

FARM to SAUSD

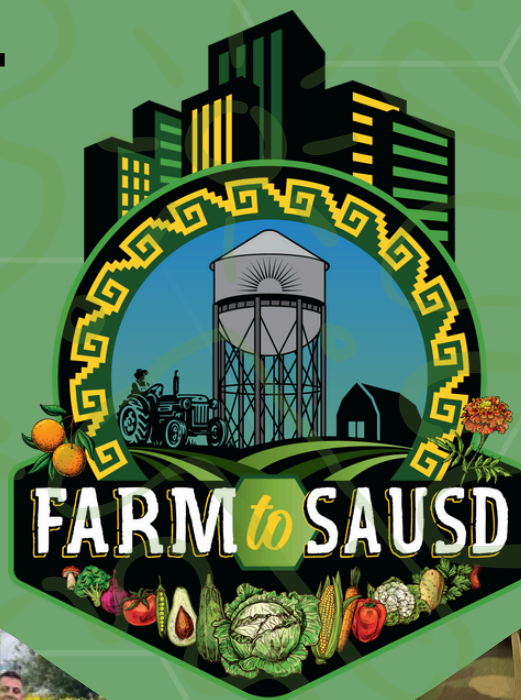


NUTRITION
SERVICES

ANNUAL REPORT

2023-2024

SCHOOL YEAR

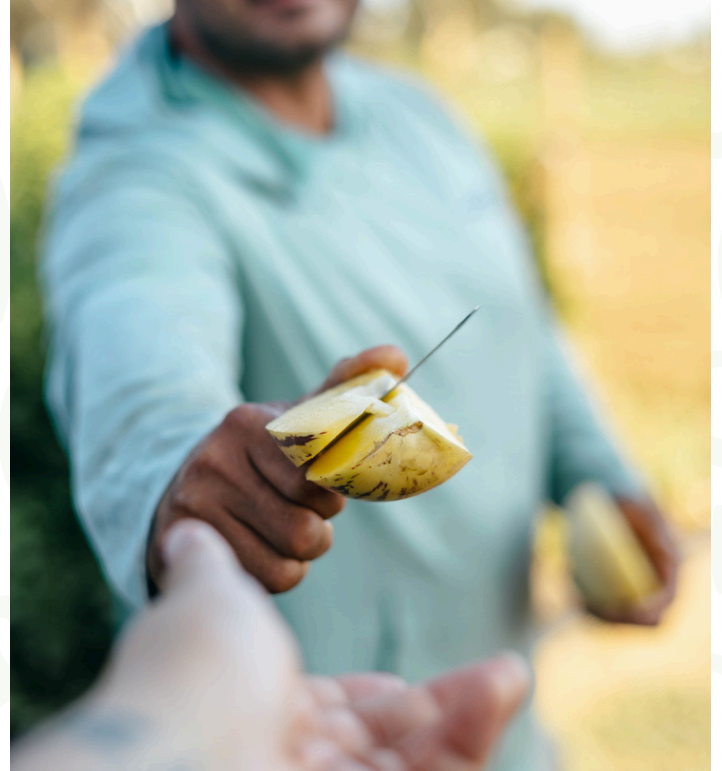


PURPOSE

We are excited to present the inaugural Farm to SAUSD Annual Report. This report chronicles SAUSD's commitment to fostering sustainable food systems within the Santa Ana community and beyond. At the heart of Farm to SAUSD is a pledge: to bridge the gap between our students and our shared agricultural heritages, ensuring that every meal served is a step toward a healthier, more sustainable future.

Farm to SAUSD exemplifies the principles of food sovereignty in the age of climate change. As the effects of global warming become more pronounced, the significance of local, resilient food systems is more crucial than ever. Our food system faces unprecedented challenges; by sourcing fresh produce directly from local family farms, we merge our goals of reducing our carbon footprint, ensuring the freshest foods reach our students, and promoting an equitable food system.

**SAUSD IS AT THE FOREFRONT OF
A GLOBAL FOOD SYSTEM
TRANSFORMATION**



Farm to SAUSD challenges our industrial food system by prioritizing ecological health, resilience, social justice, and community empowerment. Our students are at the center of this transformation. We promote connectedness with our food by ensuring that our students actively guide our journey toward a healthier food system.

Farm to SAUSD aligns with the teachings of Indigenous Food Sovereignty, restoring cultural knowledge, protecting environments, and regaining health. By integrating these principles, we are providing nutritious meals while honoring and revitalizing the cultural heritage and traditional practices of our diverse community.



SAUSD IS SOWING THE SEEDS THAT WILL RECONNECT US WITH OUR FOOD AND OUR PLANET

The SAUSD Department of Nutrition Services, a sponsor of the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs and the Child and Adult Care Food Program is the engine behind this initiative. The tremendous responsibility of annually serving more than 9 million meals underscores the importance of making decisions that promote food justice and equity, as well as practices related to good health and environmentalism.

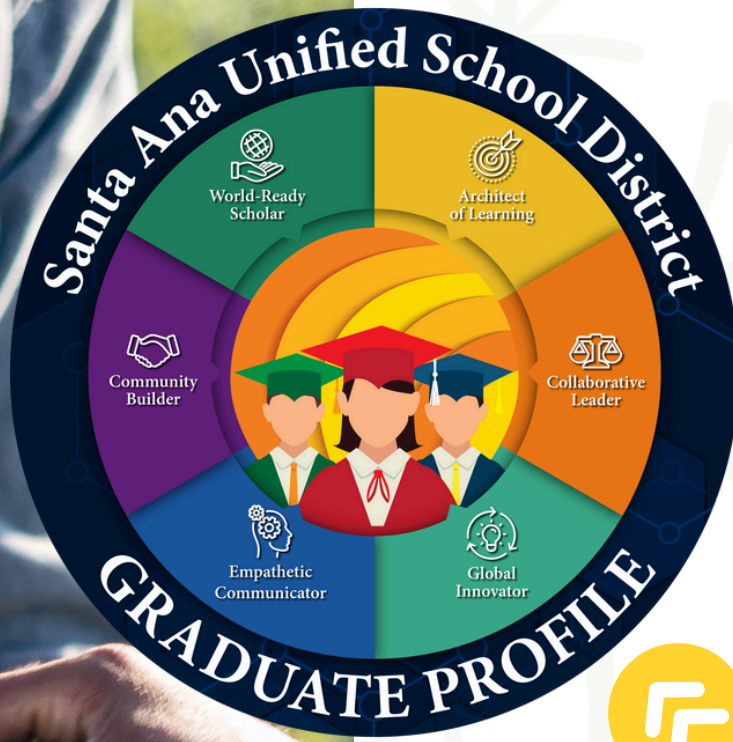
Farm to SAUSD hopes to demonstrate that sustainable, equitable, and resilient food systems are well within our grasp. As you delve into this report, we hope that you will take note of the strides we have made toward achieving this goal.

We extend our deepest gratitude to the SAUSD Board of Trustees for their steadfast support and visionary leadership. Together, we are sowing the seeds of change, cultivating a future where every student is nourished, every farmer is empowered, and every meal is a step toward a more just and sustainable world.

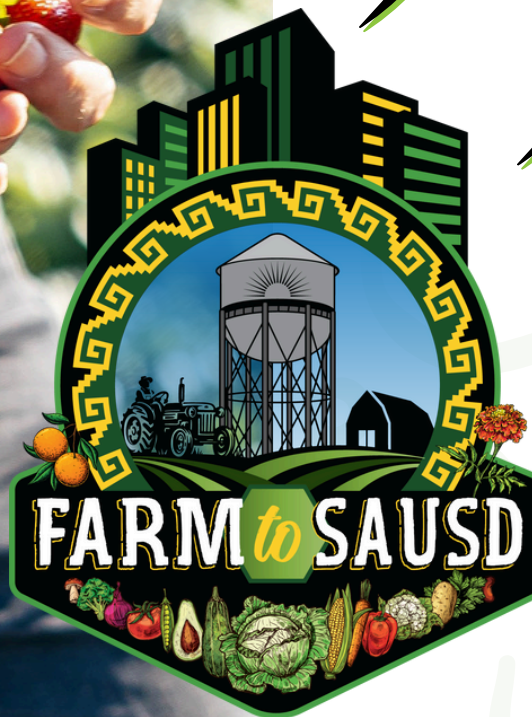
Sincerely,

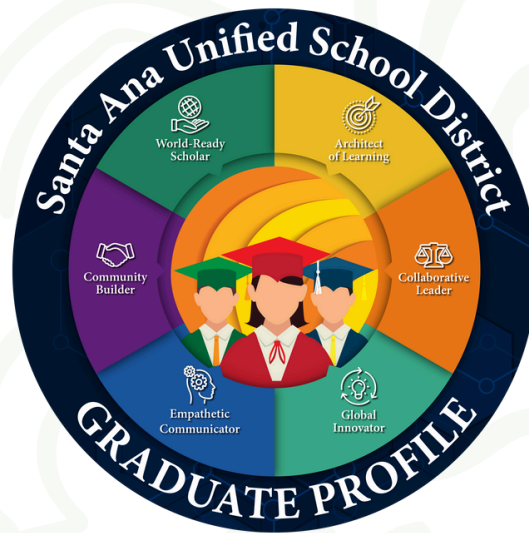
The Farm to SAUSD Team





PROCUREMENT
EDUCATION
GARDENS





Farm to SAUSD supports our Graduate Profile

Architect of Learning: Farm to SAUSD promotes hands-on, experiential learning through gardening, cooking, and farm visits, helping students build lifelong skills in food literacy and environmental stewardship.

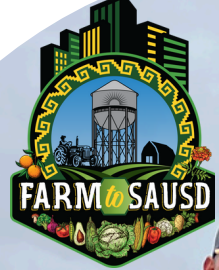
Collaborative Leader: By engaging with local farmers, chefs, and community members, Farm to SAUSD inspires leadership and teamwork as students work together to address food system challenges.

Global Innovator: The program emphasizes innovation by teaching students about sustainable food systems and climate-smart agriculture, preparing them to tackle global food and environmental issues.

Empathetic Communicator: Farm to SAUSD's focus on food justice and cultural connections allows students to understand and articulate the diverse experiences and needs of their community.

Community Builder: By involving families, local businesses, and community organizations in school food programs, the initiative strengthens the ties between students and their broader community.

World-Ready Scholar: The program enriches students' understanding of global agricultural practices and environmental justice, cultivating a well-rounded perspective on the interconnectedness of food, culture, and the planet.



SAUSD is embracing the power of food by affirming the District's role in shaping our collective food system. Honoring this responsibility requires building direct relationships with the individuals and families who produce our food.

FOSTERING CONNECTIONS

Farm to SAUSD seeks to reconnect the world through food. It is SAUSD's part in addressing our food system's challenges by cultivating environmental stewardship, promoting health and wellness, and making connections to culture and identity.





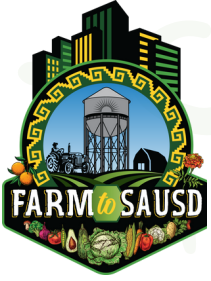
RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS



Buying directly from farms increases access to fresher and tastier fruits and vegetables for our students. Engaging in partnerships with small regional family farms leverages SAUSD's purchasing power to create new and consistent opportunities for growers who may lack the resources to enter the school food market. Forging relationships with farmers means SAUSD can influence farms to grow culturally appropriate foods, adopt regenerative farming practices, and create learning opportunities for students and families. The closer we are as a District to the source of our food, the larger role we can play in promoting food justice, equity, and fair labor practices for farm workers.



FOOD JUSTICE



TIMELINE

DECEMBER, 2021
INITIAL OUTREACH

SAUSD staff begin to visit local farmer's markets to assess farmer interest in selling produce directly to SAUSD.

SAUSD staff participate in good agricultural practices (GAPs) training to better understand food safety on farms and better relate with growers.

JANUARY, 2022
GAPS TRAINING

FEB - MAR, 2022
FOOD SAFETY STANDARDS

SAUSD develops and publishes its farm-to-school food safety standards and resource guide for farmers.

SAUSD buys its first farm-direct produce, delicious navel oranges from Jay & Sons Farms in Riverside.

AUGUST, 2022
FIRST FARM-DIRECT ORDER

SEPTEMBER, 2022
COORDINATOR POSITION

SAUSD Board of Education approves a new job description: Coordinator of Farm to School Programs. This new role was filled in September, 2022.

SAUSD is awarded grants for its farm to school ambitions, most notably the California Department of Food and Agriculture's (CDFA) incubator grant.

JAN -MAY, 2023
FARM TO SCHOOL GRANTS

OCTOBER, 2023
FARM TO SCHOOL MONTH

At its September 26 meeting, the SAUSD Board of Education adopts Resolution No. 23/24-3540, proclaiming October 2023 as Farm to School Month.



FUNDING

Grants and Allocations

- California Department of Food and Agriculture Farm to School Incubator Grant
 - \$502,000.00
- California Department of Education Local Food for Schools
 - \$297,624.33
- California Department of Education School Food Best Practices
 - \$200,000.00

Donations and Fundraisers

- Rancho Gordo Heirloom Beans
 - \$6,000.00
- Kellogg Organics Soil Donations Value
 - \$3,342.20
- Native Seed Search and Baker Creek Heirloom Seed grants
 - \$250.00

Total: \$1,009,216.53





OBJECTIVES

Objective 1: Foster A Healthy Food System

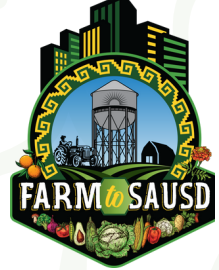
The primary objective of Farm to SAUSD is to foster a healthy food system that ensures the well-being of our students, community, and planet. By sourcing fresh produce directly from farms, we can offer students meals rich in nutrients and free from excessive processing. The farm-to-school pipeline reduces the distance food travels, thereby minimizing our carbon footprint and contributing to a more sustainable environment. Supporting local farmers bolsters the regional economy and ensures the viability of small-scale agriculture, which is essential for a resilient food system. Our commitment extends beyond procurement; we aim to create a school nutrition ecosystem where sustainable practices are the norm. This includes promoting organic farming methods, reducing food waste through efficient distribution and consumption practices, and advocating for policies that support agricultural sustainability. Through these efforts, Farm to SAUSD aspires to create a model of a healthy food system that can be replicated across other districts and communities, resulting in a future where nutritious, sustainably sourced food is accessible to all.

Objective 2: Cultivate Community Food Culture

Farm to SAUSD is dedicated to cultivating a vibrant community food culture that celebrates diversity, traditions, and the shared joy of good food. By integrating locally sourced produce into school meals, we not only provide healthier options but also introduce students to the rich agricultural heritage of our region. This initiative encourages a deeper connection between students and their food, nurturing an appreciation for the origins of what they eat. Community involvement is a cornerstone of this objective; we actively engage parents, local businesses, and community organizations to create a supportive network around our food programs. Farm visits, school gardens, and community meals serve as platforms for sharing knowledge and building relationships. These activities help to weave a fabric of communal support that reinforces the importance of sustainable food practices and cultural food traditions. By celebrating local flavors and incorporating diverse culinary practices, Farm to SAUSD strives to create a food culture that honors our community's heritage while promoting health and sustainability.

Objective 3: Champion Hands-on Food Education

Hands-on food education is a vital component of Farm to SAUSD, aimed at empowering students with the knowledge and skills they need to make informed food decisions. We believe that experiential learning through gardening, cooking classes, and farm tours is crucial for developing a holistic understanding of food systems. These interactive experiences allow students to engage directly with the processes of growing, preparing, and consuming food, making abstract concepts tangible and memorable. By integrating food education into the curriculum, we help students understand the nutritional, environmental, and social impacts of their food choices. This education goes beyond the classroom, encouraging lifelong healthy eating habits and cultivating a generation of environmentally conscious citizens. Collaboration with local farmers, chefs, and educators enriches the program, providing diverse perspectives and expertise. By championing hands-on food education, Farm to SAUSD aims to inspire students to value nutritious food, understand its journey from farm to table, and appreciate the broader implications of their dietary choices.



OUR FARMERS



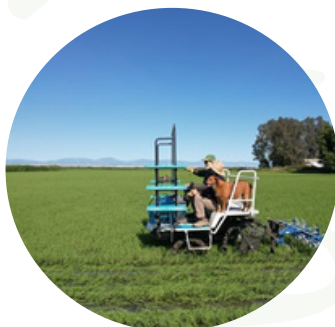
JR ORGANICS
ESCONDIDO, CA



LIMELIGHT GROVES
TEMECULA, CA



JAY & SONS
RIVERSIDE, CA



DUCKS N' RICE
PRINCETON, CA



RAUL FAMILY FARMS
RIVERSIDE, CA



DICKINSON FAMILY FARMS
FALLBROOK, CA



JACY FARMS
ANZA, CA



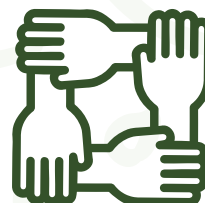
CUYAMA ORCHARDS
CUYAMA, CA

Our farmers

- Cuyama Orchards; 100 acres
- Ducks N' Rice; 200 acres
- JG Berries; 59 acres
- Limelight Groves; 100 acres
- Raul Family Farms; 13 acres
- Jacy Farms; 40 acres
- Dickinson Family Farms; 30 acres
- Jay & Sons; 40 acres
- JR Organics; 130 acres

How are farmers are selected?

- Geographic preference (250 miles from Santa Ana)
- Small to midsize business
- Historically socially disadvantaged
- Food safety standards
- Regenerative practices
- Promoting equitable, socially responsible supply chain practices





Local, Fresh, and Equitable

- **8** farms within 250 miles
- **1** California grain farm
- **6** certified or registered organic farmers
- **9** farmers using climate-smart agriculture
- **1** woman-managed farm
- **5** BIPOC farmers
- **9** small businesses



Fruits: watermelon, cantaloupe, saturn peaches, nectarines, strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, apples, mandarin, tangerines, and oranges.

Vegetables: romaine lettuce, spring mix, spinach, snap peas, carrots, onions, cucumbers, broccoli, cauliflower, jalapenos, mini sweet bells, banana pepper, tomatillos, heirloom tomatoes, tomatoes, cherry tomatoes, and zucchini.





FOOD SAFETY

SAUSD is committed to ensuring all foods served to students and staff are the safest, highest-quality foods available. Before selling any fresh produce to SAUSD, farmers must have a Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) certification or meet SAUSD's minimum GAPs standards. These standards are outlined in SAUSD's GAPs checklist and serve as an option for farmers who may lack the resources to obtain a GAPs certification.

SAUSD's "GAPs Checklist and Resource Hub" was created by SAUSD to ensure farm-direct foods are safe for consumption. The checklist is a set of good agricultural practices SAUSD staff will look for on a farm before considering purchasing their fresh produce. For farms that are not GAPs certified, SAUSD's GAPs Checklist enumerates the practices a farm must have in place or adopt before selling fresh produce to the SAUSD. Each component on the checklist is paired with a resource (sometimes multiple resources) to inform farmers about the associated practice and provide examples of the practice in the field.

Once a farm is ready to receive a Farm to SAUSD inspection, SAUSD staff visit the farm to confirm the GAPs checklist practices have been implemented and are being maintained. In addition to the resources SAUSD provides farmers to enhance and maintain good agricultural practices on their farms, SAUSD will perform annual inspections of farms to ensure such practices are being upheld.

SAUSD's GAPs standards accomplish three objectives:

Ensure Compliance with Standards

- Verify adherence to local, state, and federal food safety regulations
- Ensure implementation of Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs)

Protect Student Health

- Ensure safe handling, storage, and preparation of food
- Assure parents, students, and staff about food safety

Provide Resources and Support for Small Businesses

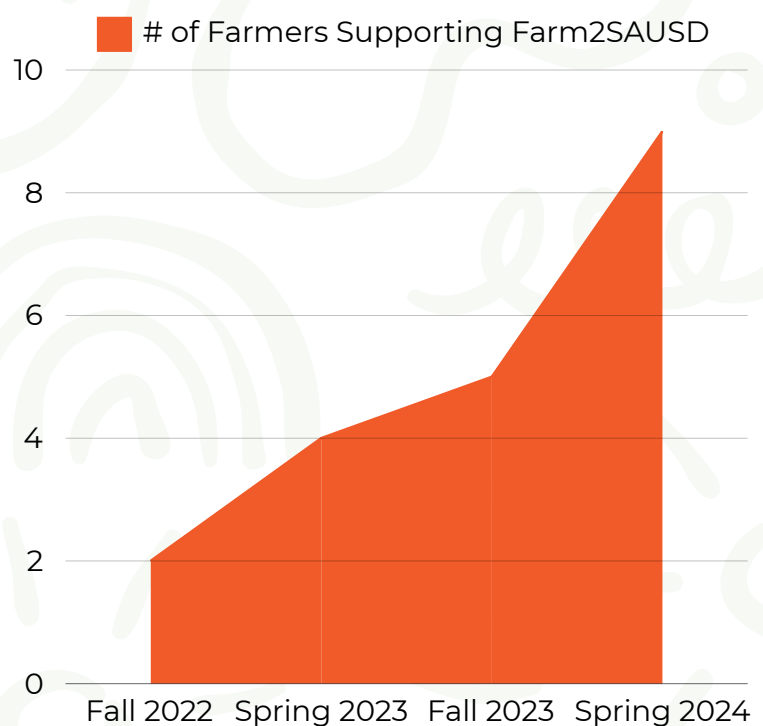
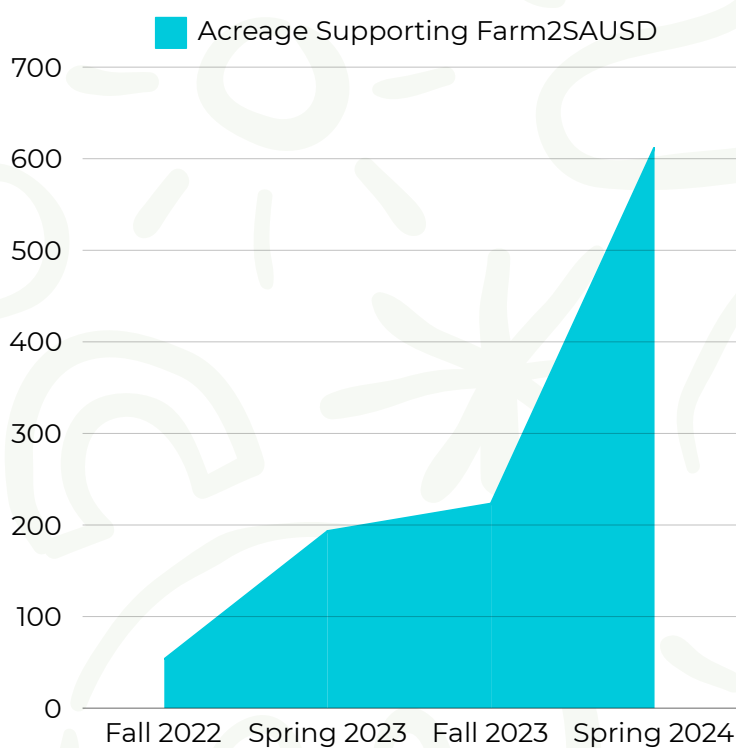
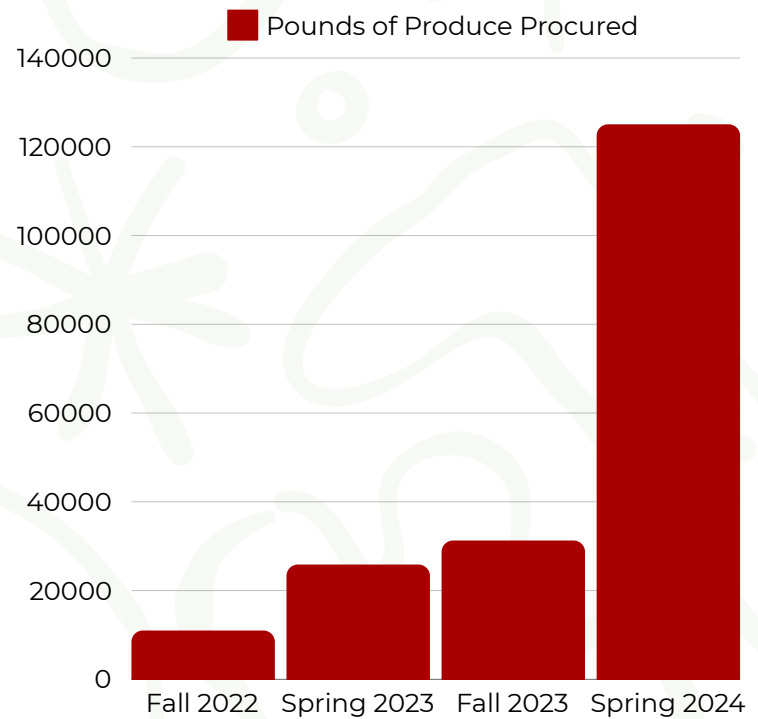
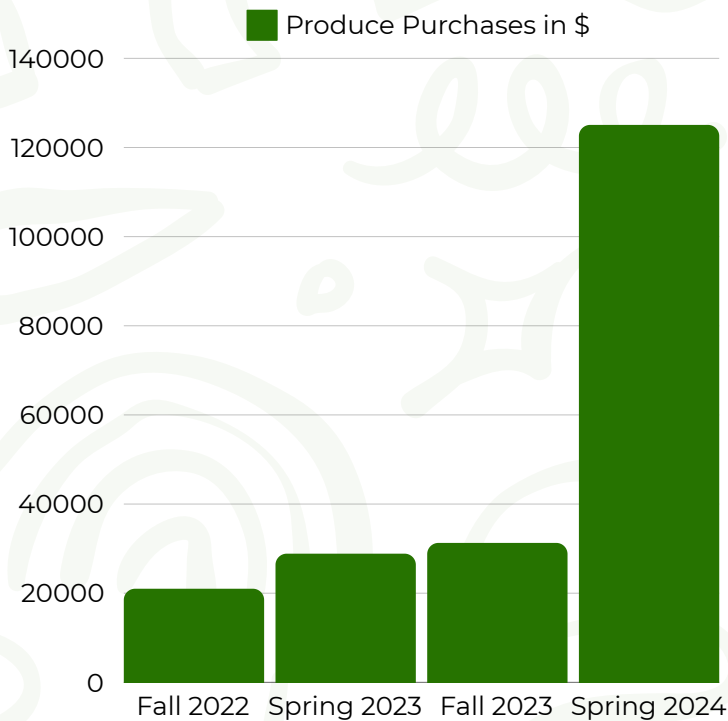
- Provide access to training and resources for staff and farmers
- Support from food safety organizations and experts

**FOOD
SAFETY**





PROCUREMENT

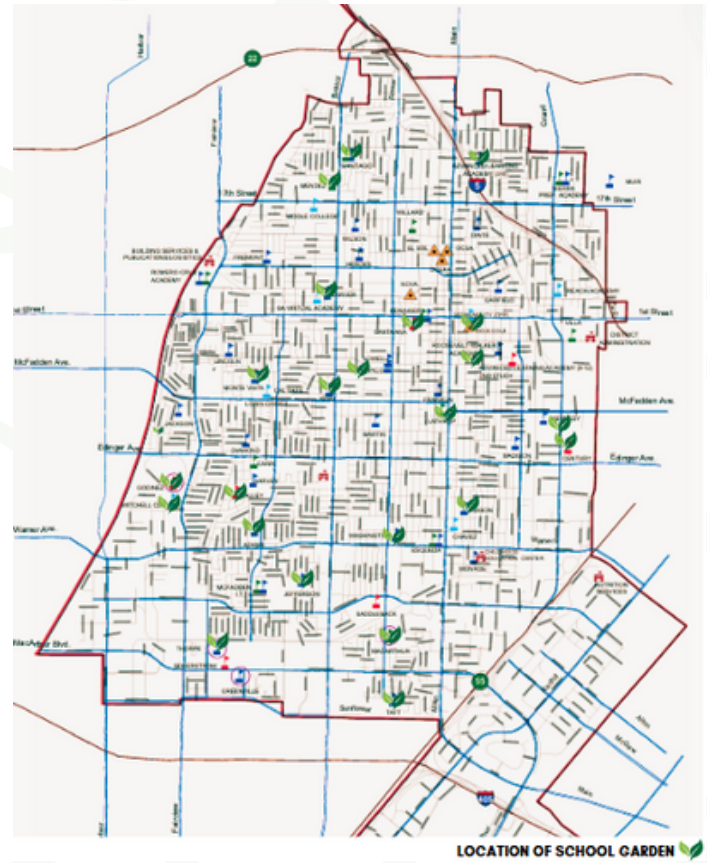




GARDENS

26 school gardens located at:

- Adams Elementary School
- Rob Richardson Welcoming Resource Center
- Advanced Learning Academy
- Carver Elementary School
- Century High School
- Godinez High School
- Greenville Elementary School
- Jefferson Elementary School
- Kennedy Elementary School
- King Elementary School
- Lathrop intermediate School
- MacArthur Intermediate School
- Madison Elementary School
- Mendez intermediate School
- Mitchell Child Development Center
- Monroe Elementary School
- Monte Vista Elementary School
- Pio Pico Elementary School
- Roosevelt-Walker Academy
- Santa Ana High School
- Santiago Elementary School
- Taft Elementary School
- Thorpe Elementary School
- Valley High School School
- Washington Elementary School
- Staff wellness garden at Central Kitchen





EDUCATION

Career and Technical Education (CTE)

- Culinary and Nutrition Education

Adult Transition Program (ATP)

- Food and Environmental literacy
- Therapeutic Wellness gardens

Expanded Learning Opportunities

- Farm to School Clubs
- Culinary/Cooking Clubs
- 2023-24 School Year Farm Visits: 14

Family and Community Engagement (FACE)

- Parent workshops
- Licuado workshops with Chef Zamora

Ethnic Studies

- Food and Environmental Justice

Development of Curriculum

SAUSD's Coordinator of Farm to School Programs curated a series of nutrition, agricultural, and environmental curriculum for use in classrooms. These lessons were developed to enhance high school afterschool programs and support state standards covering a variety of topics.

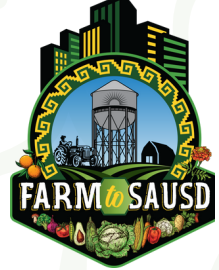
Lessons and Activities

- Plant Parts-Kindergarten
- Three Sisters Polyculture-Kindergarten
- Nature Bracelet-Kindergarten-3rd Grade
- Native Plants and Animals-3rd Grade
- Photosynthesis-7th Grade
- Food Systems and Food Justice-10-12th Grade
- Fruit and Veggie Loteria-K-12th Grade
- Afterschool Supplemental Lesson Plans for Highschool
 - Analyzing the Urban Food Landscape
 - Food Origins and Diversity
 - Food Labels
 - My Plate
 - Nutrition Paradox
 - Uprooting Food Oppression
 - Eating Local and Seasonal
 - Water and Food
 - Multicultural Foods
 - Farm Fieldtrips

200+
STUDENTS

13
CLASSROOMS





SANTA ANA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT FARM TO SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT

Academic Year 2023-2024

CORE ELEMENTS OF FARM TO SCHOOL

SCHOOL GARDENS

Creating and tending school gardens

**43% OF
SAUSD
SCHOOLS**



PROCUREMENT

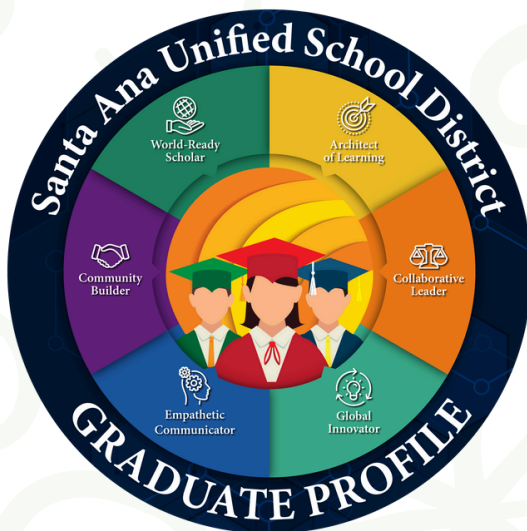
Serving local products in school meals

**100% OF
SAUSD
SCHOOLS**

**60+ FARM TO
SCHOOL
LESSONS OR
ACTIVITIES**

EDUCATION

Conducting educational activities



WHAT IS FARM TO SAUSD?

Farm to SAUSD connects our community with fresh, healthy food by changing our purchasing and education practices. Farm to SAUSD creates access to healthy, local foods as well as education opportunities through school gardens, culinary lessons, and farm field trips.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

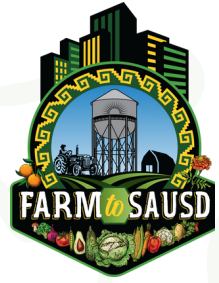
Farm to SAUSD connects students with locally grown fresh foods, and fosters cultural connections. In light of rising food-related health challenges and climate change, Farm to SAUSD is promoting personal wellness while building a resilient food system.



**ACCESS TO SCHOOL GARDENS,
COOKING DEMONSTRATIONS &
NUTRITION EDUCATION
INCREASE CONSUMPTION OF
FRUITS AND VEGETABLES**

14.9¢

**FARMERS' SHARE
OF EACH DOLLAR
IN CONVENTIONAL
FOOD SYSTEM.**



OUR PARTNERS

Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County
California State University Fullerton (CSUF)
CSUF Urban Agriculture
The Ecology Center
City of Santa Ana Parks and Recreation
California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA)
OC Parks and Recreation Department
The Alice Waters Institute
The Center for Ecoliteracy
Heritage Museum of Orange County
CRECE/SALSA
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Serrano Creek Soil Amendments
Ecological Agricultural Training (EAT) Cultural Center and Farm

**6000
LBS**

**FOOD WASTE
COMPOSTED WITH
CRECE CO-OP
PARTNERSHIP**



4

**INTERNS FROM
CSUF AND
COMMUNITY
PARTNERS**

1000+

**SEEDS PLANTED IN
SCHOOL GARDENS
AND WITH PARENTS**