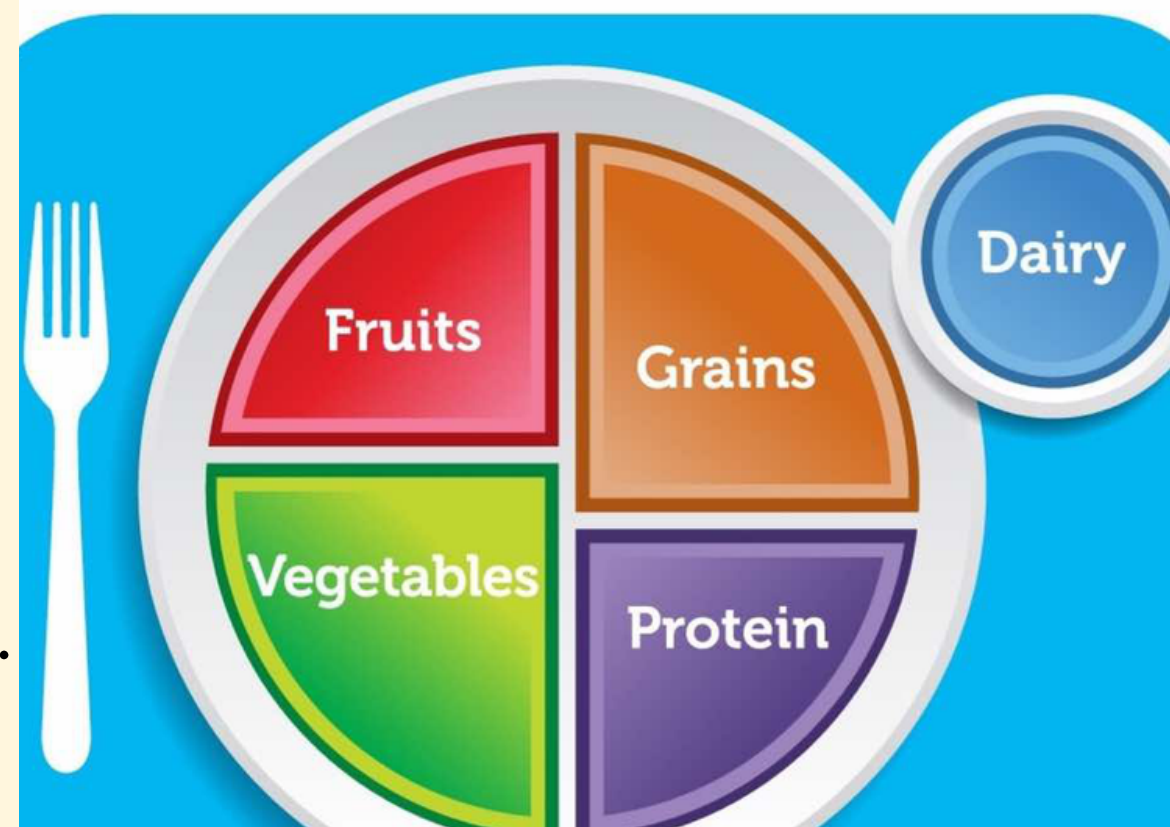


Introduction

This research began with the question, what is wellness; which led me to ponder the correlation between, education, convenience and access to healthy foods. Nutrition is defined as a substance that provides nourishment essential for growth and the maintenance of life. What's on your plate is an integral part of Health Education. MyPlate uses the U.S. Department of Agriculture's current nutritional guidelines to remind students of the five food groups that should be consumed daily to improve and maintain health. The five food groups are grains, proteins, dairy, fruits and vegetables. The MyPlate diagram displays a place setting showing half your plate should be filled with fruits and vegetables.



Methods

Using the USDA's MyPlate guidelines as a foundation, students learn about the five food groups and what state grown foods fit into each group. The two books that will anchor the work with elementary students are: Eat a Rainbow Healthy Foods written by Susan Kesselring (2012) which explores five shades of nutrients to animate that "eating a rainbow" is a metaphor for eating a different color of fruits and vegetables and Green Green A Community Garden written by Marie Lamba (2017) which focuses on the benefits of community gardens and increased access to fresh foods.

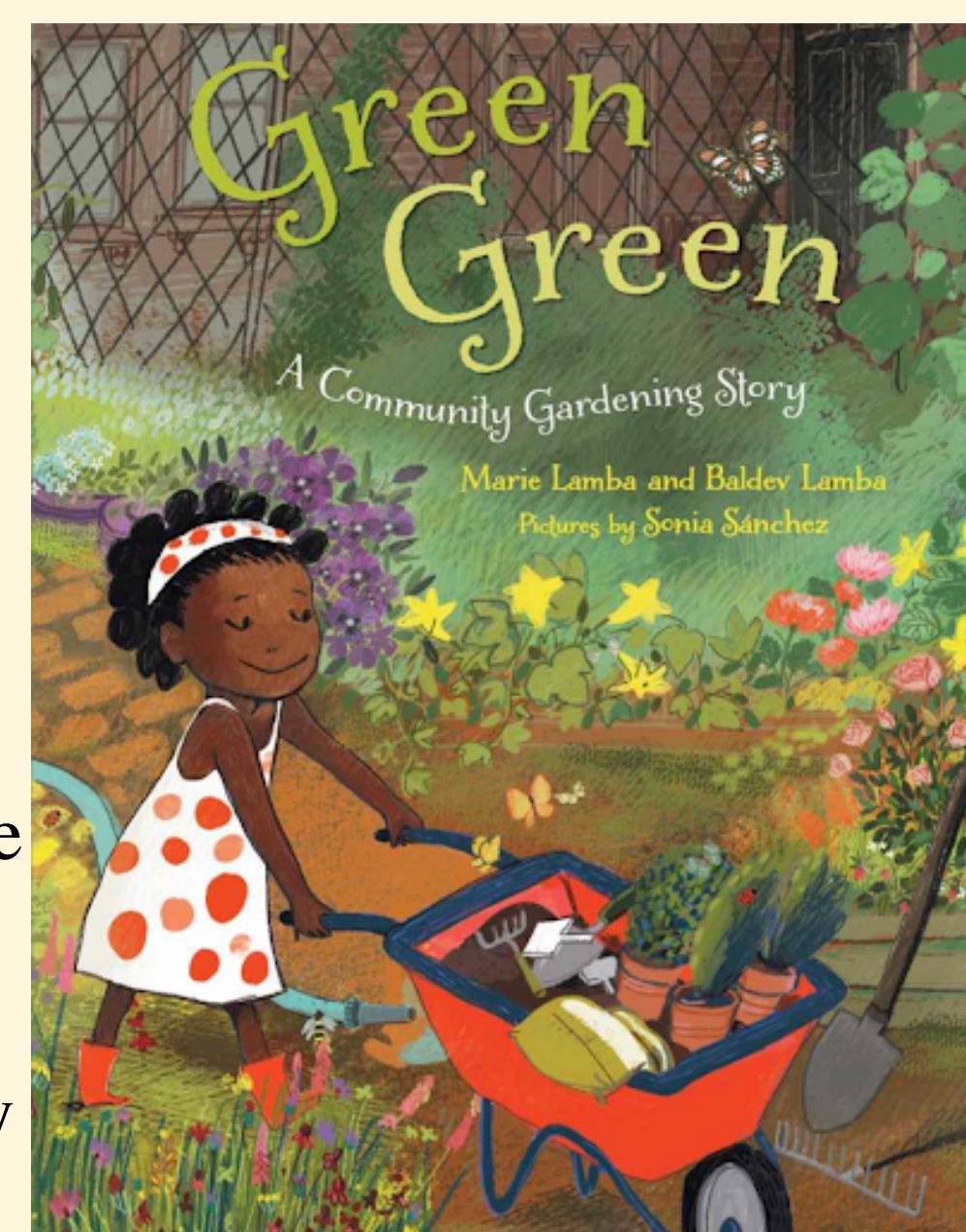


Results and Analysis

There are many Farmers Markets throughout Charlotte. There are many benefits to shopping at a Farmers Market. Farmers Markets provide:

- healthy food choices
- fresh local foods
- affordable access to produce
- support to family farmers
- support for the local economy
- Seasonal treats

According to research, Community Gardens have many benefits. Gardens increase access to fresh foods, improve dietary habits, increase fruit and vegetable consumption and increase physical activity. Gardens offer a place to come together to grow foods, herbs and other plants. By having a shared garden, each gardener works together to care for the whole garden and take a share of what is produced. If a community garden is not feasible, you can start a garden right in your backyard or any outdoor space you have.

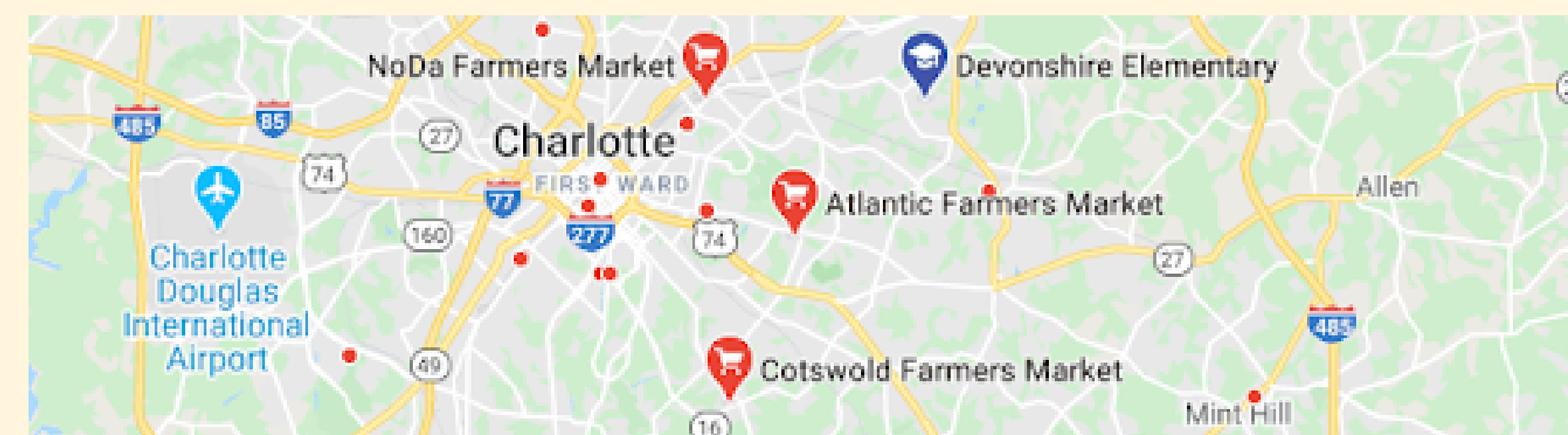


Merry Oaks Community Garden Backyard Personal Garden



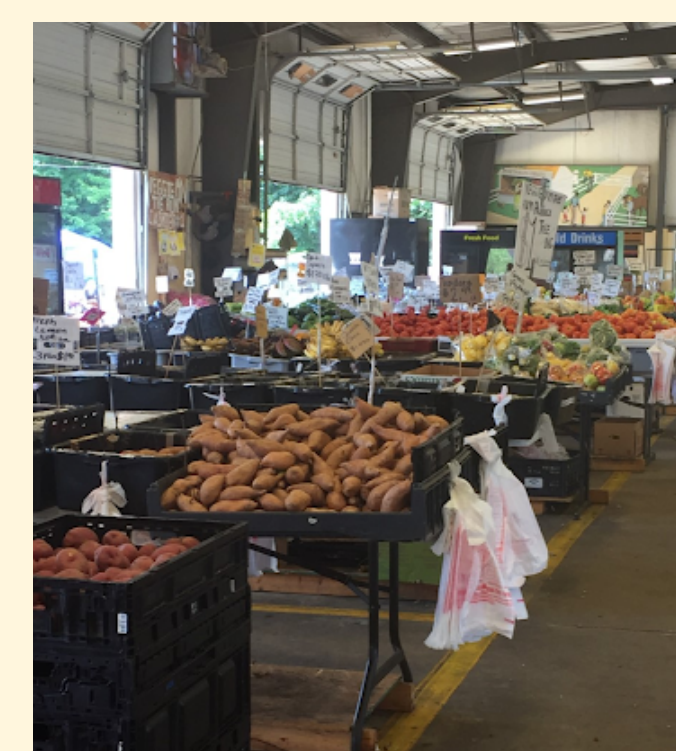
Community Garden Sites in Charlotte

- Druid Hilo's Park, 2801 Lucena Street
- Frazier Park, 1201 W. 4th Street
- Fred Alexander Park (Male's Place) 1832 Grier's Grove Road
- Hoskins Park, 3801 Gossett Avenue
- Bucks Road Park, 491 Hucks Road
- Huntingtown Farm Park, 2201 Ramblewood Lane
- Irwin Creek/Clanton Park, 2858 Barringer Drive
- Lincoln Heights Park, 1819 Catherine Simmons Ave
- Little Sugar Creek Greenway, 1319 N. Alexander Street
- McAlpine Creek Park, 399 Holly Lane
- Reedy Creek Park, 8801 Grier Road
- Reid Park, 3207 Amay James Avenue



Two local Farmers Markets

Charlotte Regional Farmers Market 1801 Yorkmont Road (open year round) Tues-Saturday



Kings Drive Farmers Market 938 South Kings Drive (open April-September) Tues and Friday



Farmers Markets in Charlotte

- Charlotte Open Air Market, 5471 Central Ave (March-December) Saturday and Sunday
- Mecklenburg Market, 1515 Harding Place (Open daily, year round)
- Mint Hill Farmers Market, 7601 Matthews-Mint Hill Road (May-October) Saturday, 8am-12pm
- NoDa Farmers Market, 701 East 36th Street, (May-October) Saturday, 9am-12pm (temporarily closed due to Covid-19)
- Plaza Midwood Farmers Markets, 2007 Commonwealth Avenue (April-October) Thursday and Saturday
- Rosa Parks Farmers Markets, 2020 Beatties Ford Road (June-September) Tuesday 3pm-7pm
- Seeds for Change Farmers Market, 2901 Romare Bearden Drive (May-Sept, Nov-Feb) Saturday 9am-12pm
- Uptown Farmers Market, 301 North Davidson Street (April-October) Saturday 8am-12pm

Conclusions and Findings

Findings

Research suggests large health disparities between healthy eating, convenience, and access. To get to most local farmers' markets students need to find reliable transportation. In marginalized communities a car is needed to travel to the nearest farmers' market and supermarket. The Plaza Market, a 2-minute drive from school, and Compare Foods, a 23-minute drive from school, are the closest supermarkets to Devonshire Elementary. The closest farmers' market is a 11-minute drive, but is only open on Saturdays.

Future Work

Learning Targets:

- I can name and give an example of each of the five food groups.
- I can create a healthy meal plan to promote healthy food choices, using MyPlate, USDA's nutritional guidelines.

Pre Lesson

- Ask students to go over five food groups, name, record them and give examples of foods from each group.
- Lessons: Give Me Five/Making half my plate fruits and vegetables.
- Day 1: Students trace their hand. On each finger students write a food group and on the palm of the hand write their favorite form of exercise.

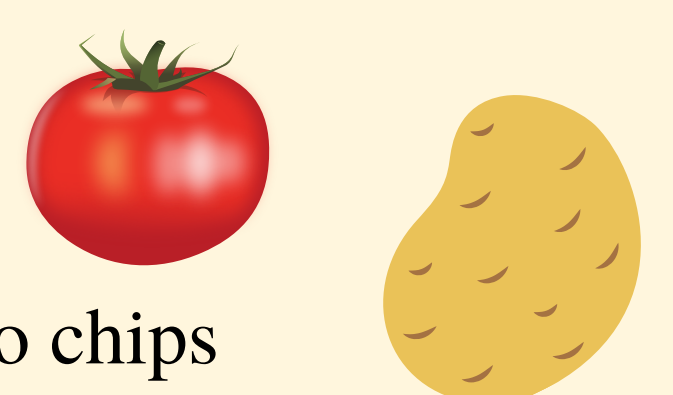
Lesson Day 2

- Students and the teacher create a meal plan utilizing the five food groups from the created list.



Where does it come from?

You can use tomatoes to make pizza, ketchup, tomato sauce



You can use potatoes to make french fries, potato salad, potato chips

Conclusion

In conclusion, children who eat a balanced diet give the body nutrients they need which optimizes their learning. Since April, more people have started gardens at home. As communities continue to go through this health crisis, creating and maintaining a community garden should be examined. As students learn about healthy eating by focusing on the five food groups, students will make the correlation between fruits, vegetables and their favorite foods.

Acknowledgements

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References

Choose MyPlate US Department of Agriculture

National Agriculture in the Classroom