



# Blackshear Garden Project: Wishlist & Estimated Budget for Expansion

## 1. Executive Summary

The Blackshear Elementary School Garden, in partnership with EriRene Farms and the DYAD Program, is expanding into a school-based farm and food access initiative designed to support students and their families across the Houston community.

As the program has grown, so have its infrastructure, production, and sustainability needs. This document outlines our updated wishlist with estimated costs to support expanded raised beds, irrigation systems, seed starting, harvest distribution, and long-term soil health. These resources will allow the program to scale responsibly while continuing to provide hands-on STEM education and increased access to fresh, nutritious produce.

### Key Impacts

- Support expanded food production for 200–300 students and families
- Enable hands-on STEM, nutrition, and sustainability education
- Improve irrigation, soil health, and year-round growing capacity
- Strengthen long-term viability of a school-based urban farm model
- Provide meaningful engagement opportunities for partners and donors

## 2. Project Overview

The Blackshear Garden serves students in grades 3–5 through hands-on agricultural education integrated into the DYAD Program. Students participate in planting, maintaining, and harvesting crops while learning about science, nutrition, teamwork, and environmental stewardship.

Through EriRene Farms, a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit, the garden is expanding its role to include food distribution for students and their families. This evolution transforms the garden into a school-based farm that directly connects classroom learning with food access and community well-being.

## 3. Current Objectives

- Expand raised bed capacity to increase food production



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- Improve irrigation systems for efficiency and consistency
- Build protected growing infrastructure for seed starting and season extension
- Support harvest, storage, and food distribution logistics
- Establish sustainable systems for composting and soil regeneration

### **4. Estimated Wishlist & Budget Overview**

The following estimated costs reflect current needs for expansion. Costs are approximate and based on school and community garden project benchmarks. Both in-kind and financial support are welcome.

#### **Infrastructure & Farm Expansion (Estimated \$5,200)**

- Raised bed lumber & hardware (15–20 beds): \$1,200
- Soil, compost, peat moss, perlite: \$1,000
- Mulch & pathway materials: \$500
- Shade cloth & supports: \$400
- Small greenhouse / hoop house materials: \$1,500
- Garden border fencing: \$600

#### **Irrigation, Water & Sustainability (Estimated \$2,000)**

- Hoses, reels, timers, splitters: \$400
- Drip irrigation & soaker hose systems: \$600
- Sprinklers & watering accessories: \$250
- Rain barrels & water conservation supplies: \$500
- Freeze protection & frost cloth: \$250

#### **Seeds, Plants & Food Production (Estimated \$1,900)**

- Vegetable, herb, and edible flower seeds: \$400
- Fruit trees & berry plants: \$1,200
- Seed trays, seed-starting soil, labels: \$300



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### **Tools & Equipment (Estimated \$1,800)**

- Child-safe garden tools: \$500
- Wheelbarrows and garden carts: \$600
- Harvest bins, buckets, scales: \$400
- Gloves (child & adult sizes): \$300

### **Learning, STEM & Classroom Integration (Estimated \$1,400)**

- Student journals, clipboards, worksheets: \$300
- Soil test kits, magnifiers, measuring tools: \$250
- Educational and multilingual signage: \$500
- Outdoor whiteboards or easels: \$350

### **Harvest, Storage & Distribution (Estimated \$1,800)**

- Harvest crates and food-safe bins: \$400
- Folding tables and pop-up tents: \$600
- Coolers, ice packs, reusable produce bags: \$500
- Handwashing station supplies: \$300

### **Composting & Soil Regeneration (Estimated \$800)**

- Compost bins / 3-bin system materials: \$500
- Pallets, lumber, thermometers, tools: \$300

### **Total Estimated Expansion Budget**

The total estimated budget to support this phase of the Blackshear Garden and Farm expansion is approximately **\*\*\$14,900\*\***.

## **5. Funding & Support Opportunities**

EriRene Farms welcomes both in-kind donations and financial sponsorships toward the materials outlined above. Donors may choose to support specific categories, sponsor infrastructure elements, or contribute toward the overall expansion effort.



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Recognition opportunities may include garden signage, digital acknowledgment, and participation in community engagement events.

### **6. Contact Information**

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Location: Blackshear Elementary School Garden, Houston, TX