



What is Bear Canyon Farm?

Bear Canyon Farm is a non-profit farm on the Mount Ellis Academy campus. It is led by a board of directors and currently operated by Eric Harris. For those who have not yet heard about this project: Bear Canyon Farm exists to provide employment and hands on learning opportunities for students at Mount Ellis Academy, and to deliver healthy, fresh, local produce to the community. Our goal is to equip students with practical skills and unique agricultural knowledge—preparing them to be reliable, responsible employees and volunteers in their communities and in the world.

The farm was formed for the benefit of MEA and MEE by creating outdoor learning opportunities right in their backyard. As our society shifts away from agriculture as a way of life, this element of education is not as readily available as it once was. We hope each students' exposure to the farm will inspire and spark an interest in agriculture in some way. In addition, we know through the Bible and pen of inspiration how important the study of nature is for the student in all subjects and for all ages. We want to make learning in nature easily accessible to all classes and inspire each student to connect with God through His creation. God planted the first garden and placed man there, we want to be a part of continuing His vision.

FAQ

What are the donations used for?

100% of your donations are used for operation expenses such as: seeds, plants, irrigation equipment, fuel and student labor. Once the farm is selling produce and making a profit, then it will begin supporting a farm manager. Currently all labor is volunteer with the exception of students.

Can I have a tour?

For those who will be here Sunday morning and would like to be shown around, we will be giving a brief tour of the farm starting at 10:00 am. We will meet outside the cafeteria.

Contact us

Feel free to contact us with any questions, or if you just have something to share!

Email: bearcanyonfarm@gmail.com

Website: bearcanyonfarm.com

Phone: (406) 750-1367

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facebook.com/bearcanyonfarm

God's Providence:

As some of you may know, this past winter we re-applied for the Growth Through Agriculture Grant, which is a \$50,000 1-to-1 matching grant. Unfortunately, we did not receive any grant funding on our second and final attempt. Although this was disappointing, we know God is still leading in this project and will continue to provide as we move forward—according to His will and in His time. In fact, after getting notice from the GTA board that we did not receive funding, we had been praying for God's direction when we were contacted by a former Montana pastor who is now located in Canada. An Adventist school in BC has been expanding a honey berry (aka Haskaps) orchard and he wanted to tell MEA about the potential of such a crop. We spoke to the principal of the school and after further research and prayer, it seemed the phone call was providential in both timing and direction. We are excited that we will be establishing a small honey berry orchard this summer. Since we are focusing on growing fruits, this crop will fit right in—especially with its cold hardy characteristics.

Hoophouses

The two 30x100ft hoop house frames were erected last fall. They were reinforced before winter and stood the snow load well with occasional clearing until early March. As Eric was making his way through the endless deep blanket of snow with MEA's snowblower, one of the hoop houses began to collapse as things began to warm up on that sunny March day. The supports down the center busted and nearly half of the bows were bent on one side. Only hours sooner and the whole thing could have been saved! However discouraging this event has been, we know God is still in control. The devil tries all kinds of ways to get us down and has been working mighty hard to inhibit progress for the project. He has used illness, destruction and disappointments to name just a few, but we remember each day that God is bigger and will see us all through anything that comes along in our lives!



What's growing this season?

This spring we are starting the season by expanding the orchard with a variety of cold hardy fruit trees, approximately 125, as well as 90 other trees and hazelburt bushes for an orchard windbreak. We will also expand the raspberry and rhubarb patches. The honeyberry orchard will be our big project this year. The 750 plants will arrive in June, be babied through the summer and transplanted in September. The patch will cover approximately half an acre. We also planted 50 lbs of garlic last fall and it is exciting to see it starting to sprout as the snow is slowly melting away this spring!

Class involvement

We had a great time last summer with a visit from a group of MEE students for their summer school program. We gave them a tour of the farm and talked about some basic gardening topics. In the fall, the pre-K/K class had a ball harvesting onions and picking one out to take home. They have been our best helpers by far, harvesting a 150 ft bed of onions in 20 minutes flat! Their energy and enthusiasm was fun to watch.

Various MEA math and science classes joined us in the garden last fall, as well. The biology class looked at a couple plant deficiency problems, a math class helped pull plastic over one hoop house and the geometry class measured a hoop house for volume calculations and plastic covering needs. We eagerly anticipate providing more classroom application opportunities in the future.



How can
I help?

Support

We would appreciate your prayers as we continue to move forward with various farm projects.

Volunteers

We can always use help with various projects such as planting, building and regular maintenance.

Donations

If you would like to make a tax deductible contribution, please make checks out to:

Bear Canyon Farm
3271 Bozeman Trail Rd.,
Bozeman, MT 59715

You can also make donations online at
bearcanyonfarm.com