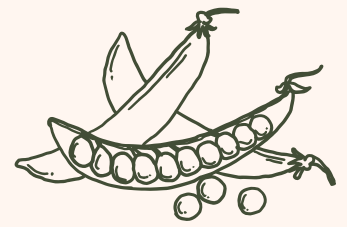




ANNUAL REPORT

Montezuma School To
Farm Project

INTRODUCTION



OUR MISSION:

Unite our local agricultural heritage with our growing future by engaging students at the crossroads of food production, nutrition and resource conservation through educational experiences.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

I've always viewed food as a shared, universal language that has the power to bring people around the table. This belief has brought me joy in planting seeds, nurturing crops, and sharing their bounty. Imparting these skills and a passion for food to students, while witnessing them build their own connections in the gardens, has been incredibly rewarding. Thanks to the dedication and hard work of our staff and AmeriCorps service members we reflect and celebrate another successful year of advancing our mission. Their efforts in our gardens and throughout the broader community have significantly improved our programs and had a positive impact on numerous students in Montezuma County.

In 2023, we focused on evaluating our programs, revamping our curriculum, and strengthening our collaboration with community partners. We expanded our programming to include middle school and hosted our 6th summer cohort of Southwest Conservation Corps high school crew members. Additionally, the free farm stand at Southwest Open School has proven to be remarkably effective, providing a model for distributing fresh fruits and vegetables to students, teachers, and families every week throughout the harvest season.

These achievements would not have been possible without the steadfast support of our community members and local educators. Their collaborative spirit has been vital to our success and continues to drive our commitment to providing quality programs.

As we approach a significant milestone, our fifteenth anniversary of garden education, we are excited and committed to continuing our journey of planting seeds in the minds of our students and sharing a bounty of quality school garden-grown food.

Here's to many more years of growing together.

-Ben Goodrich, Executive Director

TEACHING BY THE NUMBERS



OVERVIEW

We teach garden lessons at elementary schools across Montezuma County. During each class, we provide a unique hands-on lessons and a tasting of fresh food.

Where we taught	Students per month	# of months taught
Mancos	215	8
Kemper	280	7
Mesa	343	7
Dolores	315	4
CMS	100	1
Lewis	57	4
Total	1,310	4



17,064 total serving of fresh food

419 hours spent teaching in school gardens

PROGRAMS

FRIDAY PROGRAMMING

We provide 4 hours of activities every Friday to teach students how to grow and prepare food. This provides students the opportunity to connect with other students and their local environment.

MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAMMING

Every Monday, Mancos Middle School students meet in the garden to practice food production skills. They have also learned the ins and out of growing food using a hydroponic system.

SUMMER FARMCORPS

We collaborated with Southwest Conservation Corps (SCC) to provide paid internships for 8-10 local high school students. They gain practical skills in water conservation, food production, and land management.

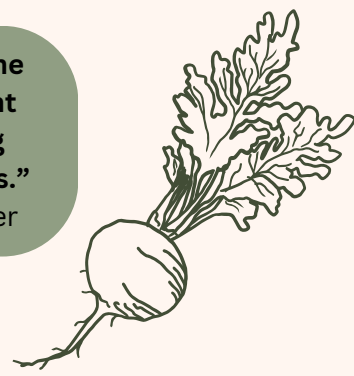
SUMMER INTERNSHIP

Through collaboration with SCC one high school student works directly with our director to expand their knowledge of food production and marketing crops.



EDUCATIONAL IMPACT

"I liked the lesson due to the hands on counting, student engagement, and working cooperatively with partners."
-2nd Grade Kemper Teacher



"I talk about the 5 senses all year with my Kindergarteners so this lesson just fits into what I am doing in the classroom so nicely."
-Kindergarten Mesa Teacher

"Garden class is fun because we get to be outside and find worms."
-Kindergarten Student

"I like the tastings the best because now I really like sweet peppers and I had never tried them before."
-2nd Grade Student

"I love that students learned how to preserve foods that they picked from the garden. Many of them went home and talked to families about it and were able to do this at home."
-4th Grade Mancos Teacher



BENEFITS

1. Participation in a hands-on garden program increased student's vegetable consumption and nutrition knowledge (Kim & Park, 2020).
2. Garden classes also increased students science achievement and motivation (Williams, et al., 2018).
3. Learning in school gardens creates more opportunities for social interaction which promotes social and emotional competence (Pollin & Retzlaff-Fürst, 2021).



COMMUNITY IMPACT

TEACHER WORKSHOP

This fall the annual teacher training workshop hosted by local educators for Montezuma county teachers emphasized food literacy and preparation. Twelve teachers learned the process of food production from seed to tplate.

GARDEN COORDINATORS

We provided over 100 hours of training to six local educators on lesson planning, garden skills, food production, nutrition, conservation practices, and teaching in the garden.



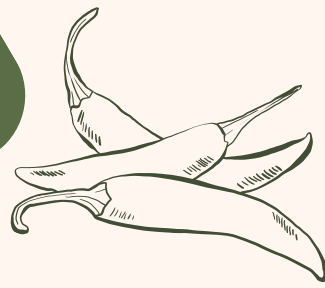
FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Our School Gardens produced over 5,250 lbs. of fruits and vegetables which was distributed to students and community members. Our AmeriCorps members work with Good Sam's Food Pantry to help distribute produce to help provide all community members access to fresh nutritious food.

We also distribute food to students and teachers at the Southwest Open School every week during the growing season. This provides over 120 students the opportunity for fresh locally grown food.



FINANCIALS



EXPENSES

Payroll & Taxes Programs

Operations Fundraising

Operations
6.9%

Program Contributions
19.4%

Payroll & Taxes
69.2%

Total expense \$329,575.11

INCOME

Grants and Foundations

Program Contributions

Fundraising Events

Individual Contributions Other

Fundraising Events
5.1%

Grants and Foundations
71.4%

Total income \$292,431.89

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!





CONTACT US



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