

Detroit Public Schools Garden to Cafeteria Program Transcript

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Zaundra Wimberley: This is Drew Farms. Drew Transition Center is a school for cognitively impaired adults whereby they obtain life skills and one of the life skills that we come in and offer as a partner is the skill of being able to work on a farm and learn about urban agriculture. And what you're seeing here is two acres of non-GMO corn that we planted, harvested and entered into the food service program through the Office of School Nutrition.

Betti Wiggins: The corn is one of the most-- something that we're very, very proud of. When we started developing this garden here, our extension partners told us that it was probably the largest open field garden in the city of Detroit and so you know, as we were developing it we decided to do just one crop, so the crop that we done with their help and through their guidance and with the help of our staff here is sweet corn. But out of this field, we have serviced probably 16,000 meals the first corn cutting, harvesting and then the second one we're probably going to add another 14, 15,000. So we're probably going to do 30,000 meals or 50 DPS Schools with our own home grown, locally processed sweet corn.

Wimberley: The Farm and Garden Program consists of Drew Farms. We have 76 school gardens throughout the city of Detroit whereby we-- each garden has six raised beds and in those raised beds teachers are able to grow in three of the beds whatever they desire. We provide seeds and transplants and in the additional three beds, we grow what is known as the DPS Stop Light Salad which is cherry tomatoes, green zucchini and yellow squash.

Christine Quane: We've been an integral partner in the garden collaborative, pulling all those partners together. We have also worked very hard with DPS to get more farm fresh produce into their schools and we're just working together to increase the variety and the scope of farmers coming, bringing their produce into the schools.

Wimberley: In five years, I would like to know that every student within the Detroit Public School System, within the Detroit School System, understands that a fresh fruit, a vegetable is a snack and that they are beginning to make choices away from processed, unhealthy foods to the healthy foods. So that they understand how it affects their bodies and why it's important. They've tried it enough to know that it actually tastes good and that it's a great alternative to what they may think now is a snack.

Wiggins: I know in five years we will be sustainable. That is our major goal right now. Five years of being sustainable and I do believe in five years, you will see more local produce on my kids' trays not just monthly because as we build in capacity and we build in awareness, I



think the program is going to grow. It's going to stay because it's here for the right reason; to improve access to healthy fresh fruit and for our kids.

Wimberley: We had 65 students that we hired for the summer and I heard a student say: "I now have respect for farmers." So it's not whatever they thought farming was. They have a respect for where their food comes from and for the person who grows the food, so that was the coolest thing that I heard.

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