



My Heart. My Life.

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American Heart Association®
TEACHING GARDENS

Bringing Back the Farm:

Moss Haven Elementary Breaks Ground on American Heart Association Teaching Garden

WHAT: The **American Heart Association's National Center**, located in Dallas Texas, will break ground on its official Teaching Garden at Richardson ISD's Moss Haven Elementary School on **Friday, March 23 at 8:00 a.m.**

WHEN/WHERE: **Moss Haven Elementary @ 8:00 a.m. on Friday, March 23**
9202 Moss Farm Lane, Dallas, TX 75243
(469) 593-2200 – main school number

WHY: Childhood obesity is one of our nation's most urgent health threats. Today, one in three children and adolescents in the U.S. is overweight or obese. Research shows that the children who have been exposed to fruits and vegetables through the garden program are more likely to eat fruits and vegetables as part of their diet. Additionally, the **Teaching Gardens** program helps kids educate their parents and community on the benefits of heart healthy eating.

The goal is to allow each student the opportunity to cultivate and grow their own plant with dedicated garden beds for each class. Research from the **American Heart Association** shows that children are more willing to try vegetables if they grow them and adults living in the household are 3.5 times more likely to consume fruits and vegetables at least five times daily. Among children today, obesity is causing a broad range of health problems that previously weren't seen until adulthood such as high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, asthma, sleep apnea and elevated cholesterol. Teaching students about the importance of healthy diet that includes fruits and vegetables is just one part of the association's healthy living initiative's [My Heart. My Life.](http://myheartmylife.org)

MORE: Moss Haven Elementary sits on land that was formerly part of Moss Farm Ranch where Harry S. Moss' racehorses roamed free. Now the school will be allocating part of the school grounds to a rich and fruitful educational experience with an Outdoor Learning Environment – the Moss Haven Farm. This unique **Teaching Garden** will be one of 117 sites in the country sponsored by the **American Heart Association** in the first year of this exciting program. The AHA plans to build more than 500 throughout the U.S. by 2014.

The garden will focus on 100 percent organic gardening while using a sustainable water source – a first for the **Teaching Gardens**. In addition to curriculum and planting modules provided by the **American Heart Association**, the school has also received a \$1300 grant from REAL School Gardens towards the water harvest system and has already secured a 1,000 gallon galvanized steel water tower complete with hand pump to provide water sustainability. All garden beds will include a unique sub-irrigation planter to minimize water needs while maximizing plant growth during record heat and drought months.

Moss Haven Elementary is also teaming with Texas A&M Agrilife Research and Extension to track and survey the Farm's influence on students' interests in gardens, nutrition and eco-sustainability. The school has also identified "green" teachers at each grade level to prepare teaching curriculum for our students in their farm. To make journaling and visiting the Moss Haven Farm more comfortable for students, the school has procured tree stumps to use as outdoor seating. Additional gardening supplies such as wheelbarrows, rakes, etc. can be donated to the school to help make this a permanent fixture for years to come. To donate supplies, email MossHavenFarm@gmail.com. For more information on the American Heart Association **Teaching Gardens** visit www.heart.org/teachinggardens.

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