

Food and Agriculture Development Centers: Ravalli County Farm to School Summer Camp Success Story

The Project: The Hamilton School District Farm to School Team (HSD F2S Team) is taking creative approaches to agriculture education. The HSD F2S Team spent two years revitalizing the school garden and putting in an outdoor classroom located at Daly Elementary. The Team was excited about the outdoor classroom, encouraging classes and student groups to use the space. One group that was enthusiastic about the garden and outdoor classroom was HSD's summer program, Keystone.

In 2024, Ravalli County Economic Development Authority Food and Ag Development Center (RCEDA FADC), a member of the HSD F2S Team, introduced the Bitterroot Conservation District (BCD) and Montana Farmers Union (MFU) to Keystone. Both BCD and MFU were interested in teaching students about conservation and agriculture.

The collaboration, facilitated by RCEDA FADC, led to 60 students experiencing summer agricultural programming. The hands-on lessons provided by BCD and MFU were taught in the school garden and focused on the importance of agriculture, learning about vegetables and flowers, and pollinators. During the first lesson, less than 25% of the students could define agriculture. By the end of the third lesson, students knew about the importance of agriculture in Montana.

For more information:

Ravalli County Economic Development Authority – Grace Nichols, 406-962-3914, grace@rceda.org