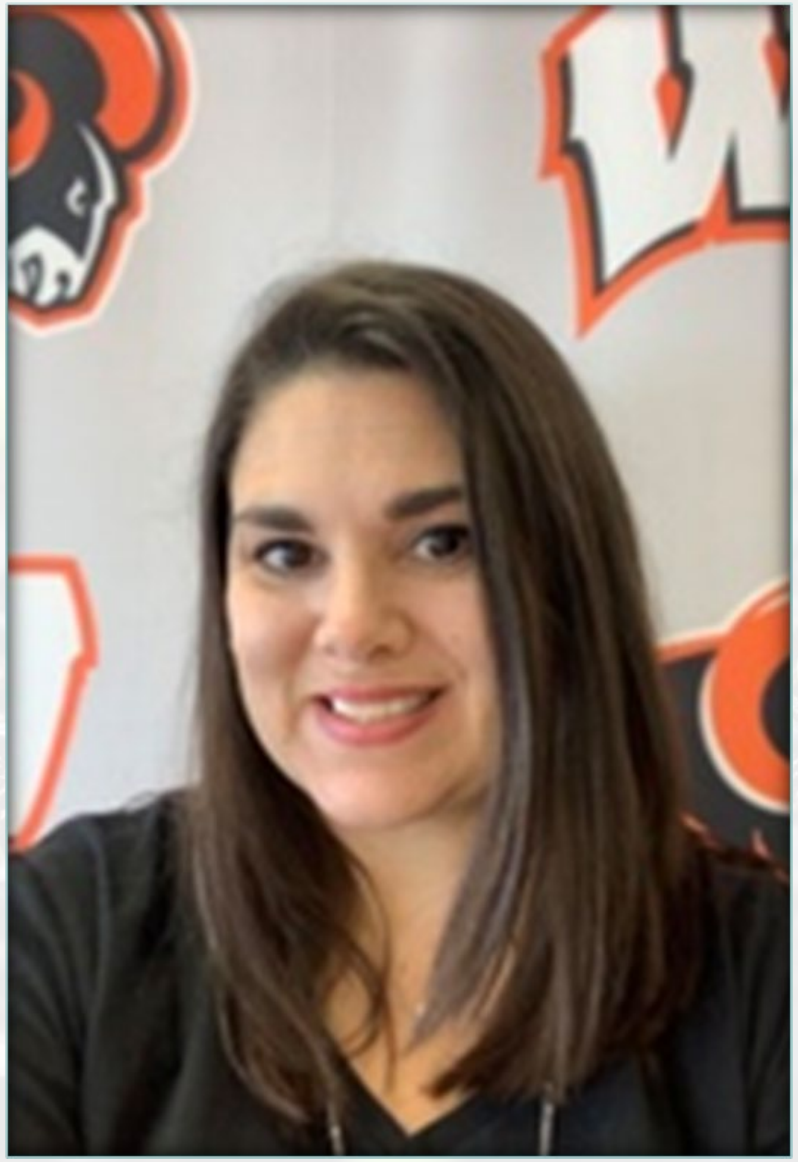
GROWING NEW CONNECTIONS

2023 Louisiana Farm to School Conference



About Me

- Degree in Agricultural Education
- Began teaching in 1996
- Currently teach agriscience at Westlake High School in Calcasieu Parish

Tell me about you… raise your hand…

- Are you a teacher or do you work with school age children?
  - Elementary?
  - Middle School?
  - High School?
- Do you currently have a garden established?

Establishing a School Garden

- You do not have to have a lot of space to grow food.
- Good for all ages.
- Younger the kids the more work on the adults.
- Ask for HELP!!

Who do you ask for help?

Local Master Gardeners

Local Ag/FFA Program

Parents

Square foot Gardening

- I teach square foot gardening
- Limited tools needed
- Build up, don’t dig down
- If managed may be in production year round
- Easy to manage kids in the garden
- https://squarefootgardening.org/

Square foot gardening in a nutshell

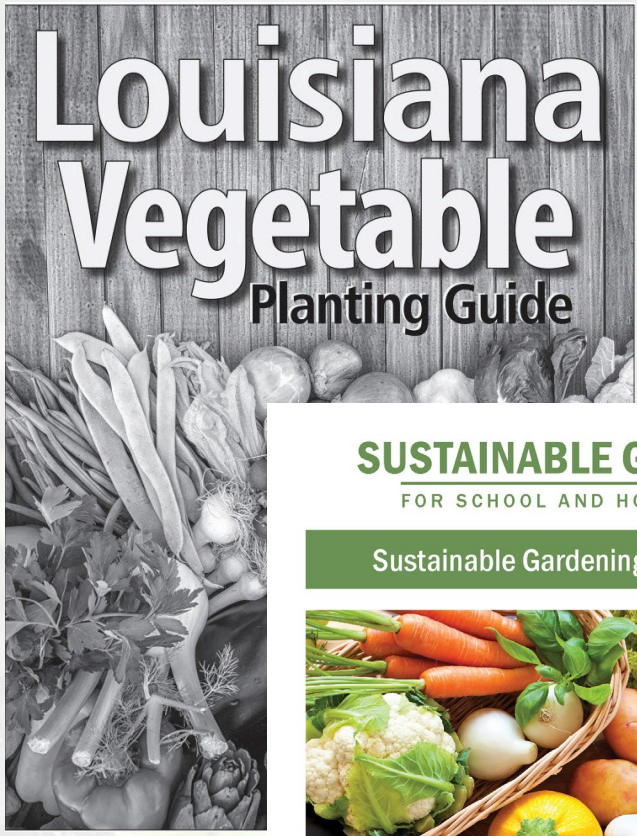
- Location, Location, Location
- 6-8 hours of sunlight.
- Access to water.
- A good size for a garden is 4’ x 4’
- Minimum depth of 6 inches. I prefer 10-12 inches. Be aware, price will increase as soil gets deeper.
- Treated lumber no longer uses arsenic and is considered safe for use.
- Do your own research to find materials you want to use.

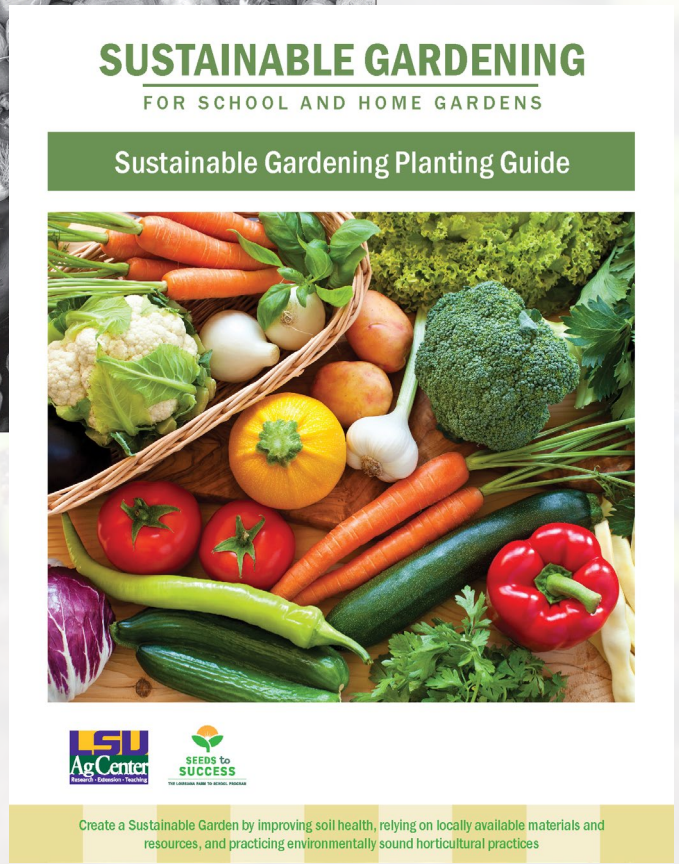
How many plants per square?

Plant Size	# Per Square	Seed spacing planting guide
XL Plant	1 plant per 2 squares	Over 12” apart
L Plant	1 plant per square	10-12” apart
M Plant	4 plants per square	6-8” apart
S Plant	9 plants per square	3-4” apart
XS Plant	16 plants per square	1-2” apart

Resources

- THE BEST is the LSU Vegetable planting Guide or Sustainable Gardening Planting Guide!!
- Square foot Gardening by Mel Bartholomew
- There is a lot of information on the world wide web… always use that against the LSU AgCenter planting guides!





Challenges

- Because of construction we cannot build raised beds (my personal preference)
- Livestock mineral buckets

Westlake High School Garden

What about the summer!?

- Talk to parents of students who participated. You would be surprised how many would love to take care of gardens.
- This year, we harvested and donated to a church food bank.
- School/Parish maintenance workers will harvest over the summer.

Make your own Garden Plan

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Resources for you to use and edit will be sent to you by scanning the QR code.