



**THE EDIBLE
SCHOOLYARD
PROJECT**

2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 1, 2023 - JUNE 30, 2024

Dear Friends,

As we celebrate 30 years of the Edible Schoolyard Project, we reflect with gratitude on the countless moments of awe, wonder, and connection that have shaped this journey.

What began in 1995 as a single program at Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School in Berkeley, with 800 students speaking 22 different languages at home, has blossomed into a global movement, inspiring 6,500 edible education programs across 47 countries. This growth reflects the Montessori belief that the senses are the pathways into our minds, and that food is a powerful tool for learning, collaboration, and care. We are not teaching gardening or cooking per se, but using a kitchen and garden classroom to teach the academic curriculum to its standards. A geography class on the Middle East taught in the kitchen where students have cooked and eaten hummus from the area, becomes an unforgettable memory. The students will never forget the taste of that region because they have learned about it experientially.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to teaching this curriculum using garden and kitchen classrooms that are adaptable to every climate and culture. We also remain committed to expanding our reach and ensuring that every child ~ regardless of background ~ has access to joyful, hands-on edible education. Thank you for being part of this delicious revolution.

With hope and love,



Alice Waters
Founder of Chez Panisse Restaurant &
The Edible Schoolyard Project



Ashley Rouse
Executive Director
The Edible Schoolyard Project

COVER PHOTO:

Each Spring our Annual Plant Sale brings together students, families, and neighbors in Berkeley! A joyful tradition, the event raises vital funds for our programs—typically selling more than 2,000 plants grown with care by students, staff, volunteers, and community partners. **PHOTO BY PAULINE CHATELAN**



Everything has its place in the ESY Kitchen Classroom, making it easy for students to find what they need for recipes and lessons all year round. **PHOTO BY PAULINE CHATELAN**

THE EDIBLE SCHOOLYARD PROJECT HISTORY & OVERVIEW

The Edible Schoolyard Project is a nonprofit organization committed to transforming public education through organic school gardens, kitchens, and cafeterias, teaching academic subjects alongside the core values of nourishment, stewardship, and community.

Founded in 1995 by chef, author, and activist Alice Waters, the Edible Schoolyard at King Middle School in Berkeley, CA serves as a demonstration site and innovation hub for the field of edible education. Our nationally recognized, project-based curriculum offers students hands-on learning experiences that connect them to food, nature, and each other. It also examines the crisis of climate change, public health, and social inequality from a systems change perspective - helping youth find agency in creating a better future.

Since 2009, the Edible Schoolyard Project has focused on building capacity among educators to create and sustain strong edible education programs in their home communities. Over 15 years, we've trained 10,000+ unique educators, reaching 2.5 million students annually. Our network includes 6,500+ programs across 52 U.S. states and territories and 47 countries. Through in-person and virtual training, we continue to expand our impact and grow our online community.

An exploration of culture, collaboration, and scratch cooking. Educators prepare a traditional Mexican meal during a hands-on lesson in edible education.



PHOTO BY ENNA SHEA MOBLEY

WELCOME ASHLEY ROUSE



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE EDIBLE SCHOOLYARD PROJECT

Ashley and Alice first met in 2009 when Alice visited Atlanta to see a school garden installation that Ashley was leading. Their shared commitment to garden-based education has enabled our program to thrive.

In November 2022, following a nationwide search, the Edible Schoolyard Project was delighted to welcome Ashley Rouse as our new Executive Director.

Ashley has spent the past 17 years transforming local food systems through farm-to-school programs. Prior to joining ESY, she led Project Learning Garden and Project Giving Gardens at the Captain Planet Foundation, expanding garden-based education nationwide and strengthening farm-to-school initiatives in Georgia. Ashley was instrumental in improving local food procurement practices for Atlanta Public Schools and developing programs that equip educators and students with gardening and cooking skills. She also launched a rooftop garden-to-cafeteria pilot, empowering high school students to engage in sustainable food systems.

As Executive Director of the Edible Schoolyard Project, her leadership is guided by the belief that everyone deserves access to fresh, nourishing food and the knowledge to advocate for a more just and sustainable future.

THE THREE PILLARS OF OUR WORK

EDIBLE SCHOOLYARD BERKELEY

The Edible Schoolyard Berkeley fosters hands-on learning, connecting students to food while reinforcing academic concepts. Through cooking, gardening, and food system exploration, we provide meaningful engagement with the environment. Over the past five years, we've expanded to include after-school and community programs, promoting belonging, sustainability, and real-world academic skills. In addition, our Program Network and Training offerings continue to grow and thrive. After adapting through COVID, we've returned stronger with in-person training and a refreshed curriculum.

EDIBLE SCHOOLYARD STOCKTON COMMUNITY FARM

Since 2019, the Edible Schoolyard Project's Community Farm in Stockton has been a hub for food access, land stewardship, and hands-on learning. Supporting San Joaquin County schools and residents, it offers a free Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program, community garden plots, field trips, and events. With orchards, chickens, beehives, and 32 community plots, the farm connects students to food, nature, and essential skills, fostering resilience and a thriving community.

ALICE WATERS INSTITUTE FOR REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE AND EDIBLE EDUCATION (AWI)

Our newest initiative, the Alice Waters Institute for Edible Education and Regenerative Agriculture is accelerating the transition to a regenerative organic food system through School-Supported Agriculture. Through thought leadership and advocacy, curriculum development and training, and model programs on campus, the Institute is shaping policy, edibly educating and training food service professionals, and demonstrating the power of regenerative organic food systems as a climate solution.



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT:

Volunteer days are open to King families and community members of all ages and abilities. These workdays are essential to the health of our garden.

Farm Festivals are a cornerstone of our work in Stockton. These seasonal, family-friendly events happen four times throughout the year and enable us to serve over 2,000 attendees with cooking demos, farm tours, produce giveaways, games, and more.

K-12 food service directors participate in creating a local seasonal organic school lunch at an Alice Waters Institute regional culinary workshop in partnership with Conscious Kitchen.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE EDIBLE SCHOOLYARD PROJECT

Students prepare meals together in the Kitchen Classroom at Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School in Berkeley, often cooking with produce harvested from the Teaching Garden or repurposed surplus from the cafeteria.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

EDIBLE SCHOOLYARD BERKELEY

INTEGRATING GARDEN PRODUCE INTO THE KITCHEN CLASSROOM:

Our educators and garden manager deepened collaboration this year by streamlining crop planning to align garden harvests with kitchen class needs. This thoughtful coordination not only significantly reduced the need for market purchases—it also ensured that student produce was featured in every lesson. As a result, students experienced a more meaningful connection to the food they prepared and shared, often bringing in their own family food stories and learning from the traditions of their peers. These shared experiences are helping build stronger, more connected classroom communities rooted in culture, care, and nourishment.

EXPANDED LUNCHTIME & AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS:

We launched lunchtime harvest events and parent volunteer coordination to boost garden access. Our after-school program now runs four days a week with specialized courses in herbalism, junk food alternatives, fiber arts, and food preservation. Partnering with the after-school director, and the local library, we also introduced new community events such as storytime in the garden and a guest chef series in the kitchen!

PILOT CURRICULUM FOR MULTILINGUAL & SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS:

One educator piloted lessons for multilingual learners, integrating English acquisition and community building through food-related life skills. Our

educator also partnered with the special education department, enabling students with IEPs and 504s to develop life skills by baking goods for the school's coffee cart.

EXPANDED VIRTUAL TRAINING:

In response to the pandemic, we introduced virtual training in 2020, and since then the series has continued to grow. In July of 2023 we hosted seven workshops on student engagement in garden and kitchen classrooms, all recorded and accessible to audiences worldwide at edibleschoolyard.org.

IMPACTFUL IN-PERSON TRAINING:

In June of 2024, we welcomed 50 educators to our site in Berkeley, CA. ESYP staff led workshops on connecting gardening and cooking experiences to Common Core and NGSS standards, managing school garden spaces, integrating games and play in edible education, and more. The event included participant-led workshops and a screening of the documentary film *Farming While Black*.

GLOBAL NETWORK IMPACT:

Between in-person and virtual training, we directly served over 800 educators, who in turn have a combined reach of over one million students worldwide. Training participants hailed from 47 U.S. States and 35 countries.

Educators from across the country and around the globe gathered in June 2024 to exchange ideas, find inspiration, and forge lasting connections.



PHOTO BY JENNA SHEA MOBLEY

This training gave me the tools and confidence to begin leading my own class next month. I'm grateful to the team for creating such a thoughtful and practical learning experience.

—Summer program attendee

EDIBLE SCHOOLYARD PROJECT STOCKTON COMMUNITY FARM

EXPANDED PROGRAMS:

Our Stockton Community Farm doubled Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) distribution to 102,000 lbs of fresh produce, serving 6,800 households. We hosted four farm festivals with more than 2,000 attendees and led 48 field trips for 2,250 students (Pre-K-12).

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE:

The Edible Schoolyard Stockton Community Farm, in partnership with San Joaquin County Office of Education, launched a Community of Practice (CoP) to strengthen school garden-based learning. Our inaugural cohort of 16 educators, spanning TK-12th grade, represents diverse schools and programs. With administrative support, participants received stipends, program funding, and Vitamix blenders to enhance mobile cooking classrooms, ensuring lasting regional impact.

FARM INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES:

Recent improvements include hot water access, expanded storage, and a refrigerated unit, thanks to a CDFA grant. These enhancements increase efficiency and enrich student and community experiences.

Our Community Farm in Stockton, CA is an inspiring space where students can build skills, explore their relationship to food and food systems, and experience the interconnectedness of all living things.

I truly appreciate the work you do. Because of the CSA, I've been eating more fruits and vegetables—and I look forward to pick-up every Wednesday.

—CSA Member

Our classroom garden is now thriving. With new tools and supplies, greenhouse, shelving, grow bags, and a full class set of gloves, we're growing tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, flowers, and herbs. It's brought learning to life for my students.

—Community of Practice Educator





Student culinary staff in UC Merced's dining centers got an up-close look at sustainable techniques and were challenged to create locally sourced dishes as part of a workshop presented by AWI in collaboration with UC Merced Executive Chefs.

ALICE WATERS INSTITUTE

EXPANDED PARTNERSHIPS WITH UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA:

AWI is working with the University of California Office of the President and campus dining to increase organic regenerative food procurement within the UC system. Our ultimate goal is to create an “all the way” local, seasonal regenerative farm-to-university demonstration model on a UC campus to inspire a deeper shift across the UC system. In addition, we are an advisor for a new multi-campus 4-year research grant, the California Organic Agroecological Regenerative Transition Project, which supports regional change toward more socially and ecologically accountable agrifood systems with the creation of a statewide policy roadmap.

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP AND CONVENINGS:

Building on Alice Waters' pioneering commitment to edible education and school supported agriculture, we collaborated with the First Partner of California, Jennifer Siebel Newsom, and the CDFA Office of Farm to Fork to host a series of gatherings including Earth Day 2023 and 2024, the CDFA bi-annual Farm to School conference, and Climate Week New York to demonstrate how California is leading the way in farm to school and regenerative agriculture.

REGIONAL FARM TO SCHOOL TRAINING WORKSHOPS:

AWI hosts regional workshops to provide the tools, connections, and inspiration that school food professionals need to shift toward seasonal, local, regenerative-organic food. These workshops, hosted at farms and inspiring professional kitchens, bring together school food service directors, local organic farmers, Farm to School coordinators, and values-aligned food hubs to collaborate on seasonal menu planning, procurement strategies, and solving supply chain challenges. With our partner Conscious Kitchen, AWI completed 5 regional trainings with 40 small local organic farmers and food service directors from 29 school districts in Northern California. Based on this success, we applied for and received a California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Farm to School grant to expand the regional training program statewide.

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT PROCUREMENT PILOT:

AWI has been a lead technical assistance partner with Shared Plate Strategies on LAUSD's California Farm to School Incubator grant, which increases direct purchasing of local seasonal produce from small local growers as well as those using regenerative organic practices, demonstrating the feasibility of school supported agriculture at scale. To date, the pilot has enabled LAUSD to purchase over 500,000 pounds of locally grown produce from small to mid-sized farmers, over 80% BIPOC and 59% of the produce was organic.



LAUSD Deputy Food Services Director Florence Simpson meets with farmer Guillermo Landaverde, founder of Alba's Oranges and Nursery in Riverside, CA, to discuss an upcoming Farm-to-School purchase.



Vine-ripened Valencia oranges at Alba's Oranges and Nursery in Riverside, CA.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE ALICE WATERS INSTITUTE

EDIBLE EDUCATION

LEARNING BY DOING, ROOTED IN CARE

Edible education is a hands-on approach to learning that uses food—growing it, preparing it, and sharing it—as a foundation for teaching academic subjects and life skills. It connects students to the natural world, their communities, and themselves through direct experiences in gardens, kitchens, and cafeterias. By engaging the senses and encouraging active participation, edible education fosters a deeper understanding of subjects like science, history, and math, while also instilling values of nourishment, stewardship, and community.

SCHOOL SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE

A DELICIOUS, HOPEFUL CLIMATE SOLUTION

What if schools and universities purchased food in season and directly from local, regenerative-organic farmers and ranchers who take care of the land and their farm workers? Local school systems would become reliable regional buyers who could support their local economies. In turn, students would be nourished with the freshest local foods and the essential values of stewardship would come right through the cafeteria doors. Rural communities would be revitalized, and the urgent issues of climate and students' health would be addressed. The power of procurement could transform agriculture, health, and climate overnight.

—Alice Waters

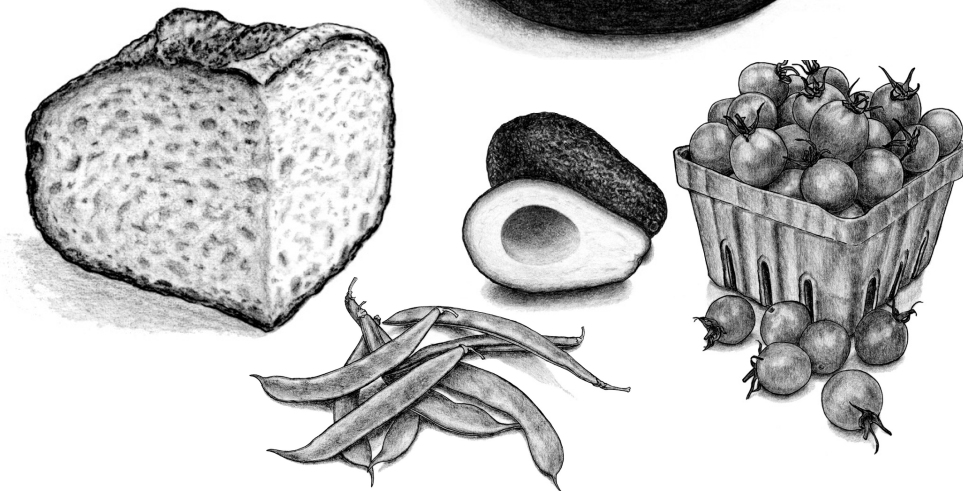
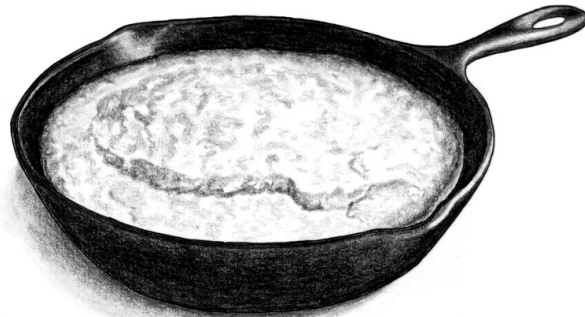


WE ARE GRATEFUL

Each year, we rely on the supporters, partners, staff, volunteers, and leaders who help us grow our movement and deepen our commitment to gardening, cooking, and eating together. Your support allows us to expand our reach and make a meaningful impact in all of the communities we serve. We are truly grateful for your incredible generosity and support. Thank you for strengthening our shared movement for edible education.

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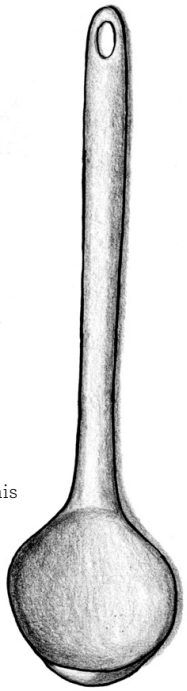
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Stockton Mobility Collective
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TOP PHOTO:

Farm Manager Jess Bloom has cultivated more than just plants—she's grown a thriving volunteer community. Volunteers join us each Tuesday and one Saturday a month in Berkeley to connect, learn, and lend a hand.

BOTTOM PHOTO:

Students, staff, and alumni from UOP contributed a Day of Service to our Community Farm in Stockton last summer. Volunteers harvested cherry tomatoes, cleared planter beds, and helped with the vital tasks that enable our crops thrive.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are an integral part of the Edible Schoolyard Project, bringing dedication, energy, and expertise to our program sites in Berkeley and Stockton. Last year, more than 200 volunteers contributed over 1,800 hours of service—time and effort that help our programs flourish.



PHOTO BY JENNA SHEA MOBLEY



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FINANCIAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2024

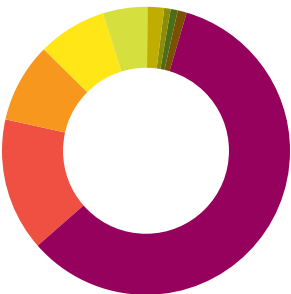
July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024

EXPENSE BY CATEGORY



- 80% Program
- 11% Fundraising
- 9% Management & General

INCOME BY CATEGORY



- 58% Foundations
- 15% Individuals
- 9% Government Grants
- 8% Investment Income
- 5% Events
- 2% Corporations
- 1% Program Revenue
- 1% Honorariums
- 1% In-kind Donations

SUMMARY BALANCE SHEET

July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024

ASSETS	FY2024	FY2023
Cash	303,257	1,215,120
Investments	2,377,444	2,179,925
Government and accounts receivable	488,315	70,783
Pledges receivable	7,555	25,150
Prepaid expenses and deposits	27,365	32,555
Right-of-use, in-kind operating lease	120,000	180,000
Property and equipment, net	131,321	47,767
Total Assets	\$3,455,257	\$3,751,300
LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	455,777	83,073
Accrued vacation	85,646	52,474
Total Liabilities	\$541,423	\$135,547
NET ASSETS		
Without donor restrictions	1,361,804	1,936,159
With donor restrictions	1,552,030	1,679,594
Total Net Assets	\$2,913,834	\$3,615,753
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$3,455,257	\$3,751,300

BACK COVER PHOTO:

Kitchen Teacher Iman Jones often leads students through cheong tastings, exploring how different types of sugar transform the flavor of preserved fruit. These samples, made with bitter oranges from the garden, were each sweetened with a different sugar: molasses, brown sugar, or raw granulated sugar. PHOTO BY PAULINE CHATELAN

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024

SUPPORT & REVENUE	
Support	
Foundations	2,068,200
Individuals	552,618
Government Grants	320,040
Special Events	167,005
Corporations	79,620
Total Support	\$3,187,483
Revenue	
Program Revenue	42,176
Honorariums	26,361
Other Income	6,241
Total Revenue	\$74,778
Investment Income	293,189
In-kind contributions	22,370
Total Support & Revenue	\$3,577,820
EXPENSES	
Program	3,414,018
Management & General	403,073
Fundraising	462,648
Total Expenses	\$4,279,739
Change in Net Assets	(701,919)

