ISLAND GROWN SCHOOLS

ANNUAL REPORT
July 2011 – June 2012

established 2007
MARTHA’S VINEYARD, MASSACHUSETTS
Dear Friends:

We are proud to present this, our first Annual Report. It marks a new stage of development for Island Grown Schools, celebrating a remarkable community achievement: the creation of a vibrant farm to school program serving all public schools on Martha’s Vineyard.

In less than five years, we have installed and supported 11 school gardens (at all seven K-12 schools on the island and four pre-schools); exposed 2,700 students to local food and garden-based learning; donated 12,000+ pounds of island-grown food to school cafeterias; led 1,300 class periods; and coordinated 190 farm field trips.

Relationships have been built, barriers have been broken, and we can now proudly state that all K-12 schools regularly source locally grown foods for their school meals programs, creating a stronger local food system for the entire community, supporting island family farmers, and providing healthy food for our kids. Schools are now bringing curriculum-based learning into their school gardens, greenhouses, and local farms. And as a result we are beginning to see island children’s attitudes towards food change, and family eating habits along with them.

We have exciting plans for the years ahead, as we continue to grow our local program while spreading the IGS model to other communities. We will provide support and leadership in building a strong regional farm to school network in the Cape and Islands; expand our teen apprenticeship program; launch an internship program for pre-professionals in the farm to school field; and become the first school system in Massachusetts to organize a community-wide Harvest of the Month program.

Please see our website for more on these new initiatives.

We are deeply grateful to everyone who has helped create this dynamic program — all the teachers, cafeteria staff, school administrators, parents, students, volunteers, non-profit partners, farmers, donors and businesses that have been instrumental in bringing Island Grown Schools to life. We are amazed by what we’ve done together so far, and look ahead to our fifth year of the program with great excitement and hope.
Our meetings soon divided up into working groups, one for each of the seven public schools, and in the years since then, each school’s program has evolved individually and organically.

As an organization, IGS moved from being an all-volunteer force to now having a staff of seven, with a paid coordinator at each of our k-12 schools and one coordinator for our preschool program.

IGS has four main components:

**CAFETERIAS**

Schools are one of the biggest food consumers on the Vineyard. By sourcing locally grown, fresh foods for school cafeterias, we generate stable year-round demand for family farmers, supporting their livelihoods, preserving the open space they farm, and maintaining the vibrant agricultural heritage of Martha’s Vineyard. By sourcing local, we also help students have delicious and nutritious meals, paving the way for life-long healthy eating habits. We work with island farmers and with cafeteria directors and their hard-working staff at all seven k-12 schools to help build relationships and the infrastructure needed to regularly bring local food to school meals. We also bring local food snacks and taste tests to our participating preschools.

**CLASSROOMS**

We work at every school and every grade level to integrate food, farm, and nutrition-based learning into classrooms. Working one-on-one with teachers to find connections to what they are already teaching, we find that every subject area can be taught through the lens of food.

Our core curriculum units for every grade level are available free on our website, www.islandgrown.org/schools.

**GARDENS**

We have established gardens at all k-12 schools and four preschools, and work with students, teachers, school staff, parents, and community volunteers to maintain them. The gardens are outdoor classrooms, where students get to learn their school subjects and deepen their connection to nature.

**FARM CONNECTIONS**

Each year we bring classes to working island farms. This helps farmers pass some of their knowledge on to the next generation, and helps children grow up knowing where their food comes from. Farm visits also help students appreciate farming as a demanding, admirable, rewarding profession.

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THE IGS MODEL:
GROWING FROM THE GROUND UP

We launched IGS in December of 2007 with a series of community forums to bring people together and share ideas about how to create a farm-to-school program for the Vineyard.
IN FIVE YEARS’ TIME
CHARTER SCHOOL
The K-12 Charter School has long been renowned for its delicious, locally based school meals program. In the 2011-2012 school year, the school sourced all locally raised meat for their school lunches, setting a remarkable precedent. All produce from the school garden is used in school meals, and in the winter of 2010-2011, IGS helped coordinate a school greenhouse renovation, which is now used to grow winter greens for school lunches and vegetable seedlings for the garden.

CHILMARK SCHOOL
Since 2009, IGS has worked with the Chilmark School to pioneer an innovative Community Lunch program. A respected local chef works with students from each grade to prepare four to six meals each year for the entire school, using all locally sourced ingredients. On Community Lunch days, students sit at beautifully decorated tables in the Chilmark Community Center with teachers, parents, community elders, and other invited guests. Eating together in this environment helps students try new foods, experience the social benefits of shared mealtime, and engages the broader community in garden and food based learning, while providing an inspiring example of what school meals can be.

EDGARTOWN
Edgartown’s school garden is now the biggest on the island, with 18 raised beds, a potato patch, a cornfield, and a free-standing glass greenhouse. The garden has become deeply integrated into the school culture: nearly every class from kindergarten through eighth grade uses the garden regularly in curriculum-tied lessons; there is a year-round after school and summer Garden Club; middle school students work in the garden for community service hours; and many classes go on farm field trips throughout the year. The school chefs regularly use local food from island farms and from the school garden in seasonally-based school lunches. Recognizing the importance of IGS programming to the school culture, Edgartown School now directly pays its IGS coordinator as a school educator.

ISLAND GROWN PRE-SCHOOLS
We launched our pre-school program in January 2012, bringing the Vineyard into the growing national Farm-to-Preschool movement. Since then, we have worked weekly with four island pre-schools: Grace Preschool, Martha’s Vineyard Community Services, Island Children’s School and Chilmark Preschool. We installed and revamped gardens at each and helped their 115 students learn how to grow food, deepen their connection with nature, and begin to think differently about the foods they like to eat. Starting in June, we began working with two more pre-schools — First Light Child Development Center and Vineyard Montessori — and are excited to continue to expand our work with the island’s youngest students and their families.

MARTHA’S VINEYARD REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
In 2011, we worked with five high school seniors in an academic year youth apprenticeship program. The students engaged in learning about the food system

Left Edgartown School students in their garden. (Right, from top) West Tisbury Cafeteria Director Jenny Devivo serves lunch; local harvest board.
while doing service learning work with elementary school students in school gardens and on farm field trips. With IGS and school Wellness Committee support, the apprentices also worked with school administrators to gain approval for a long-wished for school garden in the high school’s central courtyard, which the students installed and maintain throughout the summer.

**OAK BLUFFS SCHOOL**

At Oak Bluffs School, IGS staff brings together kindergarten and second grade students each week to work in teams as “Science Buddies.” They learn about soil, water, weather and plants in the school garden, greenhouse, and on farm visits. In 2009 IGS helped guide renovations in the school greenhouse, which students now use to grow over 1,000 fruit and vegetable seedlings each year. The seedlings are sold to the community in a popular spring seedling sale to help cover the costs of maintaining their garden and greenhouse learning programs.

**TISBURY SCHOOL**

This IGS-run after school Garden Club has become incredibly popular, with waiting lists throughout the school year. Garden Club students help maintain the school garden, eat healthy after-school snacks, and talk about food and the food system. After-school cooking programs for Tisbury School are also offered by IGS, and we are working with the school Wellness Committee to bring family cooking workshops and more garden opportunities to the school community.

**WEST TISBURY SCHOOL**

In spring 2012, the West Tisbury and Chilmark School communities, with IGS support, broke away from a 23-year-old corporate food service contract to bring control of school lunch back to the hands of the school itself and away from for-profit interests. This summer, local builders, plumbers, architects and electricians are donating their time to make necessary renovations to the West Tisbury school kitchen, and the school is hiring cafeteria staff at a living wage to prepare the meals for the new program. This hard-won victory sets an inspiring precedent for other school districts, and will help bring healthier, locally-grown food to school meals.
**PROGRAM BUDGET $95,768**

2011 - 2012 school year
July 1st 2011 - June 30th 2012

- **INCOME**
  - INDIVIDUAL DONORS / $89,743
  - FOUNDATION GRANTS / $22,500
  - GOVERNMENT GRANTS / $21,696
  - EVENTS / $10,518
  - EARNED INCOME / $3,496

- **EXPENSES**
  - SCHOOL GARDEN & CURRICULAR MATERIALS / $7,677
  - ADMINISTRATION / $16,824
  - PROGRAM STAFF / $63,951

**FINANCIALS**

GRAPHICS: COURTESY OF COURTNEY DEKORTE, PHOTOGRAPH BY MELINDA RABBITT DEFEO

2011, IGS ANNUAL REPORT
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Our work would not be possible without the help of these generous supporters.

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Chilmark School
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Island Children’s School
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MV Community Services Pre-School
Oak Bluffs School
Flum Hill Pre-School
Tisbury School
Vineyard Montessori School
West Tisbury School

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Listed here are those who have given directly to Island Grown Schools. For an up-to-date list of donors, please visit our website at www.islandgrown.org/schools.

Edgartown School Cafeteria Director Gina deBettencourt picks strawberries with kindergarten gardeners.