ASPHN 2021-2022
Farm to Early Care and Education Capacity Building Grant (CABBAGE) Year 2 Evaluation Report

Prepared by:
Community Evaluation Solutions, Inc.
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Introduction

Farm to Early Care and Education (ECE) programs are innovative, evidence-based interventions, which provide young children increased exposure and access to local produce, opportunities to learn about nutrition and agriculture, and hands-on learning through gardening. These early exposures to science, health and fresh local produce shapes health habits for life, can engage the ECE community and impacts the local food system.

ASPHN, in collaboration with CDC and the National Farm to School Network (NFSN) partnered with four (4) CDC Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) recipients to implement comprehensive Farm to ECE programs. ASPHN provided seed funding and technical assistance (TA) to the grantees, November 2021 through July 2022.

The CABBAGE grantees successfully partnered with ECE providers from within their REACH priority populations. They initiated or expanded Farm to ECE programs, increasing the quality of local ECE settings by improving children's access to healthy food and environments.

This report details the CABBAGE trainings, TA, and resources that ASPHN provided. It summarizes CABBAGE outcomes and its impact on increasing grantees' Farm to ECE capacity. CABBAGE grantees encountered challenges but ultimately sustained success with increased partnerships, new resources, and an improved Farm to ECE knowledge base.
Evaluation Methods

The CABBAGE evaluation collected data from multiple sources, including:

- Team Lead CABBAGE
  - End of Year Evaluation Survey

- Program Manager
  - Webinar/Call Attendance Data and Meeting Minutes

- Participant Feedback
  - Surveys on the Online Learning Session
4 teams located in Michigan, North Carolina, and Nebraska received funding to participate in the CABBAGE program.
CABBAGE Impact Summary

As of July 2022, the 4 CABBAGE teams reached an estimated...

- **684** Children
- **13** Early Care and Education (ECE) Sites
- **46** ECE Providers
- Of those ECEs, **4** were Family Childcare Providers
CABBAGE partnerships have grown substantially during Year 2

September 2021

20 partners
(Average 5 per team)

July 2022

35 partners
(Average 9 per team)

We added 2 ECE sites, began working with 3 more local farmers in procuring produce for tastings, engaged other potential partners in conversations about procurement and distribution, [and] engaged video production [partners] in our discussions to highlight local farmers.

- CABBAGE Team Lead
Technical assistance was provided during CABBAGE team lead meetings and Farm to ECE monthly webinars.

ASPHN hosted 28 team lead meetings (7 per team)

Of the 8 CABBAGE team leads, 6-7 (on average) attended Farm to ECE monthly webinars
CABBAGE team lead meetings included the following:

Typical Agenda

Team Updates
(progress, barriers, new members or partners)

Monthly Topic

Timeline and Next Steps

Questions

Monthly Topic Examples

Farm to ECE Metrics

Community Support

Work with REACH Grants
During **CABBAGE team lead meetings** . . .

Participants mentioned **50 new CABBAGE collaborations**

**ASPHN and NFSN Project Managers provided teams with 104 resources**
# CABBAGE Networking Calls

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Call Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th># of Attendees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informational Call</td>
<td>August 2021</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kick Off Call - Introductions and Expectations</td>
<td>November 2021</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teams Share and Talk about Resources</td>
<td>January 2022</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teams Share and Talk about Metrics</td>
<td>March 2022</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teams Share and Talk about Year 3</td>
<td>July 2022</td>
<td>13</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

An **average of 16 attendees participated in each networking call.**
Most survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they learned something from the online learning session that they would use in their work.

11 CABBAGE team members attended the March 2022 online learning session. 6 completed the event survey.
Most respondents **strongly agreed** or **agreed** that the online learning session was **useful**, helped build **knowledge** and **skills**, and improved their **capacity to address equity**.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Disagree nor Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The learning session was useful.</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>The learning session helped build my Farm to ECE knowledge and skills.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The learning session improved my capacity to address equity in Farm to ECE initiatives.</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
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</table>
All four CABBAGE teams completed the end of year survey in July 2022.

Team leads from each CABBAGE team collaborated to complete the survey.

The next slides contain feedback from teams about CABBAGE and its perceived impacts.
Most CABBAGE teams reported that all the ASPHN educational opportunities and resources provided were useful in helping teams reach their goals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Not Useful At All</th>
<th>Slightly Useful</th>
<th>Moderately Useful</th>
<th>Very Useful</th>
<th>Extremely Useful</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monthly Team Lead Meetings</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Online Learning Session</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarterly CABBAGE Networking Calls</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly Farm to ECE Webinars</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farm to ECE Monthly Newsletter</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farm to ECE Basecamp Website</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Most teams strongly agreed that their team introduced at least one tool or resource and that ECE providers used them successfully.

Our team used at least one resource or tool with ECE providers that helped children learn about food, agriculture and/or nutrition.

Our team increased the number of tools or resources ECE providers used successfully in their Farm to ECE work.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree
Most teams agreed or strongly agreed that they had improved existing tools or resources and increased their creation of Farm to ECE materials.

Our team increased the number of materials about Farm to ECE created by my program.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

Our team improved existing tools or resources that support ECE providers.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

Our team learned about a resource that yielded success for another team.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree
The **Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) approach** is a way to test an implemented change. When team leads were asked about the **effectiveness** of PDSAs, responses were **mixed**.

CABBAGE teams **completed** between **2-4 PDSA cycles**.
When asked what **types of activities** teams implemented because of **completing PDSAs**, respondents mentioned:

- Developing a local food delivery system for ECE sites
- Harvest of the Month kits for ECEs focused on tastings and education materials
- Purchasing CSA boxes, gardening supplies, and classroom materials for ECEs
- Creating (small scale) food hubs for ECEs

We had more discussions with ECEs around **local foods** and 10 Cents a Meal. Center based providers have taken a deeper look into their menu to see what foods are **locally sourced** and where they could begin **buying local**.

- CABBAGE Team Lead
The **most common CABBAGE activities** included helping providers **garden**, access, purchase, or serve local foods, and create Farm to ECE materials.

- Helping providers garden, indoors or outdoors at the ECE (4)
- Helping providers access, purchase, or serve local foods (4)
- Helping providers create Farm to ECE materials, communications, or activities (4)
- In-person or online trainings for ECE providers (3)
- Helping providers integrate teaching about farming, nutrition or food (3)
- Helping providers identify local farmers or food producers (3)
- In-person or online 1 on 1 coaching for providers (2)
- Farm to ECE learning collaborative (1)
- Helping providers identify family needs related to food or gardening (1)
- Creating materials for ECE providers to help them with Farm to ECE (1)
- Created and/or offered a mini grant to providers for Farm to ECE (1)
The number of ECEs that had **gardening**, purchased or served **local foods**, and taught children about nutrition, food, or gardening **increased** between 2021 and 2022.

Note: RAO Community Health became a CABBAGE Grantee in Year 2 of the program.
Most teams **strongly agreed** or **agreed** that the CABBAGE grant helped them **increase** their **communication** in and **coordination** of Farm to ECE.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased communication in Farm to ECE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increased coordination of Farm to ECE</td>
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<td>3</td>
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</table>
All teams strongly agreed that the CABBAGE grant positively impacted the effectiveness of their program.
Teams were asked to rate their satisfaction with the CABBAGE grant program on a scale from 1 (extremely dissatisfied) to 5 (extremely satisfied).

All four CABBAGE teams reported that they were extremely satisfied with the grant program.
Most CABBAGE teams strongly agreed that their team achieved the following REACH goals:

- Increase access to healthy foods
- Improve connectivity to healthy food
- Implement outreach and education on healthy food choices
- Improve nutrition through ECEs
- Implement culturally tailored strategies to improve access to preventive health programs
- Increase community awareness about community resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<th>Agree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase access to healthy foods</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improve connectivity to healthy food</td>
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<td>Improve nutrition through ECEs</td>
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<td>Implement culturally tailored strategies to improve access to</td>
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<td>preventive health programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increase community awareness about community resources</td>
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Additional comments from CABBAGE teams included:

“We greatly appreciate the technical assistance provided by ASPHN on this grant! The past 2 years of CABBAGE grant funding has helped propel the conversations about Farm to ECE in our community to the forefront. We’ve also been able to enhance the CABBAGE work through existing partnerships developed through our REACH grant that will keep our Farm to ECE work going.”

“Our ECE providers truly appreciate the knowledge, resources and materials we have been able to provide due to CABBAGE. Thank you!”

“The ASPHN [events and conferences] are always chock-full of wonderful speakers and presentations that spark new ideas and discussions.”

“The one-on-one team lead discussions with Emia, Lacy, and now Sophia are the most valuable to me…They share a wealth of resources and are always willing [to connect] us with people and resources from across the country that are working in the same area, have experienced and worked through similar challenges, or are simply willing to talk through their area of expertise as it relates to our [program].”
Recommendations for ASPHN

- Continue to implement the CABBAGE program and **build upon the foundation** laid in Years 1 and 2.

- Support CABBAGE teams in attending the **Online Learning Session** scheduled for December 2022.

- Work to bolster **engagement** with CABBAGE teams and **encourage attendance** at **calls** and **webinars**.

- Provide and expand upon Farm to ECE **educational opportunities**, **technical assistance**, and **resources** in Year 3.
Conclusions

The CABBAGE program provided technical assistance which increased teams’ capacity to engage and implement Farm to ECE at the local level.

The technical support, educational opportunities, and resources offered by ASPHN were very useful in helping CABBAGE teams achieve their goals.

CABBAGE funding, support, education, and resources allowed teams to increase their coordination of and communication about Farm to ECE.

All teams were extremely satisfied with the CABBAGE and felt that it positively impacted the effectiveness of their program.
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