



Farm to Table

Farm to School

Fostering fun learning experiences between kids, schools and local foods!

Farm to Table's Farm to School Educational Program supports activities that make that critical link between children, youth, their families, schools, agriculture, and the development of healthier eating habits.

Sampling of projects supported by the Farm to School in New Mexico:



The Zuni Youth Enrichment Project Summer Camp and the community-supported Zuni waffle garden. The 60 young campers, 17 teen camp counselors, and countless community members attended a camp kick-off day and all had a hand in making the garden bigger and better than ever through the summer months. Many community adults came to mentor the campers as they experienced the magic of placing seedlings in the ground and giving them their first watering.

The degree of intergenerational exchange, the amount of cultural knowledge transferred to the young campers, and the newfound enthusiasm for growing local, sustainable food made this program a standout in an outstanding summer.

Sampling of the projects supported by
Farm to School Educational Activities, 2012
\$16,000 to 22 diverse NM community-based projects
Made possible by the Nirvana Mañana Institute



La Semilla Food Center, Las Cruces / Anthony:



“Yesterday was a blast when we all prepared our different coleslaws. It was a lot of fun and I enjoyed yesterday’s learning experience. I would also like to say thank you for taking time out of your day to come and teach us about plants and nutrients. If it wasn’t for you I probably never would have never changed my perspective of healthy food.”

–Esme Ibarra, 8th grade, Sierra Middle School



“Thank you for helping me extend my classroom experience by allowing our class to grow different types of plants in our garden. It was really fun and different to learn how to plant and take data on the plants that we planted. I hope that you can come next year to teach the next group of kids how to do all of the stuff we learned this year. I really appreciate that you took your time to teach us these interesting experiences with planting plants. We also thank you for helping us do a variety of food tasting projects such as the one we did on Wednesday. Thanks again for your participation in helping us extend our ordinary classroom routine”

–Luis Borjorquez, 8th grade, Sierra Middle School



Anonymous Quotes from Survey Conducted by La Semilla Food Center - Favorite part about the garden this year (2012):

“Being with my friends and growing food.”

“My favorite part about working in the garden is learning about the plants and nutrition.”

“My favorite part was trying new foods.”

“The oos and ahhs were worth it,” said Doug. He added *“I love it!”*
I’m sure the students and teachers loved it too.

–Farm Manager, Townside Farm

Healthy Kids Healthy Community Grant County



Two second grade classes from Bayard Elementary School visited Townside Farm on Thursday, September 27th, as part of the Farm to School week. Farm Manager, Doug, gave the kids a tour, filled with plenty of samples. Alyssa, who is in Mrs. Montes’ second

grade class said that her favorite part was the carrot. She said, *“I liked how the carrot felt.”*

Second grade teacher, Mrs. Gutierrez said *“This is great. I want to come back here on my own.”* The students learned about sustainability, volunteer crops, and heirloom crops.



SOS Bernalillo County — Students participated in a variety of projects, including building benches in the Barelas Garden for the local seniors to use as they work in the garden. Students used glass from the glass site to decorate the benches. Students also conducted local food surveys to research ways of connecting the surrounding neighbors to the food grown in the garden.

Earth Force / Summer of Services (SOS), Albuquerque:

Students exploring the ecosystem of the Bosque with an Open Space guide. Students used this experience to learn more about the watershed and what they could do to improve it. Photo taken by Allison Hawks, Summer of Service Educator.



Earth Force/Summer of Services (SOS), Belen:

Belen SOS youth at UNM, visiting the Biology Lab. Here, youth are taking a lunch break on the UNM campus. Photo courtesy of Sierra Netz.



Students describing their “Down River Community” designs. The communities were created with recycled materials. Photo by Allison Hawks, Summer of Service Educator in



Belen SOS youth digging into the Central Elementary garden box to prepare the soil. Photo courtesy of Lorinda Lynch.



The highlight of this program was not one instance, but instead a series of instances. In one of the boxes, we planted small strawberry and raspberry bushes. We would alert the kids as the berries were getting close, and right as they would ripen they would suddenly “disappear”. The students would say things like “I know who ate it!” but were afraid to tell. But they all secretly really wanted to eat the berries. Once we convinced them it was OK (but that you had to wait for them to ripen) they would check daily for new berries.

—Taos Pueblo Day School

Taos Academy, photos taken by Karin Moulton



Solomon- (8th grade) “The work in the greenhouse gives us motivation to build more gardens and live sustainably.”

Aria (7th grade) “It’s great to get experience growing and cooking your own food. These are life skills that will last us the rest of our lives.”

Mrs. McPartlon-Teacher at Taos Middle School, one of the partner schools. “Participating in the Farm program with Taos Academy changed the lives of some of my students. I had high risk students from families with low income that completely flourished by going to the greenhouse and to the farm. One student, a selective mute, was talking by the end of the school year. Another student who was afraid of touch was leading the group at the farm by the end of the year. We had to walk to both Taos Academy and Tierra Lucero Farm from our school. The walk was approximately a quarter of a mile and took half an hour at the beginning of the year. By the end of the year, it took us 10 minutes. The walk, along with the produce, taught healthy habits in a way no textbook could!”

Nia – (6th grade) “I’ve learned methods for how to harvest different vegetables and how their tastes can be brought out in cooking.”

Sebatien (8th grade) “I thought it was fun and I enjoyed learning to harvest food.”

*“He threw his face into the pony’s neck, and took a deep breath.”
(Our Special Education teacher,
remarking about a student meeting a horse for the first time)
— Mesilla Elementary School*

Mesilla Elementary School -



Comments- *“I’ve never been to a state fair before!”
“He’s so fast!” -Watching a sheep shearer
“They are so beautiful!” -Looking at animals in fair barn*

Many children participating in the trip to the NM Farm and Ranch Museum were impressed by the demonstrations of early ranch life. Students marveled at the blacksmith presentation, as he pounded out nails for use on the farm. A volunteer talked about thrift, and displayed a beautiful handmade quilt, to show that pioneers wasted nothing.



Students were fascinated by the cow milking demonstration. As they studied exhibits on crops of the area, students imagined how life would have been for them, if they grew up on a farm or ranch years ago, or today.



Hi Mrs. Locke. As you know, Abby really enjoys gardening with you. But what is amazing is that she has been a picky eater and has tried foods for the first time ever through your tastings. Can you believe she has never eaten an apple until yesterday? So thank you so much for opening these new doors and opportunities to her. Thanks for all the time you put into these wonderful learning experiences.
—Stephanie Muir (from a [Parent email](#))

Acequia Madre, Santa Fe -



Rio Grande Community Farm Camp—Without this small grant, RGCF would not have been able to provide the top-notch garden and kitchen experiences that were the highlight of each camp. Each week, students spent approximately 10 hours in the garden; planting, cultivating, and harvesting fresh, organic produce. In addition, students spent from 5 – 10 hours in the kitchen preparing and cooking food. Based on parental comments, we made a huge impact on these children over the course of the month – they encouraged their families to eat healthier food, to cook at home as a family, and to plant their own gardens and buy locally-grown, organic food – we not only met our goals, but exceeded them! I truly feel like we've made a difference in the lives of these families.



Mark Twain Middle School, Albuquerque -



Our kids learned new vocabulary, concepts and expressed their curiosity:

“Can we pick a tomato?”

“Why are they yellow?”

“Are they ripe yet?”

“Who grew these?”... “Kids did this!”



One of our 3rd grade students, who uses a wheelchair, planted bulbs in our accessible raised bed. As he planted, he commented, *“This is easier than (planting) in my mom’s garden. At home I have to sit on the ground and here I can reach”*.



A 2nd grade student who was moving soil commented: *“At home I just use a shovel to clean up the dog mess. Here I get to help dig the garden.”*



A 5th grader commented, “We’re like ants building a new community!”

Another student remarked “At home this is called work. But here, it’s fun!”

We believe that building ‘community’ and forging more links between home and school, is critically important if the gardens are to have an impact on our students’ food and environmental awareness.

Mark Twain Middle School, Albuquerque