

MEDIA RELEASE

November 13, 2025

**The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair's brings Farm to Table hands-on learning to Schools  
With Support from the Ontario Government's Ontario Trillium Foundation**

**Toronto, ON:** Launched by the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in January 2025, the Growing School Gardens Project (GSGP) is a new comprehensive outreach educational program for schools to learn about building a food garden, growing food and harvesting. The program was made possible with support received through a \$67,900 Seed grant awarded in 2024 by the provincial government's Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF). On Thursday, MPP Chris Glover met with some representatives from the Fair to acknowledge their work with the grant over the last year.

"I want to acknowledge the incredible work of The Royal's educators and organizers who helped bring this project to life, and to thank the Ontario Trillium Foundation for supporting it through a Seed grant. This is exactly the kind of community initiative that shows how small investments can make a big difference in young people's lives. Projects like this don't just grow vegetables — they grow awareness, confidence, and a sense of stewardship that will stay with these young people for life. They remind us that the future of our planet depends on the relationships we nurture today, between people and the land that sustains us. Thank you for helping those seeds grow into something truly inspiring." – MPP Chris Glover, Spadina-Fort York

Six local schools were selected for the inaugural year. Royal educators worked directly with these schools to provide hands-on support and learning plans to build and maintain their gardens from March to October. Through direct participation in planting, maintaining, and harvesting their own gardens, students not only learned practical gardening skills but also developed a greater appreciation for sustainable food systems.

This learning is continued and enhanced during their participation in the The Royal's annual Food and Horticulture competitions this Fall, with classes specifically for school groups in the jams and pickling sections, and pollinator plant and seed art competitions, using food and plant materials harvested from their school gardens. Participating schools were also invited to attend the Fair and participate in activities and workshops to compliment their growing food experience.

"Educating on agriculture and food has been a mandate of The Royal since its inception over 100 years ago," said Cyrus Cooper, Chief Executive Officer of The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair. "This

project brings agriculture education and hands-on growing experiences into schools, which fosters a deeper connection between students and the environment and the land.”

The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) is an agency of the Ontario government with a mission to build healthy and vibrant communities across the province. Last year, OTF invested nearly \$105M into 732 community projects and multi-sector partnerships. Projects aim to enhance economic well-being, foster more active lifestyles, support child and youth development, provide spaces for people to come together and connect, and create a more sustainable environment. Visit [otf.ca](http://otf.ca) to learn more.

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### **About The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair**

The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair is the world's largest indoor combined agricultural and equestrian show. Now in its 103rd year, The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair takes place every November at Exhibition Place, in the City of Toronto and celebrates the best in agriculture, local food, and equestrian competitions from across the country. For more information, please visit <http://www.royalfair.org/>

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