



Farm to School + Crops by Kids * BTMES

History of The Crops by Kids Garden

- The Crops by Kids project began in the spring of 2005. A few teachers, parents and students, with the support of Dr. Riggen and Bill Kirkland, built a raised bed garden. From there, little by little, a beautiful outdoor learning center has been set into motion across the street from the Barre Town School.
- The garden project applied for and received funds from the National Gardening Association, Home Depot, Lowe's, and other organizations. All the money raised from fundraising efforts goes towards compost, seeds, mulch, garden gloves, classroom plant lights, and other improvements.



The Crops by Kids program has expanded within the past five years to include:

- Direct garden instruction in Kindergarten through grade two.
- A widening school participation.
- Tending of the garden, as well as putting the garden to bed, by K-2 PE.
- An Open House Farmer's Market.
- A Summer Garden/Library Program.
- Participation at the Tunbridge Fair.
- Increased involvement of the Abby Group in the usage of local foods in our school lunch program.
- A Harvest Soup Contest.
- Composting.
- Classroom taste testing of healthy foods.
- Coordination with the Farm to School (F2S) Program.



Crops by Kids and F2S Highlights





Harvest Soup Contest

Students in grade 8 were asked to submit recipes for a favorite soup and were encouraged to use local ingredients. Five teams were selected for a soup “cook-off”. Selected staff and fifth grade students were judges. The top three winners were given chef aprons and featured on our local cooking show



Farmer's Market



Vegetables, gourds, pumpkins, and cornstalks harvested from our garden as well as contributions from the community were sold for the third year during our Open House.

Under the direction of Nina Hansen and chef, Kevin Otis, The Abbey Group has joined the initiative to increase the use of local and sustainable food. Using the food from our garden as well as working with the F2S program, our food service is working to serve the freshest food possible including fresh grapes from our garden!



Fresh food from our garden.

Summer Library in the Garden



Each Wednesday for the last two summers, our students and parents came to visit the library and to help in our garden to read, plant, weed, harvest, eat, and create. Families were encouraged to bring home vegetables and herbs.



This summer, five members of the “new” Farm to School Committee Nina Hansen, Susan Barnard, Sarah Chap, Ellen Sulek, and Heather Kralik attended a Farm to School Institute at Shelburne Farms for four days.

- On the fourth day, Laura Moore, Patty Meriam, Phyllis Wiggins, and Alice Worth joined us for culminating presentations.



Our charge at Shelburne Farms was to create concise and tangible goals for BTMES that would align with the F2S initiative. The F2S mission: connecting schools (K-12) and local farms with the objectives of serving healthy meals, improving student nutrition, providing agriculture, health and nutrition education opportunities, and supporting local and regional farmers.



BTMES F2S + Crops by Kids Goals

- Improve awareness and visibility of Farm to School
- Incorporate a F2S component at each grade level
- Increase funding to make F2S sustainable
- Increase local food in cafeteria to over 10%
- Expand, redesign, and move the garden

Long-Term Ideas & Goals for Future School Years:

- Create sandwich board for CBK garden for side of road
- Create “mind-map” visual connecting all aspects of F2S
- Create curriculum resources for use at Barre Town



Our endeavors can best be summarized by one word:

DIG

- Develop* *Farm to School Awareness*
- Integrate* *F2S Into the Curriculum*
- Grow* *Healthy Students*



Action plan for 2010:

- Farmer's Market and Harvest dinner at PreK-3 Open House.
- Snack Fairy.
- Course offering by FEED to develop F2S curriculum.
- Move garden, expand, and create new garden design.
- Harvest Soup Contest. Winning soup served by The Abbey Group.
- Increase amount of local / fresh food served by The Abbey Group.
- Increase awareness of food education and offer opportunities to be involved in the food process.
- Wheat to Bread unit to involve both younger / older students.
- Kindergarten to Ackerman's to plant pumpkins.
- Students to develop BTMES Farm to School logo.
- Host an Antiques Roadshow as well as investigate other funding.



