



NOAA B-WET Project: Alcona Elementary School

# FOOD ECOSYSTEMS



Excellence Today...  
Success Tomorrow



"I love it when students are able to see themselves as authentic change-makers in their own community - applying their learning to bring their projects to fruition."

*Jenny Schroeder, Alcona Elementary Science Teacher*

## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Alcona Elementary students took a deep dive into the causes of marine debris after doing a handful of clean ups in their community in places such as their school grounds, school forest and local harbor. They looked at ways in which trash enters the great lakes ecosystem, travels within and also the impact it has on this land and water.

They analyzed their role and impact, both positive and negative, and focused in on their own lunch room, setting out to reduce food waste. They chose a few routes:

- utilizing food waste for pig feed to local farmers
- developing a plan to house poultry for a local food source
- expanding the school garden growing options in order to have more local fruits and vegetables

One student summed it up perfectly when they said, "We can make our own food ecosystem!"



BY THE NUMBERS

48 4th graders

20 x 40 hoop house

20 pounds of marine debris collected from community waters

## PROJECT PARTNERS



MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY | Extension