

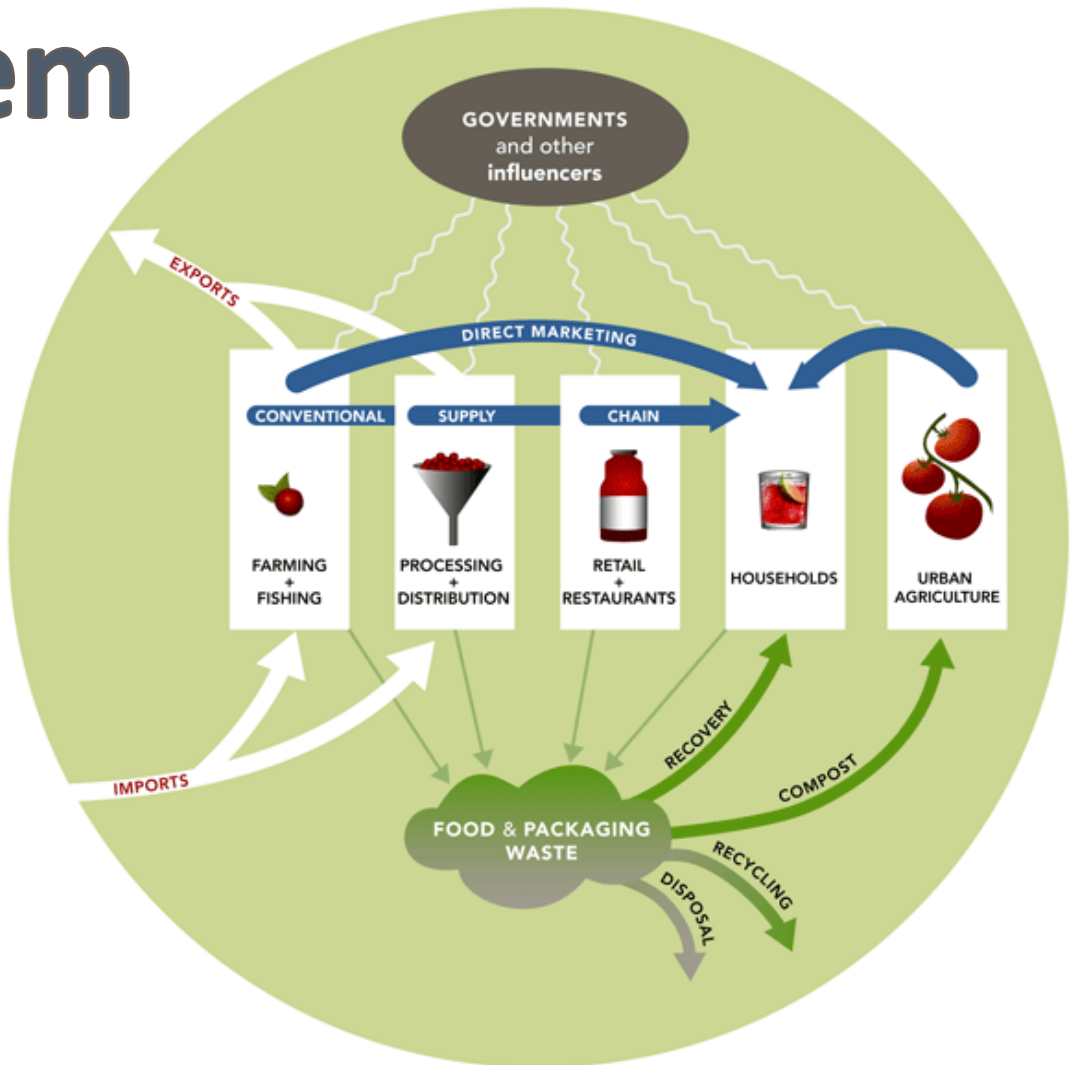


# Common Ground

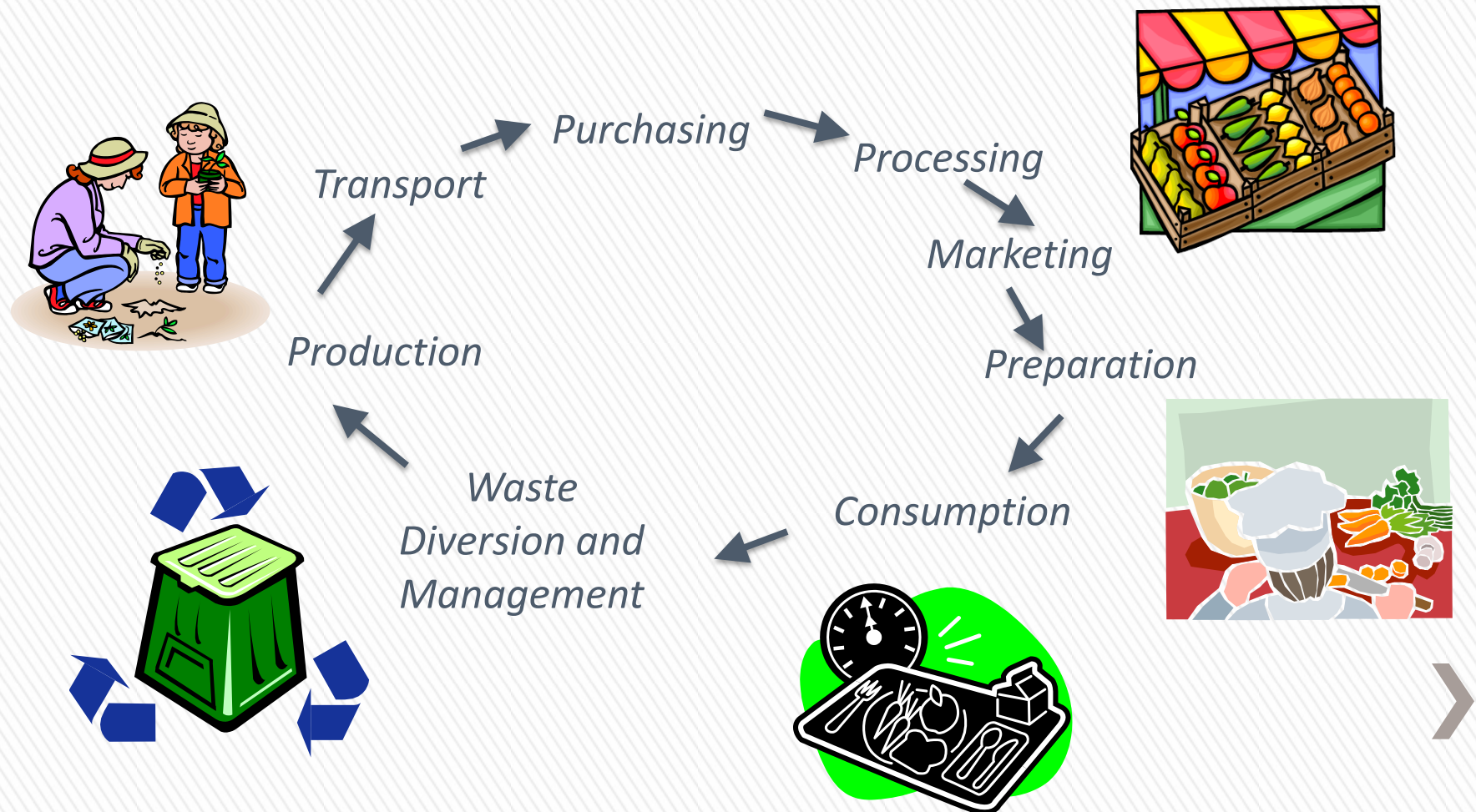
How school gardens and food service can work together to nurture healthy children

*Diana Bergman,  
Resource Conservation District  
of Greater San Diego County*

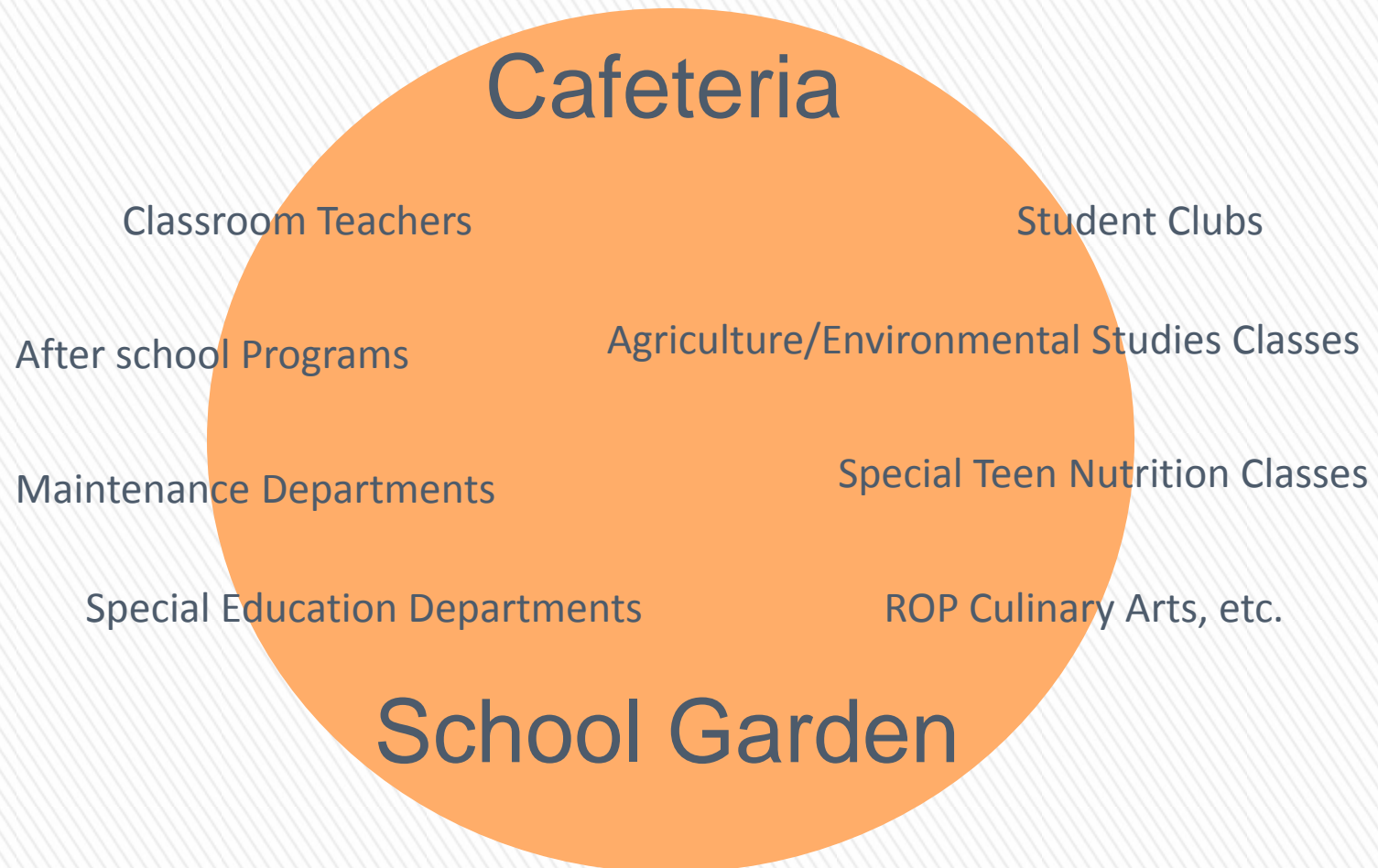
# Pulling back the curtains on the Food System



# Garden to Cafeteria Programs as a Demonstration Food System



# The Cafeteria's Connection to the School Community





# What do school gardens look like?



**They come in all shapes and sizes.**



# In-ground beds, raised beds or containers





# School gardens have a variety of features



- Gathering space
- Wide paths
- Root view boxes



- Weather stations
- Places to hide







**Fun bed shapes**







**A place for  
tools and other  
equipment**





# Art and whimsy





# A place to prepare food and eat











# Sink or hand-washing station





# Compost areas and worm bins



# Theme gardens



❖ Lots more non-edible themes:

- Plants of the World
- Pollinator Garden
- Native Plant Garden
- Literature Garden

- ❖ Herb Garden
- ❖ Pizza Garden
- ❖ Salsa Garden
- ❖ Three Sisters
- ❖ Salad Garden
- ❖ Stir Fry Garden
- ❖ Soup Garden





# Research Supports the Use of Garden Enhanced Nutrition Education



# Gardens enhance the effectiveness of Nutrition Education

**Students who plant and harvest their own fruits and veggies are more likely to eat them.**

Three schools in Vacaville, CA

- Nutrition education + gardening (GENE)
- Nutrition Education only (N)
- Control group (regular instruction)
- **GENE** group = significant improvements in 4<sup>th</sup> grade students'
  - Nutrition knowledge
  - Preferences for certain vegetables--both grown in the garden and from the supermarket

Morris, Zidenberg-Cherr UC Davis 2002





## Also ~

- Increased consumption at home
- Willingness to eat vegetables as a snack and ask a family member to buy certain vegetables



- Follow-up showed that results were retained 6 months later ➤

# Idaho Study—6<sup>th</sup> Graders

## McAleese & Rankin, 2007

At Schools with Garden-Enhanced Nutrition Education:

- The number of servings of fruits and vegetables combined more than doubled from 1.93 to 4.5 servings per day.
- Significantly increased Vitamin C, A, and fiber consumption

At Schools w/o GENE

- No significant increase in fruit/veg, Vitamin C, fiber intake





# Garden-Enhanced Nutrition Education has benefits beyond improved eating behaviors...





Gardening is a fun, hands-on way to learn about nutritious food and *get physical*





# Academic Connections



Science, Math, Language Arts, History, and More!



# Research shows that gardening improves children's environmental attitudes

*Center for Ecoliteracy*





# Gardens enhance personal development, community, cooperation, and sharing...





**...and help students  
learn how food gets  
from seed...**

**... to table.**





**These are the  
lessons that last  
a lifetime!**



*Healthy Eaters are  
Healthy Thinkers*



# How Can School Gardens Support Cafeterias?

- ❖ Students create art for marketing purposes and beautification
- ❖ Students more likely to eat the food if they have grown it – reduces food waste and reinforces healthy eating choices
- ❖ Reduce disposal fees by diverting food scrap waste, fostering environmental awareness among students
- ❖ Provide local produce
- ❖ Change public perception about school food service





# How Can Cafeterias Support School Gardens?

- ❖ Nutrition educators teaching in the garden or classroom
- ❖ Provide connection to local farmers for classroom visits
- ❖ Garden sustainability - purchase produce from the garden, provide supplies for garden
- ❖ Feature seasonal produce that is also grown in the garden
- ❖ Provide fruit and veggie scraps for composters
- ❖ Support inclusion of school gardens in wellness policies for nutrition education and PA goals

