

# Starting a Youth Garden Business

## Standard

**SS3E1 The student will describe the four types of productive resources:**

- a. Natural (land)
- b. Human (labor)
- c. Capital (capital goods)
- d. Entrepreneurship (used to create goods and services)

**SS3E3 The student will give examples of interdependence and trade and will explain how voluntary exchange benefits both parties.**

- a. Describe the interdependence of consumers and producers of goods and services.
- b. Describe how goods and services are allocated by price in the marketplace.
- c. Explain that some things are made locally, some elsewhere in the country, and some in other countries.

**SS3E4 The student will describe the costs and benefits of personal spending and saving choices.**

## Overview

A garden provides many opportunities for product development and sales. Starting a simple school business can be a rewarding challenge for youth of all ages.

## Materials

- Paper and writing implements

## Laying the Groundwork

Ponder these questions with your students as you brainstorm about your new youth garden business:

- *What products or services could we offer that people might want?*
- *Who are our potential customers?*
- *What steps must we take to bring our business to life?*
- *How will we price, produce, package, promote, and sell our products?*

You may want to share the following list of garden business ideas from schools around the country:

- Vegetable, herbs, and flowers
- Seedlings
- Canned goods (salsa, salad dressing, jam, pickles, soup)
- Herbs and herb crafts (potpourri, vinegar, pillows, catnip mice, soap)
- Dried flower or herb bouquets or wreaths
- Greenhouse-grown ornamentals
- Pressed-flower cards and placemats
- Homemade paper note cards
- Floral arrangements
- Seeds saved from the garden
- Bagged worm compost
- Houseplant care services
- Cookbooks

## **Exploration**

Explain to the class that before launching a business, budding entrepreneurs generally write up a detailed plan for their operation. They often use this business plan to demonstrate their capacity to carry out a project when requesting funds or start-up loans. The following questions from NGA's *Growing Ventures: Starting a School Garden Business* can prompt students' thinking as they contemplate a business blueprint. As a class, discuss each component and how it contributes to the plan. Then, working individually or in groups, have students choose a product and write a simple business plan. Select and adapt these questions to fit your unique project and students' developmental levels.

### **Business Name**

- What is the name of your business?

### **Executive Summary**

- How would you describe your proposed business?
- What are the most important features of your business?
- What led you to decide on this particular product or service?
- What makes you think this product or service will sell?

### **Organizational Structure**

- Who will participate in your business?
- What are their qualifications?
- How will they be organized?

### **Marketing Plan**

- How would you describe your target market (potential customers)?
- Who is your competition?
- Why will customers want to buy this product or service from you rather than from your competitor(s)?
- How will you determine the cost of your product or service?
- Where will you sell your product? Why did you choose this location?
- How will you get your customers' attention and convince them to buy your product or service?

### **Operating Plan**

- How will employees carry out day-to-day business operations such as creating products, receiving and processing orders, and managing money?

### **Financial Plan**

- What supplies do you need to launch your business?
- How much will it cost to get started?
- How will the business pay for these start-up costs?
- What are your ongoing operating costs?
- How will you cover these operating costs?
- What is your estimated profit?

## **Making Connections**

Determine the strongest student plan and put it in action. Your class may want to survey potential customers before settling on a product. Make sure to obtain approval from school administrators first.

## **Branching Out**

- Ask local entrepreneurs or small business owners to speak to the class about their enterprises, including their inspiration and the work that was required to get started.
- Take a field trip to a local horticulture business, such as a farmer's market, greenhouse grower, or florist. Learn about the challenges and rewards of working in the 'green' industry. If field trips aren't an option, you can learn about [careers in horticulture from the American Society for Horticultural Science](http://www.kidsgardening.org/activity/starting-youth-garden-business).

