

Los Angeles Times

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SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA -- THIS JUST IN

Grants to help preschools plant edible gardens

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A farm industry group's charitable arm said Monday it will give 100 California preschools and day-care centers \$1,000 each to help them start gardens for growing food.

The Irvine-based Western Growers Foundation said the project is intended to let young children see firsthand where their food comes from and teach them healthy eating habits that could help curb increasing rates of childhood obesity.

"School gardens create wonderful a-ha moments for students to truly understand where their food comes from and the work behind growing what we like to call the best medicine in the world," Paula Olson, a vice president of Western Growers, said in a statement.

The grants, to be administered with the help of the California Department of Food and Agriculture and the state Department of Education, can be used to pay for plants, seeds and gardening equipment.

The foundation is the charitable arm of Western Growers, an industry group representing farmers as well as food packers and shippers.

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-- Rick Rojas

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