

grow. feed. inspire.

A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



arden City Harvest is now in its seventeenth year of operation. In the past year, we've made great strides in our efforts to build community through agriculture. This work is possible because of our generous donors, our amazing and tireless volunteers, and our hard-working, dedicated staff.

We grow produce with and for people with low incomes. In 2012, interest in our Community Gardens was unprecedented, with almost 100 families on the waiting list to rent plots. This was due in part to a growing interest in gardening and local sustainability. Since last season, we've been busy meeting and planning with existing and potential new partners. That said, we have plans to expand the Northside and Meadow Hill Community Gardens this summer and hope to add a new site or two in the year to come.

We offer education and training in ecologically conscious agriculture at every opportunity – be it a farm field trip for first graders, hands-on farming for college interns, or teaching community gardeners how to control flea beetles without the use of toxic pesticides. Our Farmer in the Classroom program, now in its second year, is being offered in 15 second grade classrooms. Throughout the school year, our farmers help these children explore connections between agriculture and their everyday lives. Because of its success, we hope next year

Garden City Harvest builds community through agriculture by growing produce with and for people with low-incomes, offering education and training in ecologically conscious agriculture, and using our sites for the personal restoration of youth and adults.

our gardens & farms grow, feed, & inspire

to offer this curriculum in all nine Missoula public elementary schools. In 2012 we also connected our farms to Missoula K – 8th grade lunches via kale chips – see page 7 for the full story.

We use our farms and gardens for the personal restoration of youth and adults. It's no secret that digging in the dirt has therapeutic value. In 2012, we enhanced our Youth Harvest program by including farm tours, public speaking, resume writing and job interview skills. Now, as we start a new season, three of last year's teens have returned as Youth Harvest Interns, learning leadership skills so they can help introduce a new group of teen farmers to this work.

It has been a good year – a year of growth, a year of connections. As a new season unfolds, Garden City Harvest is committed to grow, feed, and inspire through work that unites us with one another. You are part of this community built through agriculture. I am grateful for your interest and support. Join us this year to celebrate, work and learn on the land.

Warmly,

Jean Zosel | Executive Director

COMMUNITY GARDENS

e believe that everyone deserves a place to dig in and grow. Each of our community gardens provides participants with a 15 by 15 foot plot, tools, water, compost, straw, common space, a few starts and seeds, and the knowledge and guidance of a garden coordinator.

Our gardens are places where long-time growers and newcomers garden together, learn from each other, and share resources. Gardens reduce stress on food budgets. They teach an essential skill: how to grow our own food. Gardens mean self sufficiency, pride, and the taste of a homegrown tomato. They bring people together for potlucks and workdays.



518 PEOPLE participated in the Community Gardens Program, growing food in **290 PLOTS** at 7 COMMUNITY GARDEN LOCATIONS

74% of our gardeners were from low to moderate income households.

By growing their own produce, our gardeners SAVED AN AVERAGE OF \$19.89 PER **WEEK** on their grocery bills.

One gardener tracked what he grew in 2012. His 15 X 15 foot plot yielded **300 POUNDS** OF FOOD.

In a 2012 end-of-year survey, 99% of the community gardeners surveyed said GARDENING IMPROVED THE QUALITY OF THEIR LIVES overall.

72% of our gardeners reported participating in their community garden to know the quality and **SOURCE OF THE FOOD** on their family's plates.

68% gardened because it was **THERAPEUTIC**.

D Dickey





FARM TO SCHOOL

e believe in the delight of learning in the dirt. From science to art, farms and school gardens have much to teach us. The Farm to School program encourages youth to explore connections between food, agriculture, science and their everyday lives. We offer experiential learning opportunities at the PEAS Farm, in school gardens, and at many of our other farms and gardens. Programming includes Farm Field Trips, Little Peas Summer Camp, Farmer in the Classroom, and a complete curriculum to assist teachers and students in making their school garden come alive.

3,500 KIDS AND ADULTS visited the PEAS Farm on field trips

50 YOUTH participated in Little PEAS Summer Camps

825 STUDENTS visited their school gardens one or more times

300 SECOND-GRADERS made connections between agriculture and the food they eat through the Farmer in the Classroom program, offered once a month during the school year at five Missoula elementary schools

3,575 KIDS participated in these activities



YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

hat can be described as an at-risk youth employment program is in reality so much more. The Youth Development Program started as the Youth Harvest Project, with a handful of teens referred to Garden City Harvest by the Youth Drug Court and Human Resource Council to be employed at the PEAS Farm. Participants in Youth Harvest receive therapeutic support from our staff.

While that project still grows and thrives, three years ago we partnered with Youth Homes to start a farm behind the Tom Roy Youth Guidance Home. The Youth Farm employs teens from that youth home each summer and offers volunteer opportunities (and provides food to) all of the other Youth Homes in Missoula. Youth Harvest and the Youth Farm run the Mobile Market, selling vegetables for next to nothing farm stand style, at housing complexes for those with low incomes.





A FEW WORDS FROM TWO OF OUR YOUTH HARVEST PARTICIPANTS ABOUT THE MARKET:

"Harvesting and selling produce was meaningful because it really made me realize that I should care more about where my food comes from, and selling the produce was meaningful because I got to meet and talk to the older generation... I have learned how to talk to people more especially adults because I was not very good at talking to anyone let alone adults."

"I think some of the most [meaningful] experiences I got out of working with Youth Harvest would be getting out into my community more and doing something positive with my time instead of sitting around. All the mobile market sites were amazing. I learned so much about the things our community does to help each other out. I met a bunch of great people on the way and I found something that actually grasps my attention and that I want to learn about. I like knowing that when I showed up to the farm and the mobile market sites that I was appreciated and accepted there. It feels great knowing I did something good, and I owe it all to Garden City Harvest."

MOBILE MARKET

ach week, kids from the Youth Harvest Project and Youth Farm go to senior residences like the Missoula Manor and Silvercrest – places where the residents don't have much money and many don't have a vehicle to get around – and sell produce. They bring the farmers' market to the seniors – a luxury, a boon to their health, and a social event all in one.

They load the produce in a big red box truck, set up farmers' market style in the courtyards or parking lots of these complexes, and start selling their produce at reduced cost -- a bunch of kale for \$0.25 or bunch of carrots for \$0.50.

This is where the magic happens. These so called "troubled teens" are suddenly produce experts. They have raised these veggies from seed to start to fruiting plant. They have something in common with the seniors, many of whom grew food in their own gardens when they were young, when it was part of what you did to put food on your family's table.

It is a transformative experience, and one that builds friendships and trust between two generations.









NEIGHBORHOOD FARMS

e believe that every Missoulian should know their farm and their farmer. We believe that our farms are places for the community to converge, falling in next to each other to weed a row.

Garden City Harvest runs four neighborhood farms around Missoula. Each farm grows food with and for people in need. Garden City Harvest's neighborhood farms include the Youth Farm, Orchard Gardens, River Road, and the PEAS Farm. While each farm is unique, they all share in growing food for Missoulians in need, distributed by the Poverello Center, Missoula Food Bank, Youth Homes, and other agencies.

In addition to increasing access to whole, nutritious, local foods for those with low incomes, each farm provides anyone a way to eat seasonally and locally through our vegetable subscriptions or CSA's (Community Supported Agriculture). The customer pays upfront for a share of the vegetables the farm will produce throughout the growing season, and picks up veggies each week.

OVERVIEW

Our four neighborhood farms grew tons (literally!) of food for several local service agencies including the Missoula Food Bank, Poverello Center, Youth Homes, Watson Children's Shelter, Mountain Home, the Carole Graham Home and others.

Each farm sold CSA's, or veggie subscriptions, to supplement our work.

Total food grown from all the farms: 112,241 pounds

Total estimated meals made from that food: 56,120





ORCHARD GARDENS NEIGHBORHOOD FARM

Grew 5,286 pounds of food for the Food Bank.

2,963 pounds of produce sold at affordable prices through the Mobile Market and Orchard Gardens Farm Stand.

22 CSA members took part in the veggie subscription, yielding 6,913 pounds of veggies.

Total pounds grown: 15,162





PEAS FARM

This farm grew 12,574 pounds of food for the Food Bank.

6,203 pounds of produce were sold at affordable prices through the Mobile Market and WIC.

3,600 pounds of veggies were sold to the University of Montana Dining Services and the Western Montana Growers' Co-op.

93 CSA members took part in the veggie subscription, yielding 23,400 pounds of veggies.

Total pounds grown: 45,777





RIVER ROAD NEIGHBORHOOD **FARM**

3,000 pounds of food grown for the Poverello Center.

5,000 pounds of produce went to the Volunteer for Veggies program or was sold at affordable markets like our Mobile Market.

1,000 pounds of produce sold to the Western Montana Growers' Coop, helping diversify our income streams.

50 CSA members took part in the veggie subscription, which yielded 18,000 pounds of veggies.

Total pounds grown: 27,000



YOUTH FARM

6,152 pounds of food grown for all seven Youth Homes, the Partnership for Children, Watson Children's Shelter, Mountain Home, the Carole Graham Home, the YMCA's pre-school program, Council Groves After School program, the Poverello Center, and Missoula Aging Service's Congregate Meals.

2,625 pounds of produce went to affordable markets by way of the Mobile Market.

560 pounds of veggies were sold to other groups

38 CSA members took part in the veggie subscription, yielding 14,965 pounds of veggies.

Total pounds grown: 24,302







KIDS CRAZY FOR KALE

hiannon Cox, a kindergartener at Lowell Elementary, had a dream last spring. It happened when Jason Mandala held kale chip taste tests (kale + olive oil + salt + 350 degrees + 10 to 15 minutes) at three local public schools. The lunch staff was skeptical . . . kids liking vegetables with a little oil and salt?

The kids were screaming for more. To Jason Mandala, Garden City Harvest's Farm to School Director, whose motto is "eat more kale," the screams were music to his ears.

Apparently, kale chips taste like pop corn, potato chips, or Cheetos, depending on who you ask and how much cheese you apply.

When Rhiannon tasted the kale chips, she dreamed of sprinkling some on her spaghetti sauce that night.

The PEAS Farm planted extra rows this summer and made Rhiannon's dream come true. Every Missoula County Public School lunchroom, K through 8th grade, got PEAS Farm homegrown kale blended in their tomato sauce, in their pizza sauce, in soups and as more kale chips this school year.

The kids loved kale in all forms.

Kale is a super veggie – per calorie, it has more iron than beef, more calcium than milk, and more vitamin C than spinach. It is high in vitamins A, C, and K, as well as lutein, potassium, folic acid, and antioxidants. In other words, it is something you want your kids (and you) to eat regularly.

Kale is also known to help kids see in the dark, grow strong bones, and become superheroes.

It's also the perfect Montana vegetable. It grows here from early spring to late fall (and gets sweeter as the weather gets colder).

From plant to taste bud, from school lunch room to neighborhood farm, this project was a success story, and something we will be doing again in 2013.



FINANCIAL REPORT EXPENSE Farm to School \$60,412 Community Gardens \$46,926 Neighborhood Farms \$192,748 = \$61,971 Youth Development General Operations = \$58,760 = \$64,488 Development TOTAL EXPENSES = \$485,305 INCOME = \$33.324 Program Income \$143.570 Individual Contributions = \$141,380 = \$164,573 Grants \$2,574 Miscellaneous

TOTAL INCOME

= \$485,421





What a wonderful group. Thank you to these generous donors for joining our efforts - we have built this community together.

THANK YOU

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Those who make a commitment to give \$1,000 or more to **Garden City Harvest** for three years

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FARM TOURS Give our office a call to sign up for our first summer of monthly farm tours. Take a walk around one of our four farms, sample some veggies, draw a deep breath.







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