

Apples for Gardens

Some youth struggle to sit still in the classroom. But in the garden, they feel at home, with dirt at their feet, sky overhead and a shovel in hand. That's why BriarPatch is raising money for local schools through the Apple For Gardens Program. Each month, we donate 10 cents for every pound of apples sold.

At Lyman Gilmore Middle School, Brianna Abundiz has served as Sierra Harvest's Farm to School Liaison for the past three years (six years at Scotten Elementary before that!) She teaches kids about soil, builds compost, saves seeds, sells veggies at the garden cart, finds donations and recruits parent volunteers. She spins gold from a shoestring budget - turning food waste from area farms and the school lunch program into a school garden that nourishes more than just the belly.

She admits it's been a challenging year with COVID, but walking the garden with her daughter Bella. there are signs of life everywhere. Cabbage, pumpkins, dahlias, borage, kale, a few late blooming flowers, the last of summer peppers and tomatoes. Straw bales serve as benches in this outdoor classroom under the Ponderosa pines.

"The first thing we need money for is the program itself," said Farmer Bri, who is taking a year off to stay home with her family. The garden needs to raise at least \$2 per student (there are 568) in order to keep the program afloat. You can help! Every time you buy apples at BriarPatch.

This month, it's apple pie season. Why not bake an extra pie, or stack of apple hotcakes or a batch of applesauce this November knowing that proceeds will benefit a school garden in your community?

