

Farm to School Program

KODIAK AREA NATIVE ASSOCIATION

JULY 2024



IMPLEMENTATION GRANT UPDATE

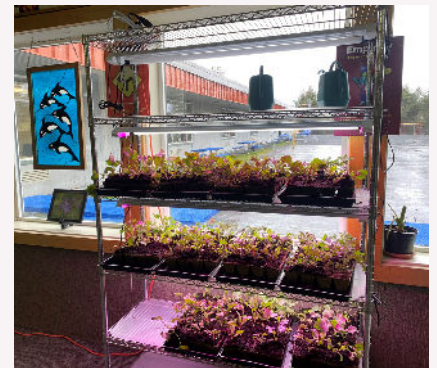
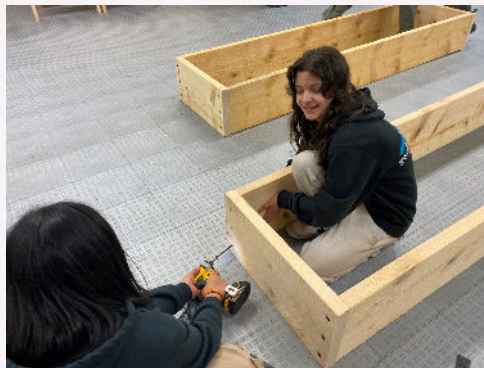
Kodiak Area Native Association was awarded a Farm to School Implementation Grant by the USDA Food and Nutrition Services that will run through June 2025. One of the primary goals of Farm to School is to enhance agriculture and nutrition education at schools throughout the school district. Another is to build transactional and lasting relationships between local food producers and the school district to increase the amount of regionally produced fresh food in school meals. We are approaching the halfway mark on this two-year initiative with lots of projects in the works.



KMS AGRICULTURE UPDATES

The KMS Agriculture program's students successfully grew lettuce, peppers, celery, and cucumbers using innovative hydroponic methods. Their endeavors resulted in thriving crops that have supplied multiple Farm-to-School taste tests this winter which were enjoyed by both KMS students and staff. Student-grown greens also supported the Kodiak High School Culinary Arts class with students incorporating freshly harvested salad greens into their culinary creation of chef salads. Providing opportunities for students to use and enjoy these farm-fresh veggies promotes healthy eating habits. It also provides opportunities for students to reflect on the journey food takes from farm to table, reinforcing the value of **locally sourced food**.

Beyond hydroponics, students demonstrated their resilience by building raised beds in sub-freezing conditions, and experimented with growing winter spinach and miners lettuce in January. Students planted a diversity of seeds in preparation for the annual KMS spring plant sale. Amanda Johnson wanted to extend a BIG thanks for the community for helping make that fundraiser a great success. Students finished the year by planting out the KMS greenhouses and new raised beds with cold-weather crops, hot-house crops, berry bushes, and new grape vines and fruit trees with support from KANA's Farm to School program.



KIBSD AWARDED FARM TO SCHOOL MINI-GRANT

With support from KANA's Farm to School Coordinator, KIBSD was awarded a Farm to School Mini-Grant through the State of Alaska that has funded the revitalization of school gardens at Peterson, East, and North Star Elementary schools. This grant facilitated the purchased material needed to rejuvenate our school garden spaces

facilitated the purchased material needed to rejuvenate our school garden spaces with the help of school PTA volunteers, and the KMS Industrial Arts class. Through this effort, students at these schools learned more about where their food comes from and gained hands-on experience planting seeds and transplanting starts. With a focus on cultivating carrots, kale, snap peas, and Swiss chard our students are learning valuable gardening skills and fostering school pride as they revitalize their school garden sites. Participants look forward to the joy of harvesting their crops in the Fall with plans to snack fresh veggies in classrooms to complete the circle from seed to table. Summer harvests will support the KIBSD Summer Foods Program, and will be available to the public at Kodiak Food Harvest Co-Op.

KIBSD GARDEN AGRICULTURE INTERNSHIP

A fruitful collaboration is underway between KANA, Kodiak Island Borough School District (KIBSD), Kodiak Soil and Water Conservation District (KSWCD), Koniag, and Kodiak Harvest Food Co-Op (KHFC) to pilot a KIBSD Gardens Agriculture Internship program focused on caring for school gardens over the summer months. Through KANA's Workforce Development's Supplemental Youth Employment Training Program (SYETP), five youths will be employed to maintain six school garden sites across the community. With technical assistance provided by KSWCD's agriculture outreach specialist Ian Zacher, the KIBSD Garden Interns will engage in work-based learning while caring for new and existing gardens. They will facilitate summer harvest from gardens to support the KIBSD Summer Meals program and ensure that students who planted their school gardens will harvest the veggies they planted. This pilot project promises to build both the skill sets and work readiness of participants.

It is also instrumental in ensuring the success and sustainability of our school gardens. KANA's Farm to School Coordinator is grateful for everyone who has come together to launch this initiative.



PETERSON ELEMENTARY GARDEN BED RELOCATION

In a remarkable collaboration between the Kodiak Island Borough School District (KIBSD), Island Trails Network (ITN), and the Kodiak Area Native Association's (KANA) Farm to School program, a problematic garden bed at Peterson Elementary School has been successfully relocated. On a chilly Saturday, KIBSD facilities personnel and equipment, alongside ITN's equipment and dedicated volunteers, joined forces with KANA's Farm to School coordinator to tackle the task. Together, they moved soil and wood, salvaging heavy timbers for future ITN trail projects while repurposing the soil to support the KIBSD's school garden revitalization project. This collaborative effort stands as a shining example of community engagement and problem-solving.

CONNECT WITH US

If you have interest in supporting future Farm to School activities reach out to:



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