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# The Food Literacy Project

## Hands in the Dirt, Hearts in the Work: Meet the 2025 Spring YCAP Crew



The Youth Community Agriculture Program (YCAP) is back in action for Spring 2025, and this season's crew is already making a big impact at the farm! There are 9 crew members this season, including 7 returning alumni and 2 new crew members. Returning crew members are an integral part of the Food Literacy Project's work, bringing essential experience, knowledge, and dedication to every task. They mentor new YCAP crew members and motivate one another to grow each season. Since the beginning of March, the crew has harvested fresh kale, carrots, and green garlic; seeded and watered flats; prepped and weeded beds for new plantings; and installed a rain barrel system to conserve water. They've also been

In addition to their work in the fields, the crew has been supporting Field-to-Fork Clubs at our partner schools by sharing their skills and providing leadership to younger students through mentorship and hands-on learning. Their dedication, teamwork, and passion for growing food and connecting with community are already making this a season to remember.

YCAP is more than a farm job. It's a transformative experience for youth to activate their power by learning job skills, connecting with community members and local businesses, and exploring leadership opportunities to build a more vibrant community. From public speaking to teamwork to environmental stewardship, YCAP equips young people with tools that support their growth on and off the farm. We can't wait to see all that the crew accomplishes this season! Stay up-to-date with all the growth happening at the farm by following our social media channels on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).



Awad "Cabbage" (left) and Jericho "Juniper" (right)





Kai "Kiwi" (left) and Khalid "Kale" (right)



Malik "Mango" (left) and Mariam "Mango" (right)



Reese "Radish"

YCAP crew member not pictured above: Trinity "Tomato", Alexa (farm name pending)

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## Spring, Seeds & Steeping Tea: A Beautiful Start to Community Days at the Farm



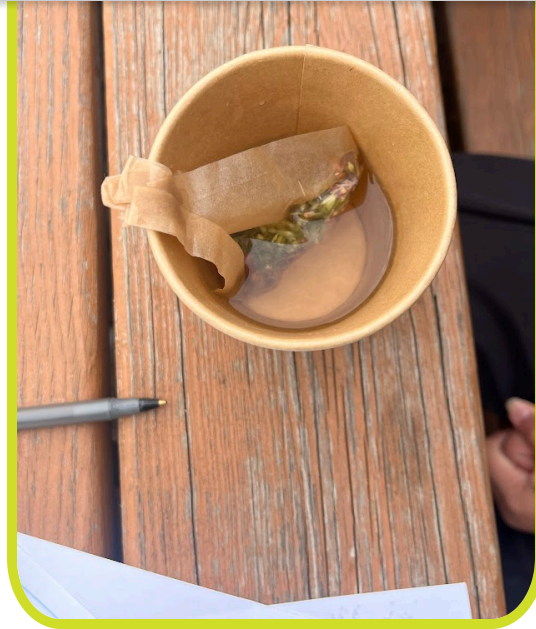


We kicked off the first Community Day at the farm of 2025 in March with sunshine, smiling faces, and so much generosity from community members. Thank you to everyone who joined us at the farm to dig in, lend a hand, and build deeper connections with the land and each other.

Volunteers packed and labeled seed packets (complete with gorgeous, hand-drawn artwork!) to share at future events, helping us spread the joy of growing food far beyond the farm gates. Seedlings got some extra love and water thanks to the helping hands of guests, and our low tunnel greenhouse is thriving because of it! One of the highlights of the day was an herbal tea blending workshop led by Volunteer Coordinator, Cayla “Chamomile.” Participants learned about the healing properties of common herbs and had the chance to create their own custom tea blends to enjoy at the farm after a hard days' work.







The energy, enthusiasm, and care brought to the day reminded us just how special these gatherings are. Community Days at the Farm are a chance to learn, share, and give back together.

**Mark your calendars:** Community Days will continue on the **last Saturday of every month** through the growing season. Check out our [website calendar](#) to plan ahead and check out all future Community Days. We can't wait to welcome you back to the farm for more connection, discovery, and growth.

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## What's New in Field-to-Fork Club? Learning, Leadership, and Local Food





Since the start of March, Field-to-Fork Club has been buzzing with energy, creativity, and some seriously delicious meals. Students across our partner schools rolled up their sleeves to cook, taste, create, and learn in ways that connect them to their food, their community, and each other.

From the cutting board to the crafting table, Field-to-Fork Club offers a full array of hands-on activities. So far this spring, students learned how to make healthy ranch dip, farm-fresh potato soup, honey glazed stove-top carrots, sweet potato fries and green garlic and kale pesto pasta. Using farm-fresh ingredients from the Food Literacy Project Farm and local farms like Valley Spirit Farm, students created some truly delicious meals that they can share and cook at home with their friends and family members. Here are some of the reviews we heard about the kale pesto pasta (a F2F favorite) - *"This was out of this world,"* and *"Delightful!"* One student reflected, *"I learned you can make pesto out of pretty much any green leaf."*





Alongside the cooking component of Field-to-Fork Club, students delve into an educational topic usually rooted in gardening, healthy food choices or environmental stewardship. Both partner schools tend to a school garden bed where seeds have been planted and have already started to germinate. Other topics students have learned about this season include making nature journals and learning what a garden needs to grow, making a colorful banner about what they are grateful for, participating in a spring scavenger hunt and making a spring altar as an ode to the start of a new season, and reducing food waste by finding creative ways to use aging ingredients. By combining nature, art, and cooking in the club, students can expand their knowledge on topics through play and creativity, building confidence and deepening their relationship with fresh, whole foods.



What makes Field-to-Fork Club truly special is the way it goes beyond the club meeting each week. Students bring the lessons learned in the club home, sharing recipes, cooking skills, and new favorite foods with their families. When combined with the leadership and heart of the YCAP crew who help to guide young students each week, intergenerational learning flourishes. Their presence helps younger students feel seen, valued, and inspired — and watching youth lead youth is a reminder that leadership isn't taught, it's shared. The ripple effect of Field-to-Fork is clear: it nurtures not just knowledge, but connection.

Together, students, the YCAP crew, families, and educators are growing something bigger than a school garden. They're growing a movement toward food justice, lifelong wellness, and a more connected community — one snack, seed, and smile at a time.

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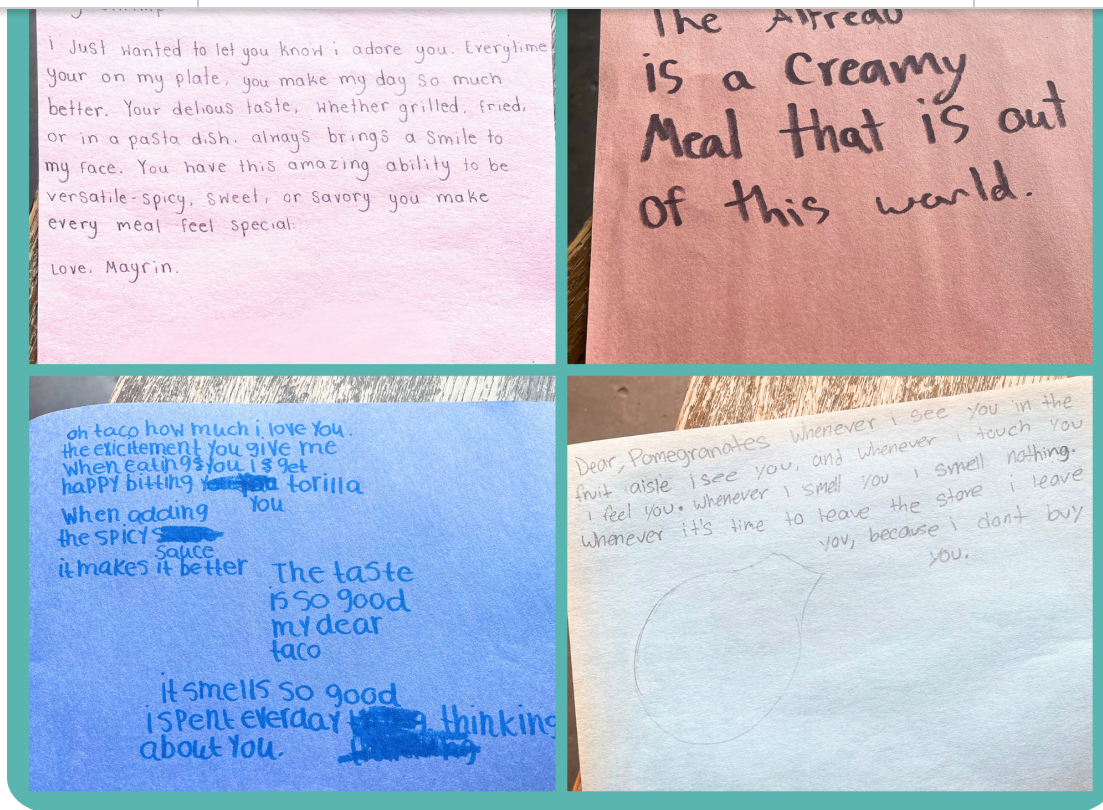
## From Harlem Grown to Homegrown: Stories that Stick and Recipes that Stay





This spring, we've been celebrating the many ways food connects us through our new program, Food Stories. By combining storytelling with tailored farm-fresh recipes, students of all ages are reminded that food can nourish more than our bodies — it brings people and communities together across generations and cultures. At one of our partner schools, students prepared a kale apple salad with homemade honey mustard dressing and one student proudly declared, *"I'm showing my mom this recipe when I get home!"* This recipe was inspired by the book *Harlem Grown* by Tony Hillery, all about a lush garden in New York City growing in an unexpected place — an abandoned lot. After reading this story, students reflected on the power of community gardens and created their own recipe cards to take home — building food knowledge while honoring the value of trying something new.





At an earlier Food Stories session at the Backside Learning Center, students celebrated love on Valentine's Day in the most delicious way — by writing odes to their favorite foods. From savory to sweet, their words were filled with imagination and heart. These moments of creativity and storytelling speak to the deeper impact of learning about food by building confidence, cultivating connection, and empowering individuals to see food as a source of strength, pride, and cultural expression.

If you are a school, community program coordinator, or teacher interested in a Food Stories session with The Food Literacy Project, please reach out to Arabella at [arabella@foodliteracyproject.org](mailto:arabella@foodliteracyproject.org) and click the button below to find out more about the program.

Food Stories

## Grow with Us: Volunteer at the Farm!

Are you looking for opportunities to volunteer with the Food Literacy Project? We are always in need of volunteers - stay tuned for Spring volunteer activities at the farm, with Field-to-Fork Club and more!

## Donate

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The Food Literacy Project invites young people to leverage their power to cultivate health, justice, and sovereignty through a sustainable community food system.

This work is only possible with contributed support from our community.



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