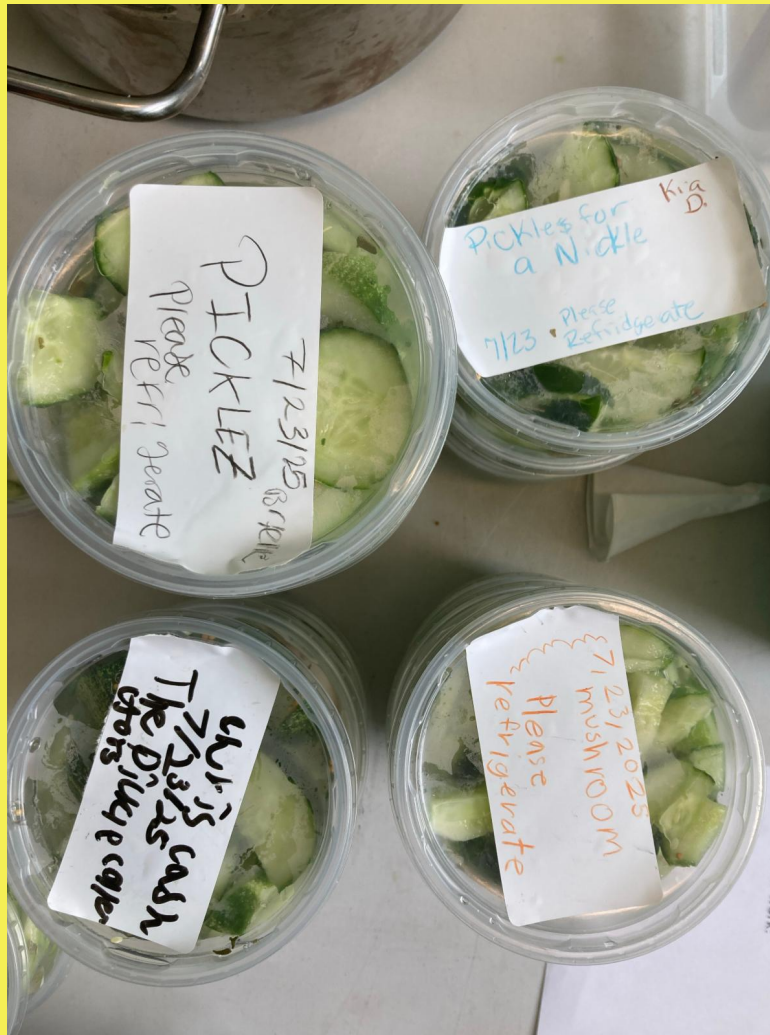


News & Updates - August 2025



Programming Update!

By: Laura Genello
Farm to School Specialist

As I'm writing this, rising 8th grade students in the Access to Algebra summer program are in the next room calculating the quantity of brine they will need to make for pickles. They'll each leave today with a pint of homemade refrigerator pickles made from cucumbers and garlic on the farm. So far this summer, we've hosted over 500 students from City Schools' summer programs on full-day field trips. This represents a different programming model from past years, in which we've run our own summer camp, and has allowed us to bring more students to the farm to experience everything this place has to offer in the

summer: tasting fresh tomatoes from the vine, digging potatoes and turning them into French Fries, catching small fish or feeding the goats. Every day, we've harvested and prepared a fresh food item from the farm, and students have enjoyed new foods and flavors such as blackberry crisp, fruit smoothies, garlic bread, and sweet corn straight from the field.

The other highlight of our summer has been watching our crew of 10 high school interns grow and learn in their roles. These students have been helping on the farm, building new garden beds and benches, maintaining trails and gardens, and learning to play a leadership role working with the younger students who visit every day. I love watching the interns take on new responsibilities and learn new skills throughout the summer. For now, though, time to sign-off so I can go teach the group of 8th graders about the business side of agriculture.



Where do all your donor dollars go?

Nancy Wiley
Friends of GKF Executive Director

Recently, I had a long-time volunteer and donor ask me what exactly Friends does with the money they raise. He had no idea that we funded all that we do, so I thought I'd share a snapshot of what Friends does to support the amazing programming at Great Kids Farm.

During the 2024/2025 school year, Friends and our donors will have funded the following crucial pieces of programming to ensure that City Schools' students are able to benefit from the district's impactful farm-to-school programs.

- *Transportation to and from the Farm for 5,883 students for an impactful day of field trip programming*
- *The Fall Good Food Summit during which the Farm hosted 139 elementary & middle school students*
- *The African American Foodways Summit, which brought 113 high school students to the Farm for a day of impactful learning*
- *The Spring Garden Summit impacted 122 elementary school students and their school garden clubs*
- *Materials and supplies for farm-to-classroom programming brought learning to the schools for 5,080 City Schools' students.*

Other programming funded by Friends include the Ag-Tivity Kits for City Schools' students in K-12, garden grants for four elementary schools, as well as the addition of electricity and plumbing to both the outdoor classroom and the barn, and the building out of the Jill Wrigley Outdoor Classroom kitchen components to make better use of the space and enable the farm-to-school specialists to incorporate cooking in the space.

This summer, with the generous support of donors, we are funding a new type of summer camp program, providing field trips for City Schools' summer camps as an enrichment program. We are employing 10 City Schools' high school students to work with students during the field trips as well as to work on the Farm, transportation for students to and from the Farm, and various materials and supplies to run the program.

Finally, we pay the Executive Director and Administrative Assistant, as well as run the non-profit itself, including an external audit, insurance, our website maintenance and payroll services.

We are a true partner to Baltimore City Public Schools' Great Kids Farm as they work to provide high-quality farm-to-school education for the district's more than 76,000 students. I hope you'll join us and become a donor today.





Friends Receives Episcopal Diocese of Maryland Reparations Grant

Friends of Great Kids Farm received a \$50,000 grant through the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland Reparations Grant program this year, partially funding busing for field trips during the 2025-2026 school year, as well as fully funding the 2026 African American Foodways Summit for Baltimore City Public School students. We are grateful and honored to be a recipient of this grant program.

Below: Reparations Grant Committee members Justin Rose (co-chair), Peter Sabonis, and The Reverend Angela E. Furlong (co-chair) visit Great Kids Farm



FRIENDS OF GREAT KIDS FARM

*Farm Fest '25
& Online Auction*



**SEPTEMBER 20, 2025
11:00-1:00**

Upcoming: GKF Farm Fest 2025 and Online Auction!

You don't want to miss our upcoming GKF Farm Fest 2025 & Online Auction! Our online auction will open on **September 10th** and close at noon on **September 20th**, during Farm Fest. Farm Fest attendees will enjoy a family friendly event, experiencing the programming of Great Kids Farm through cooking demonstrations (using fresh local ingredients and those grown right here at Great Kids Farm), tasting opportunities, an online auction and other hands-on activities. Lunch will be provided as well as lawn games, kid-friendly entertainment, and nature walks for all event attendees and Farm Family Guests. Mingle with local business leaders, educators, and community members while supporting childhood nutrition, farm-to-school education, and local agriculture!

RSVP to Farm Fest!

Donate an item to the Auction!



Farmer's Notes

*By James Koval,
Farm Manager*

This summer has been HOT, but our farm team has been doing an amazing job taking care of business. This summer, we have four farm interns: Angel, Jenna, Justin, and London. They have been such a dedicated group despite very uncomfortable weather conditions.

We first planted pumpkin and watermelons in our lower field. Those are timed up for a late September harvest when field trips have resumed. Last year, we gave out a mini pumpkin or gourd to every student during the month of October. The goal is to do that again this year.

The team also maintained all our growing spaces. We had a great potato and sweet corn harvest. Our tomatoes and peppers are finally ready to pick. And we got a plentiful crop of cucumbers.

The last main project was making a new herb garden along the driveway. This is meant to be a more exploratory space with winding paths and interesting features. As of today, this area is more than half way complete. Looking forward to seeing everything fill in by this fall!





Visit us online!

Help us continue to fund impactful programming! - DONATE

The Great Kids Farm Beet

- FREE Farm Family Hours at Great Kids Farm: Save the date for our first open house of the 2025-2026 school year: Sat, Sept 20, 10am-2pm. All families of City Schools staff and students are welcome to come explore our farm (take home produce, meet our animals, and walk our trails). Optional registration @ <http://Bit.ly/GKffamilies>.
- FOR EDUCATORS: Sign-up forms for FREE field trips, Farm to Classroom experiences, Facetime the Farmer sessions, and more, will be live in mid-August. Please make your requests early to secure your spot! Links for all forms are at <https://www.baltimorecityschools.org/page/farm-school>.

All Farm to School offerings are listed at www.baltimorecityschools.org/page/farm-school.
General Farm to School email is farms@bcps.k12.md.us.

Check out the [Great Kids Farm Annual Report 2023-24](#) to see everything we did last year!

Follow us on social media!

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