

News & Updates - March 2025

Friends  of
GREAT KIDS FARM



Tower garden greens.

Great Kids Farm Programming Update

By Laura Genello,

Farm to School Specialist

It's finally spring and it feels like it at Great Kids Farm. Tulips and daffodils are popping up, radishes have sprouted, and the farm is full of students. This spring we're hosting field trips every day of the week, and have introduced some new activities to our field trip stations. In addition to the planting, tasting, and animal-focused activities that are staples of a visit to Great Kids Farm, students have made herbed cream cheese spreads, used maps to find hidden treasure in the woods, and harvested and tasted hydroponic greens from our tower garden. Classroom lessons are continuing at schools throughout the district this spring with students trying their hand at making bruschetta, or adding a healthy twist to easy meals like pizza. This year, our FoodCorps team members have also been conducting 10-part lesson series at four partner schools throughout the district connecting farm to school topics to lessons in social studies or science. Finally, we're also busy preparing for our spring garden summit on April 9th that will host students from 12 schools throughout the district.



Choose To Become A Recurring Donor!

The future of farm-to-school education belongs with you. You can make a huge impact by becoming a recurring donor. Over the course of a year, just \$5.00 a month will cover the cost of an Ag-tivity kit for a City Schools' teacher and their classroom full of students. \$30 a month will pay for a busload full of students to visit the Farm for a field trip, a summit, or a Farm Family Hours event. Every

dollar counts and yours could impact City Schools' students starting today. [Donate here](#) and check the recurring donor box to make your gift the most impactful.

"Supporting programming that exposes kids to nutritious food and the natural world is really important to me, and that is why I choose to be a monthly donor to Friends of Great Kids Farm." - Blake Wrigley (Recurring Donor)



Free Milkweed for Schools and Nonprofits!

[Milkweeds for Schools & Nonprofits](#)

Deadline: Waiting list open

Award Amount: Flat of 32 milkweed plugs

If your school or non-profit educational organization is interested in pollinator conservation, Monarch Watch can help you create a habitat for monarchs and pollinators. Qualifying organizations can receive [a free flat of 32 milkweed plugs](#) as well as guidance on how to create a new habitat or enhance an existing garden. Free milkweeds are awarded in the order that applications are received so submit early!

Eligibility at a glance: School, nonprofit, and community orgs in the breeding range of the eastern and western monarch butterfly with the exception of the Rocky Mountains and the Desert Southwest

Farmer's Notes

*By James Koval,
Farm Manager*

Spring is obviously the most exciting time on the farm. It is so great to see all the plants reawaken and also begin their journeys from seed. Our strawberry plants are in their second year and should be providing a wonderful harvest for field trip tastings



and in-school programs. The garlic that was planted by students last fall is popping up through the ground. It will need another few months to fully develop and be ready for harvest.

Moving indoors, it is now time to start the majority of seeds for the year in our greenhouses. We will continue to offer thousands of seedlings to school staff for classroom and garden usage. Seedlings are also used on our field trips for planting rotations. The goal this year is to get plants in the ground earlier so we can have a larger harvest earlier in the season for our summer programs. While we always grow such variety of plants, the favorites continue to be watermelons, tomatoes, and sweet peppers. We are

a long way away from those fruits. The seeds have only just germinated!





Visit us online!

Help us continue to fund impactful programming! - DONATE

The Great Kids Farm Beet

Spring & Summer FREE Farm Family Hours: Save these dates for opportunities for all City Schools staff and students to enjoy Great Kids Farm with family and friends! Come for hands-on activities and to explore our greenhouses, fields, barn, and woods at your own pace! If you'd like to attend and receive a reminder email closer to the events, submit our brief event interest form [HERE!](#)

- Sat, 5/3, 10am-2pm
- Thurs, 6/26, 10am-2pm

In-Person Programs

- [Farm to Classroom Experience](#) (pre-K-12): Sign-up today for a classroom

cooking lesson, planting program, or Garden Party (healthy eating lesson). We'll bring the farm to your school for engaging, hands-on workshops for all ages.

- [Field trips to Great Kids Farm \(K-5\)](#): Sign up for Spring 2025 ASAP, only a handful of spots remain open! Free curriculum-aligned, hands-on learning with plants, animals, and land at the farm (K-5) - 1 per school per year.
- **Student Summits**: We offer four annual summits: full-day events featuring hands-on workshops bringing together students from many schools. Applications will open 1-2 months before each summit, but our [Summit Interest Form](#) is always live for teachers interested in updates for future summits.
- **Upcoming events**:
- Spring Garden Club Summit (gr 2-5) - 4/9/25 - [Apply now through March 3](#).
- High school internship program & service-learning opportunities, [email us](#).
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Virtual & Materials-Based Programs

- [Ag-tivity Kits \(PreK-12\)](#): Materials and teacher resource pack to link classroom learning with hands-on experiences, including Aquaponics Kit, Microgreens Kit, Mushroom Kit, Indoor Herb Garden Kit, Worms Are Wonderful Compost Kit
- [Facetime the Farmer \(PreK-12\)](#): Live (virtual) visit to GKF tailored by age group and focus area
- **Video Resources**: [Science-curriculum-aligned videos](#) and [introductory farm clips](#)

School Garden Support

- Questions about planting at your school? Request support through our [School Garden Support Request Form](#), and submit [Seeds and Seedlings Interest Form](#) for announcements about seed and seedling giveaways in the Spring.
- Check out our [School Garden Toolkit](#) for resources and tips.

For guidance on outdoor learning and food education, review the below and email us with additional questions.

- [Outdoor Learning Toolkit](#)
- [Classroom Cooking Toolkit](#)

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!

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