

Feed the Hungry Project Plants the Seeds!

An idea is planted, germinates, and grows to become much more than anyone ever thought!

This is the plan for the “Feed the Hungry” Project that the Middleburgh Elementary School’s third grade students in Ms. Hoos, Ms. Kenyan, and Ms. Indelicato’s classes will be carrying out. The students have planted their winter squash, will nurture the seeds, and experience the full growing season. They will then harvest their crop and make a donation to the (or local Food Pantry), plus learn about creating delicious vegetable dishes from their squash, as well as the nutritional concepts for a healthy diet.

The program mission is to expand students’ knowledge of the agricultural food and fiber system, broaden their understanding that good nutrition comes from the soil, providing healthy food, as well as an understanding of community and social service. All of this captures the essence of the program.

These Middleburgh Elementary students are the pioneers of this program for their school. Their “farmer” is Sarah Hooper from Barber’s Farm, located in Middleburgh. The involvement by Heather Prokop, the District 9 New York Farm Bureau Promotion & Education Representative, brings a helping hand to the project. Photos depicting the growth of the squash will be posted on several websites, which will bring a continual visual to the students and community on the progress of their squash.

Sarah and Heather met with the class to “sow the seeds”. Each student was given an ID stick that will be transplanted with the seedling as it grows to maturity so they will be able to identify their very own plant. The students were treated to the delightful lesson as they planted.

This fall the students will return to the farm market for the harvest. The Food Bank will be presented with the bounty of that harvest.

Some squash will be brought to the school so the students can work with their school food service director to learn about how their squash might be used in the school lunch menu, plus a bit of nutritional education. An opportunity to prepare, taste, and share with their fellow students as the final chapter has served as a new beginning to taste and grow for many who have completed this project.

This program does many things, including an awareness of the interface between community, school and agriculture, inter-disciplinary learning through agriculture, career opportunities, nutrition, volunteerism, community pride, and connects a “garden” to the food supply for the general public.

This is a program that truly “works” for the community, education and agriculture. The seed planting session was attended by Vicki Hoerz, representing the Board of Education, and Michele Weaver, MCS Superintendent.

Pictures Attached
May 31, 2017
Sandie Prokop