

With Help from Meijer, Grady's Garden Fulfills Mission to Promote Healthy Eating

The mission at Grady's Garden is simple – to inspire children to eat more veggies.

Founded by food industry veterans, Chad Miller and Mike Wheeler, the West Michigan company's commitment to this goal extends beyond simply providing nutritious foods. The brand also aims to revolutionize attitudes toward healthy eating through engaging, animated content and educational initiatives.

"At Grady's Garden, we believe that growing healthy communities starts with our kids. We also believe that healthy foods help lead to healthier bodies, which lead to healthier families and communities," Mike said.

Grady's Garden pasta sauce and salsas are carried in a growing number of Meijer Market format stores. The products are packed with wholesome veggies and contain zero added sugars, colors, or artificial flavors. Our retail partnership goes beyond carrying the company's line of pasta sauce and salsa to supporting its outreach to schools and after-school programs. In fact, profits from their product sales directly fund their educational program.

"Bridge Street Market has been a valuable partner in our community gardening initiatives, investing financial resources and in-kind donations of time for our pilot garden programs at two Grand Rapids elementary schools," Mike said.

Research indicates that community and school-based interventions can be effective at improving fruit and vegetable consumption. Children prefer hands-on learning, including technology-based learning, tasting, and cooking. Such experiential learning has been associated with increased fruit and vegetable consumption compared to other strategies.

Central to Grady's Garden's multi-faceted approach are short, animated videos, part of its "Grady's Garden" series shown on GRTV, which follows the adventures of six ethnically diverse children who live in an under-resourced community as they embark on a transformative journey to establish a garden in their urban neighborhood. In the first episode, the children learn about growing ingredients for a salad and in another, the many varieties of tomatoes. Through their trials and triumphs, the characters inspire viewers to embrace the power of gardening and healthy eating, sparking a ripple effect of positive change within their community.

"Our data suggests that for upward of 37% of kids who participate in our program, their willingness to try vegetables goes up substantially," Mike said.

During product demos, Mike says he's watched kids get excited when they see a Grady's Garden label because they've seen the program. Parents are equally impressed with the nutrition label on the products, as well.

As a Black-owned business, Mike continues to work with the Meijer Supplier Inclusion team to expand Grady's Garden's reach.

"They are tremendous champions," Mike said.

Additional assets available online: [Video](#) ⁽¹⁾

<https://meijercommunity.com/With-Help-from-Meijer,-Gradys-Garden-Fulfills-Mission-to-Promote-Healthy-Eating>