



LITTLE GREEN THUMBS

2016/2017 SCHOOL YEAR
NATIONAL REPORT



Little
Green
Thumbs

plant grow
eat share



WE MAKE LEARNING COME ALIVE

The Little Green Thumbs program unlocks the magic of food and agriculture education by providing students and teachers the resources to become food producers in their own classrooms. Little Green Thumbs indoor garden program is a hands-on, inquiry-based educational program that creates dynamic learning

opportunities for students across Canada. As one of our Grade 3 teachers in Newfoundland said this year, "Little Green Thumbs has infused energy and life into our science, math and language art's curriculums." Little Green Thumbs is the leading classroom gardening program in Canada, and your support helps our gardens grow.

OUR PROMISE, A STUDENT'S ADVENTURE

OUR HEART & SOUL

Thank you to the thousands of students, teachers and coordinators who make this magic happen.



LET'S HAVE A
SALAD-BRATION



Little Green Thumbs (LGT) is a powerful educational program that helps youth connect their health with the environment and their food system.

WE'RE GROWING MORE THAN FOOD

A Little Green Thumbs garden is more than the sum of its parts. A classroom garden is an extension of a traditional classroom and provides fertile ground for inquiry-based, cross-curricular and hands-on learning. We believe that our communities need informed, engaged and inspired leaders, equipped with the skills and motivation to work for the health of our communities, our environment and each other. A garden is an ideal place to grow such leaders.

It's no secret that Little Green Thumbs has a big, bold vision: a garden in every school and a school in every garden. Because of the ongoing support of our national and regional partners and funders, significant milestones were reached this past year. Nationally, the Little Green Thumbs program has surpassed 700 active teachers (707), over 500 garden sites (517), directly impacted 13,831 students, while continuing to build program capacity to effectively support and engage teachers and students.

517 GARDEN SITES **707** TEACHERS **359** SCHOOLS

13,831
STUDENTS DIRECTLY INVOLVED

WHO WE ARE, AT THE ROOTS.

AN EXCITING INVESTMENT FOR US AND OUR TEACHERS

Little Green Thumbs gardens are synergistic classroom tools that help teachers address diverse learning outcomes; and LGT gardens have a strong presence in the learning environment. Many teachers use the garden in several aspects of classroom life. This includes integrating learning from math, language arts, science, and health, as well as structuring simple weekly maintenance tasks as an opportunity to build responsibility and confidence in their students. **Pretty big ideas... but our little green thumbs are always up for the challenge!**

OUR THREE LEARNING PILLARS

INQUIRY-BASED LEARNING

Observation, curiosity and experimentation are encouraged in a Little Green Thumbs garden. When students plant a garden in their own learning environment, questions naturally sprout!

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Students get their hands dirty, literally. They gain knowledge, skill and understanding from direct experience planting, tending and harvesting their own classroom garden.

CROSS-CURRICULAR LEARNING

Gardens are naturally cross-curricular, bridging subject areas for engaging, practical learning opportunities! There is truly a school in every garden, waiting to be discovered.

LIGHTING A SPARK & INSPIRING LEADERS

"The LGT program has seemed to have lit a spark in the students that wasn't there at the beginning. Lots of meaningful conversation. The best feature of the LGT program is the hands on learning, nothing but positives in helping students expand their learning in ways that you cannot get out of textbooks or video. Many students are going home and educating their parents and guardians!"

LYNDSAY, RED DEER, AB
LITTLE GREEN THUMBS TEACHER



CULTIVATE UNDERSTANDING

Modern communication technologies allow unprecedented access to shared ideas. With this, we see divergent perspectives regarding food production methods, environmental impacts and ethical standards for agriculture and food. Developing food-system literacy through hands-on experience helps students understand the complexity of growing food and caring for people and the environment. The Little Green Thumbs program naturally inspires dialogue and discussion that includes a diversity of perspectives. The Little Green Thumbs program cultivates understanding and the essential skills of inquiry, which compliment the practical knowledge students gain.

FOOD LITERACY

Little Green Thumbs classroom gardens help students understand the impact of your food choices on their health and the environment.

AGRICULTURE EDUCATION

Kids deserve to know where their food comes from! Students help produce healthy food from seed to plate and recognize their ability to contribute to their own food system.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Students gain an increased understanding of ecology, interconnections in the natural world, and our responsibility to care for our environment.

WHY WE VALUE

INQUIRY

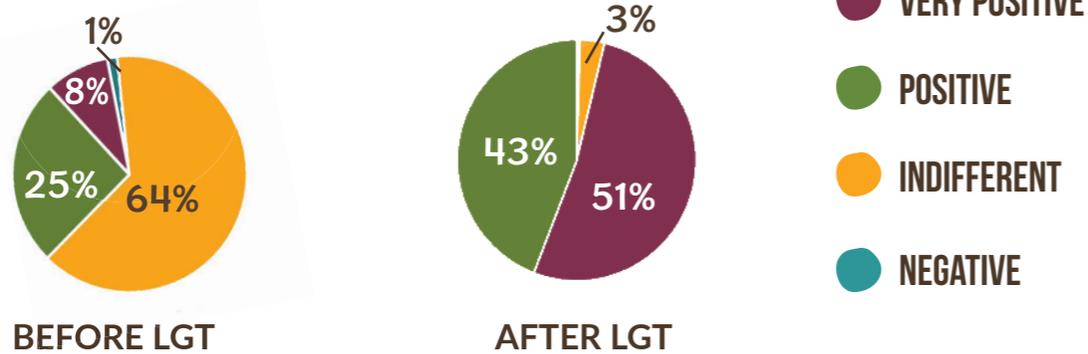
A GARDEN OF POSSIBILITIES.



A GARDEN IN EVERY SCHOOL, A SCHOOL IN EVERY GARDEN

Last year, we came even closer to realizing our vision of 'a garden in every school, a school in every garden'. Over 700 classrooms across Canada are experiencing the magic of a Little Green Thumbs garden. For 98%* of our teachers, their classroom garden has improved their learning environment. For 99%* of teachers, the garden promoted teamwork and cooperation amongst their students.

STUDENT ATTITUDES TOWARDS AGRICULTURE AND FARMING



STUDENTS DIRECTLY INVOLVED

13,831

There is a growing army of Little Green Thumbs across the country. There are 13,831 students with classroom gardens that allow them to plant, grow, eat and share a daily basis.

STUDENTS REACHED

21,365

Our reach extends beyond the classroom where Little Green Thumbs gardens grow. Often times, other students at a school benefit from the garden through celebration events, mentorship and learning opportunities.

517
GARDEN SITES

Little Green Thumbs has 517 active classroom gardens, which is an increase of over 50 gardens from the 2015/2016 school year.

702
CLASSROOMS

Currently 702 classrooms across Canada are engaging with a Little Green Thumbs garden, which is an increase over 69 classrooms from last school year.

359
SCHOOLS

Little Green Thumbs has 359 schools with a classroom garden, representing an increase of 59 schools over last school year.

PROVINCIAL GARDEN NUMBERS

Province	Gardens	Students Directly Involved	Students Reached	Teachers	Classrooms	Schools
Saskatchewan	123	3780	7540	200	265	114
Alberta	156	5302	8549	249	248	130
Manitoba	111	1820	2347	120	48	50
Newfoundland	127	2929	2929	138	141	65
TOTAL	517	13831	21365	707	702	359

100%

OF TEACHERS AGREED

their LGT garden catalyzed questions and curiosity that facilitated learning.

- Strongly Agree (65%)
- Agree (35%)
- Disagree (0%)



OUR TEAM & OUR REACH

THANK YOU TO OUR
FOUNDING SPONSOR:



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SCHOOL DIVISION,
ALBERTA



SERVING
RED DEER &
WEST CENTRAL
ALBERTA



A NETWORK OF COMMITTED ORGANIZATIONS

Little Green Thumbs is delivered by these host organizations, each serving their unique geographical region, and supported regionally by local and provincial funding partners. This local hands-on support for teachers and schools is an important aspect of the LGT program. Currently, Little Green Thumbs operates in Manitoba, Alberta, Newfoundland and Saskatchewan, and looks to expand to British Columbia and Ontario in the coming years.



PENNEY MARNELL,
TEACHER, ST. JOHN'S, NL

"This program is a significant source of motivation for me as a teacher. Learning about the importance of farming and agriculture was new for me too. Knowing that WE COULD DO IT helped us connect as a class. I plan on using this program for the rest of my career, regardless of what I teach."



KIRA, AITC MANITOBA
LITTLE GREEN THUMBS
COORDINATOR

"One of the most common stories I hear from teachers in various schools is how many students tried vegetables that they had never tried before. For many students there is excitement when a new flower or fruit is found and a curiosity builds over many weeks."



STEVE, TEACHER
RED DEER, AB

"Because of the LGT program, I have become an agriculture teacher at our school and am learning how to address food issues in an engaging, hands-on approach."



JANINE HOEY, TEACHER
PRINCE ALBERT, SK

"I love having light and greenery in the classroom during the bleak winter months. I think it is valuable that students have the experience of growing and harvesting food. Many have no experience of farming and this is a taste of that. They learn to respect the work involved."

NEW FACE, GROWING PROGRAM



Little Green Thumbs National HUB advanced several projects over this past year, including the development of teacher resources, a new visual identity, updated website and database, garden kit improvements and strategies to improve teacher and coordinator networks.

VIBRANT LOOK, DEFINED VOICE

As the Little Green Thumbs program grows and evolves – updating our website, building new relationships with partners, exploring new audiences, and strengthening our visibility online and across Canada – our branding and communications grows with it.

This update is not just about modern colours, fonts and a new look. While this is important, it represents only the visual expression of our identity. It was important that we took this opportunity to think about who we are, what we value and how we want to inspire and connect. Your continued support ensures we do just that.

**WE BELIEVE
GARDEN
IS A VERB, NOT A
NOUN.**

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

One of the greatest assets to the Little Green Thumbs program is our network of teachers. Their knowledge, skills and enthusiasm consistently improve our program delivery. Over the last year we've held several focus groups and a teacher resource writing lab with the intention of improving and developing new Little Green Thumbs educational materials. These new resources will be available to LGT teachers in 2018.

SALAD-BRATIONS

We encourage our Little Green Thumbs classrooms to celebrate their growing success with a year-end salad-bration. **This year, 216 celebrations took place for Little Green Thumbs classrooms!** These harvest celebrations included: the visit of special guests such as farmers, Ag specialists, chefs and beekeepers. Some classrooms visit vegetable, dairy or grain farms, participate in culinary sessions, host concerts and sing the Little Green Thumbs anthem, prepare a harvest salad feast with their crops, attending grocery store tours to learn about nutrition and healthy eating, tour greenhouses, plant their outdoor gardens, and ultimately share the gift of their gardens with family and friends.

GARDEN KIT

We learn as we go and our work is exploratory. We value learning and experimentation. That's why Little Green Thumbs is always looking to improve the effectiveness and safety of our garden kit. We continue experimenting with growing models, lighting sources and set-ups to ensure that our Little Green Thumbs can have the best educational experience possible!



ONLINE PRESENCE

Our website isn't a silo and it's not only about design. Our new website will affect our social media, email communications, partner and participant lead generation, program awareness and engagement.

WEBSITE

Our website redesign is currently underway, with priorities increased functionality and an enhanced aesthetic. Our website redesign will include updates to the Little Green Thumbs database that will make navigation more intuitive and allow us to track more complex data.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media has proven to be an effective tool for sharing information, building relationships and inspiring teachers and parents. Little Green Thumbs has been working to animate our social media channels to build connections with the education community.



FOUNDING SPONSOR:

Agrium



Little
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