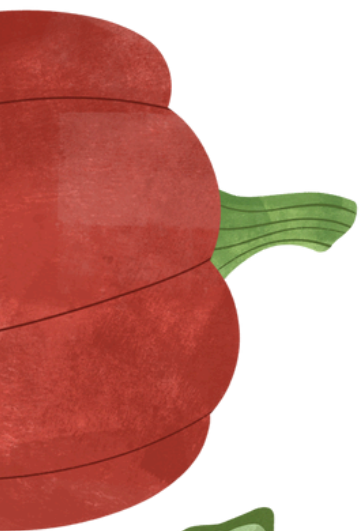




Poetry on the Farm

A collection of original
poems about farming, food,
and nature by members of
the **Gaining Ground**
community.





About Gaining Ground

Gaining Ground is a nonprofit, no-till farm in Concord, Mass., that grows food exclusively for hunger relief. We donate everything we harvest, year-round, to food assistance programs in Boston, Lowell, and the MetroWest.

Our mission is to provide free, sustainably-grown, fresh organic produce to people experiencing food insecurity. We do this with the helping hands of a diverse community of volunteers who work and learn with us on our farm.

www.gainingground.org
(978) 610-6086



*The Fifth Annual
Poetry on the Farm
exhibit is open April
18 to June 15, from
8 AM to 3:30 PM, at
341 Virginia Road,
Concord, MA 02150.*



This Year's Poets

Weight-bearing by Anonymous
Comfort Place by Rahimah Adan
Late September by Michael Ansara
Spring Morning by Michael Ansara
Our Times by Michael Ansara
I follow the tangle and the tendril by
Louise Berliner
*The Seasons: Fall, Winter, Spring and
Summer* by Bonnie Gangi
Prayer for My Son by Liza Halley
Woodpecker at Egg Rock by Terry House
On Finding My Joy at the Farm by Polly
Keller Vanasse
Stead Wild by Jay Kemp
Music by Sean Leclair

The Field by Sean Leclair
GG by John Lee
How can I ... by Bill Loehfelm
Bloom and Grow by Traci Neal
no, my fridge isn't haunted by Aparna Paul
menu from tonight's dinner party by
Aparna Paul
Chicken of the Woods by Carla Schwartz
The Sad Ballad of the Garlic Mustard by
Carla Schwartz
the goose by Alexandra Toto
Mulberry Prayer by Laura Veligor
Sewing and Sowing by Jyalu Wu





This Year's Poets

Concord Public School, 7th grade

Nature Writing Enrichment

When Spring Comes by Sophie Allison,
Natalie Carroll, Reese Hudner, Isabel
Martin, Eva Smith, Nifemi Oladapo,
Laura Regis, Eva Smith, Caroline
Trafton

Fayerweather Street School, Perkins and Cali 5th/6th Grades

When I Think of a Farm by Zac Branca
Belief by Kairee Cayetano
I am a Farmer by Antonia Fera-Stein
*Look Up or Look Down, You're Seeing
Nature Either Way* by Elan Hersh
The Farm Fire by Bea Koelzer
Grow, Grow, Grow by Maddy Mack

***Four Poems for the Farm* by Amo Pardo**

Everyone stares by Willow Peach

One With the Farm by Nate Ravenel

Full by Eve Stephens

Tenacre Country Day School Richards, 6th Grade

Muddy Hands, Big Smiles by Mackenzie
Auguste

Feeding Chocolate by Krishen Banerjee

Gaining Ground Spirit by Addison
Carlson

Carrots by Asata Cineus

Carrots by Julia Consigli

Carrots by Cole Costin

Spring is in the air by Isla Epstein





This Year's Poets

Spring by Aidan Gagne

Carrot Harvesting by Ella Gordon

Spring by Peter Helm

Nature's Recipe for Success by Lana Herron

The Flowing River by Andy Jin

Small Seed, Big Dreams by Olivia Gladding Lane

A New Beginning by Ali Martin

Sun by Margot Marx

On the Farm by Will Moore

Picking green beans by Edward O'Neill

Come On Cows by Lily Reece

Gaining Ground by Ellie Reynolds

Spring, Sprung by Sage Roper

Collecting Carrots by Nicholas Salguero

Gaining Ground by Juliet Scheyer

Carrot by Grady Steeves

The Life of Nature by Mia Thorpe

Seed To Stalk by Tiernan Yieh



Woodpecker at Egg Rock

Terry House

for Liz Paley

Weirdly warm weather, the
newscast had said - and it was.
When we walked to Egg Rock that
November morning, we waded,
ankle-deep, through a complaint
of clacking leaves, you in shorts,
Assabet-side, and I in sandals, the
Sudbury ahead, to my right,
a glimpse of silver below the thicket.
Above us, a vee of geese stitched
across a cloud.
We talked of politics, the heat; of
Thanksgiving plans; of the men
we loved when we were young.
Nothing's the same as it was, I said.
You shrugged and pointed to a
darting flash among the maples, its
red crest aflame in the sun.

Chicken of the Woods

Carla Schwartz

Every year I could count on you maybe multiple times, depending on conditions. I'd go searching into the heart of the raspberries, the honey locust stump, six feet high, your host. Usually in September or October I'd go diving with a knife to find your bright orange and yellow folds. How you brought a smile to my face. And then the work, unexpected for that day, the collecting into a large bag of the ears I'd cut, the cleaning out of the little black beetles speckled within, the slicing and sautéing with garlic and oil. Then eating. Then savoring. Then the stowing away of the rest for another day. Every year, my dependable friend. Every year. Until I moved away.

a gatherer's dream
new ears on the old stump
waking alone

First appeared in MacQueen's Quinterly, MacQ-27, 24 March, 2025

Late September

Michael Ansara

It is hard to think of leaving
this place of light,
Dust sifting gold
The light, shaken honey.
Each wall, a stone story
In the garden, bold tarragon;
Sage, bee-blossoming,
scented; remains of rosemary.
An orchard finally
fruiting, ready to let slip
ripened spheres,
Bountiful after barren years:
Plums, peaches, pears,
Plump, sweet.
Everything
There for the taking.

Spring Morning 2021

Michael Ansara

The spring sprung brook
Gurgled and burbled.
The lichen licked stone walls
Stood silent, steadfast.
The slender birches swayed,
Staying bent and bowed.
My two dogs released,
Ran and romped.
All as it always was.

All was as it always was.
Nothing was the same.

Our Times

Michael Ansara

A dozen Guernicas,
Without the outrage.
Truth tossed
Like a used Styrofoam cup.
“Never Again”
Like mercury in the palm.

The vastness
Of the indifferent universe
Offers a cold comfort.
Petty men convince themselves
they are the center.

A scientist brings up
A small ring of ash
From deep in the soil,
Saying it is a warning
Of catastrophe
From another time.

Black holes cause time
To slow down
Space to warp.

And yet....
And yet every child

Bloom and Grow

Traci Neal

the body is a rose
an array arrangement
petals pet promise
bloom and bleep blisters
seat the seeds
strip thorns
stems stick out
ground is graupel
willful grams
feast on fountain food
poetry flowers a person
flood this offer often
plant positive particles
thinking is a thick thirst
project poetic pollen
refresh the withered
exhale and exalt
an excellent extreme
nature is the arena
dig through dirt
roots rise
faith is famous
for miracle growth

Music

Sean Leclaire

Let yourself
Be lived

Like how sound
Pours

From the rim
Of a horn

The Field

Sean Leclaire

Barefoot in a muddy field
Of wildflower and lemon trees

There is no space wide enough
To contain joy

Golden bees and wet toes
Vast goodwill standing

At the shore of a great silence
If you have not been rocked

By the Infinite
Then you are not alive



John Lee

Goodness gracious
Good grub from
Grateful gardeners
Growing greens (et al) and
Generous gifts;
Gleeful gleaners
Glancing gladly and
Giving generously with
Great gregarity.
Going gangbusters!
Gracious goodness,
Gaining Ground.

Weight-bearing

Anonymous

An article I scroll by bears the headline, ‘The human psyche was not built for this,’ rather ominously, like the human psyche is a wood-beamed A-frame, a children’s playground, a grape-clung arbor trellis.

I want to ask the author: What was the human psyche built for? Is it weathered and inflexible, like a leather-bark maple tree? Is it the weight-bearing edges of a trampoline: the resistance and then the sudden jagged release?

If pulled, would it bend and splinter, like a wishbone on the window sill, arms pale as piano teeth? Or perhaps it would collapse, wheat against a scythe. Maybe it is a vessel: a crater belly, a womb, a well.

I want a doctor to show me on an x-ray—there’s the pelvis, the ribs, and there’s your psyche right there. She’d point to a tomato plant, vines wrapped around my intestines. Or a vacated bird’s nest in my hips—sallow and holding everything I keep there.

Maybe it’s the yellow fuzz of forsythia plumes hugging my spinal cord. She’d say, there’s your sadness, cloudy dandelions overgrown in my skull. There’s your childhood memories, hanging on the low-reaching arms of a sycamore tree.

And your bliss, see those teeth like pearls? See the dirt beneath the fingernails, the heart burning like a nectarine sun? And maybe the diagnosis comes back: yours, yours is a boomerang. You must fling, and then wait.

The Sad Ballad of the Garlic Mustard

Carla Schwartz

After “Ballad of the Sad Café,” by Carson McCullers.

I must have identified more with Miss Amelia
and her hard ways turned soft by love
than with Cousin Lymon.

I felt uncomfortable about Lymon.
He popped up like the garlic mustard
that emerged in my side yard this April.

Not entirely unwelcome—
the punchy green heart-shaped leaves
bouquets brides might throw to hopeful singles.

The roots are tender white and radishy.
I intended to jettison them
but then read you can cook them.

I would have to soak the roots
to remove the mud. Miss Amelia
might have used the leaves in a beer.

She would bring pitchers out
and pour glasses all around
while Lymon stayed on.

I could open a popup
café with all this mustard—
sautéed in eggs
a mustard pesto
roots cooked into sauce

Then I read the young ones
have more cyanide
than the second-years do—
bad things can go good.

I stare out at all the mustard,
bagsful in my future.

I wonder if I can tackle all this alone,
if I might one day come to love my yard,
if sautéing an invasive is sweet revenge.

First appeared in “Intimacy with the Wind,” Finishing Line Press, 2017

Prayer for My Son

Liza Halley

Skunk cabbage. Milkweed. Bittersweet. Plantain.
Elderberry. Raspberry. Blackberry. Thimbleberry.
Ash. Birch. Pine. Oak. Spruce.
You are a part of this.
Your name is. You are.
Name this.
Oxeye daisy.
Fireweed.
Yellow Trout Lily.
Cow Parsnip.
Campanula.
You are
delicate petal heart,
pom pom rain dancer,
wild weed boy,
violet hop slap,
wild walker,
emerald sucker of sustenance.

Know your name
jagged edge of leaf
fragile veins reaching out
out, in and down.

Don't be afraid.

Stop a moment.
Rest your head
against a pillow of moss.
Inhale.

Know like the knuckles on your thumb.
Know like the whisper of your name
in your ear.
Does it feel true?
Does it feel like home?

Stead Wild

Jay Kemp

My friend once scripted, “growth and stillness
work in tandem.”

If not, could the moss-scrubbed nurse log
feed life sky-high from its decaying bowels?
Did the old tree want to give gravely, but give all
the same?
The care worker, essential, resolute.

We passed it by the lake, on our search
for our own leafy aid.
It passed in a storm, on its own search
for the ground.
We both stayed a while.

The river considered,
I thought, “of course growth and stillness
work in tandem.”

Do you think the water ever gets tired of
shimmering?
I would, but I also move just fine in winter.
I can also fill a space and run at the same time.
Water has to choose, but it also never tires.

We passed riverbed stones after the lake,
when our legs weighed heavier.
Water striders muttered and ran in circles.
My city job
was the same, but theirs probably mattered
more.
We both stayed a while.

I pretended
fallen Eastern Hemlock needles spelt,
“growth and stillness
work in tandem.”

Pennsylvania trees, surely, but Tully Lake
rustled with their presence.
Do you think trees miss their seedlings?
They never seem to go looking,
no posters on corpsed electrical posts.
To de-root is to forfeit future seeds,
but to stay is to forfeit seedling needs.
I’ve never had a child,
but if I did, I wouldn’t follow them if they
swept
away with the wind and possibility.
They need the space. I bet the spruces feel
the same.
Their parents are in Appalachia.

We passed the hemlocks about halfway down the trail,
taller than I once bothered to look.
I was shorter than the alder buckthorn bushes
they greeted
every morning, neighbors, fenceless.
They chatted about shared soil and fears, while I
whittled my ears.
We all stayed a while.

I'm still questioning when "growth and stillness
work in tandem."

The optimist sits and reads a book
called Rest. Does he smile or gasp?

The singer shares the butterfly's repose.
Why does the languor of its wings more merit
song?

The candidates chant, "progress", as the city wails
for care. Don't healthy trees reach up, not
forward?

"Maintain at evening, to produce each day,"
I read, withered. I sign the dotted line.
Why do we credit the sun for day and night, when
we are the ones spinning?
Why does the sunset never run to see me?

The boss grants, the sweatdrop can fall.
How many raindrops did it take to sculpt
through that canyon?

The baker knows to let the bread rise.
Sustain time, sustain hunger, sustain
people.

Still, these questions grew,
as and with time to sit and think.

Stay a while, leaves and audiences,
ponder through every blink.

Mulberry Prayer

Laura Veligor

A bursting of fruit
for infinite indulgences,
and the offering of so much more
for tea, furniture, paper, ink...

May we always know such generosity
as a mulberry tree in summer.

To think that I could sit and write
a poem about a mulberry
and all that I might need to do so
could be borrowed from a mulberry.

May the tree never question
our gratitude for these gifts.

I wonder, what do the birds think
as I shake the laden branches?
As the squirrels watch my bowl fill up,
do I gain their enmity or understanding?

May hope be yet restored
when abundance goes not wasted.

What does the wild world see
as I tend my recipes in the kitchen?
It takes a bit of wild to realize
the boundless possibilities.

May wonder be set and sealed
in a little jar of sweetness.

Behind this work simmers
a source of freedom for me:
to deem no finer bite than what hangs
unceremoniously from the tree.

May I never know a difference
between a berry and a blessing.

I follow the tangle and the tendril

Louise Berliner

tracing the leaf's lineage
long before the bloom and the burst

back to the hard shell of a spit seed
nestling and nesting—
back to when a pip was part star.

What possessed me to climb my own thin thread
to that first touch of sky?

What impulse made green, made curl,
pushed twist and twine?

I didn't stop at blossom or pink,
barely hesitated when it came to the fruit—
had to chase the pull to produce as if snake-charmed

even though sometimes I thought
I was the one with the flute.

How Can I ...

Bill Loehfelm

How can I know what the trees really feel?
Standing so still on the edge of the field...

How can I know how the soil feeds the seed?
And does it much care whether flowers or weed?

How can I know the feel of the sun?
Warming so gently what the farmers have done.

How can I know what the bees really see?
What must it be like in the mind of a bee?

How can I know what the birds seem to need?
Picking their favorites, finding their seeds.

How can I know how the rain really smells?
When it bounces off leaves and gathers and swells.

How can I know how the vines choose their way?
Creeping and twisting wherever they may.

How can I know the taste of the dew?
The very first rinse when the morning is new.

How can I know what it's like in the wind?
When you wave and drift and wobble and bend.

How can I know what you see in the night?
Is it quiet and still just before the first light?

And how can I know what the farmers all know?
How it all works; what makes it all grow.

How can I....
...help.

Sewing and Sowing

Jyalu Wu

Inspired by Susan

As the promise of dusk melted into the sky,
The farmer finally finishes her mother's
Old friendship quilt,
Body aching and mouth giddy with pride.
She guides her body through
A series of stretches, then carries
Her heavy baby out to the backyard,
Folding it over an ancient clothesline
Spread taut between two
Wizened maple trees,
Great leafy heads bent together in secret and
Gossiping about the unruly crops behind them.
The farmer takes a few steps back,
Sinks down into her lawn chair,
And admires the view.

Each piece of fabric had been gifted by
A dear friend of her mother,
Collected over decades and
Decades of community,
Assembled with rose-tinted memories and
Completed under nostalgia's guiding hand.
If the farmer looked close enough,
She could also find traces of her own friends –
Friends of the earth –
Within the colors and textures of the quilt.

Here, amongst the brown seersucker,
Were rows of tilled earth waiting for rain.
Here, the green chantilly lace could be
Easily mistaken for fennel fronds.
There, the discolored white ribbed knit
Became the grooved glass walls of
Her beloved greenhouse.

And here, in this big section of ruddy paisley,
She could see a big bowl of minestrone
Filled with dozens of botehs
Grown from fat raindrop-shaped gourds
And chunky strips of waxy onion,
Lumps of psychedelic romanesco broccoli
Surrounded by twisting rosemary twigs –
All swimming in a pool of tomato broth with
Smiley chopped celery and
Little beany dots.

She watches as the sun spoons a thick
Golden mango sauce over
The trees, the crops, the quilt,
The smile lines on her face,
And decides to start sowing the onions and
celery
In the morning.

Comfort Place

Rahimah Adan

The empty roads have finally been swept.
After all the weary merchants left.
During these quiet hours many choose rest.
But, in here I'll stay tonight.

A pack of stray dogs huddle in place.
While sailors follow Polaris through the straits.
The singing birds dream of open space.
Yet, in here I'll stay tonight.

Mothers lull their wide-eyed children to sleep
As lonely hearts seek comfort in memories.
Misty raindrops are caught in the light.
Yes, in here I'll stay tonight.

the goose

Alexandra Toto

today i stood dumbfounded
gloveless hands in my coat, cold
as the sun spilled honey across the sky and onto the ground
illuminating the beaks of the geese
with that silver lining poets typically reserve for the clouds (in gold)
and i heard that pesky squawk
but was enthralled by the visible puff
that can only be captured on the coldest of days
so ordinary yet stunning
when whispered from their mouths

menu from tonight's dinner party

Aparna Paul

tomato & egg; scallion pancakes; chive pockets;
pressed tofu; chinese greens; potato stir fry;
chocolate raspberry cake pops; something silly
from trader joe's, probably; welch's white grape juice;
laughter; tears; blood; sweat; burn marks;
forgetting; remembering; cough drops; too much
white pepper; not enough salt; "I thought of you
yesterday"; one spill; two hands to clean it; almost
falling asleep on the sofa; lingering at the door;
warm hugs;

no, my fridge isn't haunted

Aparna Paul

eggs long past due dates
and root vegetables sprouting new growth
and entire cultures in the yogurt
and the leftovers from the last dinner we made together,
meatballs, I think
all the death and decay and rot and ruin and
I see only life

On Finding My Joy at the Farm

Polly Keller Vanasse

Dedicated to our Community Farm Team

Not just on the sultry summer days,
But on the frigid, windy, difficult ones,

Coming together to work in the soil brings me joy.

Not just when the world is bright and hopeful,
But when desolate times bring despair,

Coming together to plant in the soil brings me joy.

Not just in times of peace and harmony,
But when all's upside down and wars make no sense,

Coming together to harvest our bounty brings me joy.

Winter will come but our dreams stay alive,
The soil is renewed and so, now, am I.

Coming together to worship this soil brings me joy.

The Seasons: Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer

Bonnie Gangi

The Stars in the sky shine so bright there's so many stars to see so late at night

The color of the leaves falling off the trees so beautiful and they stay so bright fall is right around the corner

The stars are so bright the trees fall so beautiful true love is in the air as we turn another season

There's nothing more beautiful than another season beginning as we turn to another chapter in our lives the stars the trees are all so beautiful and so bright

You never know what life is going to bring you but enjoy the stars in the fall and the trees begin to fall as long as you can because you never know when another day is going to come around enjoy every day you have as it stands still in time

Life can be funny but enjoy every moment of it as long as you can take advantage of all the seasons you have around you fall winter spring and summer never forget the stars in the sky because they're looking down on you shining so bright

Leaves change color just like we change in age as we get older we start to realize more and more how important it is to take advantage of everything that you have in life because you're never promised tomorrow your only problems the day that you wake up

Never lose who you are always stay true to who you are never lose yourself in a field of snow always remember you have real people looking out for you and you're never alone

As we get older and change the seasons change we have to go along with time never forget there are people in your lives who really love and care about your family and friends will always be around you to give you time in a chance to grow never forget how important you are in life and never forget as Seasons go on and get older and wiser you get smarter.

*Concord
Public School,
Nature
Writing
Enrichment*

When Spring Comes

Sophie Allison, Natalie Carroll, Reese Hudner, Isabel Martin, Eva Smith, Nifemi Oladapo, Laura Regis, Eva Smith, Caroline Trafton

Sunlight streams through
the clouds
shattering the shackles of winter.

Melting ice cracks and
echoes across the
expansive azure sky.

Trees and animals alike
shed their ice cold grip and
are reborn once again.

Icy trees drip.
Flowers poke out of the dead grass.

The once dreary world is coming back
to live
from black and white into the
Sunlight.

The cardinal chirps and soars
once again
over
the brightening sky of newfound spring.

The fallen leaves summit
above the melting snow
drenched in the wet powder
that remains.

Animals come out of
hibernation; flowers are
starting to peek out,
leaves budding.

Spring is coming.

*Fayerweather
Street School*

Full

Eve Stephens;
Fayerweather Street School

The farm is full of life
The trees are full with sap
The trees are full with leaves

It is bright and sunny outside
The animals are playing with each other
The sun is big and shining

Everyone stares

Willow Peach;
Fayerweather Street School

The sunset shining golden,
Everyone stares,
The mud-covered pigs,
The teeth-grinding cows,
The loud roosters and pretty hens,
The fuzzy goats,
The hardworking farmers,
All stare at the sun painting streaks over color over the sky,
Twilight is soon to come,
A reward for the tiring day,
Of sap, dirt, and poop,
Everyone stares.
Everyone's rewarded.

Grow, Grow, Grow

Maddy Mack;
Fayerweather Street School

Chickens peck at the ground
Peck, peck, peck.

Goats jump on the rocks
Jump, jump, jump.

Cows chew the hay
Chew, chew, chew.

Pigs slurp up their water
Slurp, slurp, slurp.

Horses shake their big heads
Shake, shake, shake.

Plants start to grow out of the rich ground
Grow, grow, grow.

Cats purr in the sunlight
Purr, purr, purr.

Dogs run on the grass
Run, run, run.

When I think of a farm

Zac Branca;

Fayerweather Street School

Words that come to mind are

Food,
Hay,
A campfire,
Nature,
Sunshine,
Soil,
Animals,
Hard work,
And most of all,
Fun.

I imagine the smell of
dirt,
cows,
grass,
And the kitchen.

I imagine seeing
the barn,
animals,
and most of all,
the endless amount of
trees and
Plants.

I imagine the sound of
birds,
animals
telling the world about
their lives.

Look Up or Look Down, You're Seeing Nature Either Way

Elan Hersh;

Fayerweather Street School

They say the future is unseen, but I see
wild animals playing till
Dusk.
They feel the wavy grass blow in the wind.

I see the beautiful ground,
Brown or green,
It doesn't matter.
Before it's night, the living goes to be
Warm and cozy.

The soil, the water, the sun,
It all helps the Earth.
The breeze of the trees as the wind
flows by

I will forget the bad
And remember the good.

The Farm,
So little
And so loved.

Belief

Kairee Cayetano;
Fayerweather Street School

***Based on the quote: “The farmer has to be an optimist or
he wouldn't still be a farmer.”***

Belief. That is what the farmer's life is based on.

Belief that they toiled the soil well.

Belief that they planted the seeds the right way.

Belief that this year will be the best year yet.

Belief in themselves.

Belief in other people.

One With The Farm

Nate Ravenel;
Fayerweather Street School

The soil, animals, plants, all combine to make the magical place known as a farm
The sweat drips down your face
Raking the soil for the plants to grow
Sun shining like a million stars, Farm
Shoveling cow and horse poop, Farm.
Feeding the goats, Farm
Good or bad may they seem, it is all just work for the farm.

You get to care for the plants and animals
Like a newborn baby.
And if you don't, they will die.
Then there won't be food for others.
Slowly, the world will be demolished
It is all responsibility.

You need to commit to the pain and routine
To the early wakeups, Shoveling the poop until you can't anymore, 'Till your clothes are
stained with sweat and smell like sweat
And then, in one instant, you become one
With the farm.

You know, see, feel, and hear what to do, how to do, and when to do.
The annoying becomes the fun, the hard becomes the easy, you are one
With the farm.

You are one with the cows,
You know what bothers them, what time they wake up, what they do, what they need.
And then the goats, the pigs, the chickens, the horses;
The corn, beans, vegetables, fruits.
All in your knowledge.
All of this is in your knowledge.
You are one
With the farm.

Four Poems for the Farm

Amo Pardo; Fayerweather
Street School

Soil

The whole point of Earth is
Soil.
It grows grass that feeds livestock,
It grows the food we eat
Without it we do not survive.
it is Godly
Important.
It feeds, and it homes
Billions
It is everything and yet it is so
overlooked.

Goats

Babies bounce.
Mamas snack.
So calm,
So peaceful.
Problems disappear
And a sense of home appears.
They don't care
For things that aren't
Important.
They care for their young
They care
For their old
They care for what is
Important

For Compost

Poop
For Earth
From all living things
It comes
It decomposes
It helps
The environment
It is important
Though also disgusting.
And yet,
So important.

Sun

Warmth
From so far away.
Heat
That powers the planet
Can be harnessed
For energy
And for food.
It is needed for the survival of
Everything.
It is
So important.

I am a Farmer

Antonia Fera-Stein;
Fayerweather Street School

Waking up darkness welcomes me
Sun has not yet risen
Feeling gratitude
For the long day about to come
Community
Helping me
Every inch of the
Way
I am
Making my mark

I am
The newest ripple in the water,
Ring on the tree,
Change in the air
I am
A farmer.

After a
Long day,
Accomplishment
Fills me.
The trees
Standing tall,
Saying
Thank you
For the hard work.
Nourishment
And love
The wind
Whistling
Going through the
Branches.
Birds
Calling.

I am a
Farmer.

The Farm Fire

Bea Koelzer;
Fayerweather Street School

The fire crackled and sparked,
As laughter echoed through the circle.
Peace, calm, community,
And love.

It was easy to understand things in that moment.
As gratitude and joy bloomed in my mind.

We roasted smores,
We sang songs,
We gazed at stars,
We smiled.

As the fire sparkled in the moonlight,
We watched the fire gently toast the
marshmallows,
Our mouths stuffed with warm chocolate,
And crispy graham crackers.
One by one they turned golden brown,
Slowly but surely.

And as we finished our smores,
We sang songs,
Campfire songs.
Silly ones,
That made everyone laugh.
Classic ones,
That brought everyone together.
Beautiful ones,
That brought a vibrant smile to everyone's face.

Eventually the fire slowly calmed,
And we looked up at the sky.
Beautiful stars staring back at us,
Shining in the dark night.
We pointed out constellations.
Little spoon, Orion's belt,

Small fingers pointing to the brightest little
dots in the sky.
We told stories about our past,
Stories about families,
Stories about friends,
Stories about adventure.

These stories would bring people together
so much,
So quickly.
So beautifully.
People I didn't realize had so much to say.
These people had so much life in their eyes
as they told these stories.

As the fire slowly died out we were still
chatting.
Endless smiles as the conversations
continued.
The community we had built right then was
not going anywhere.
It was as strong as ever, and it was shining
as vibrantly as the stars.

*Tenacre
Country Day
School*

Muddy Hands, Big Hearts

Mackenzie Auguste;
Tenacre Country Day School

As I look down at my muddy hands
I see more than just dirt
But soil,
Soil that will nurture the food-that will nurture the people.
And as I look down at the bright orange carrots
I see more than just a veggie,
But a smile-to-be.

Feeding Chocolate

Krishen Banerjee;
Tenacre Country Day School

As I walk up to the goat pen
I see him
I see Chocolate
A tiny goat who just came to the farm
The sun is glistening down on him
He is eating like he has never seen food before
I turn to see that my group is lining up to feed him
I have never fed a farm animal
The line progresses and finally it is my turn
He turns to me
He eyes glued on the food
He comes over and gently bites the food out of my
hands
He was the cutest goat on the farm
That was my first time feeding a farm animal
It is a memory engraved in my brain

Gaining Ground Spirit

Addison Carlson;
Tenacre Country Day School

Digging, digging
Nails are dirty
Pants spotted with dots
Fresh smells of healthy plants
Throats filled with dryness from hard work
Laughter fills the field with baskets full of carrots
Crunch, crunch
Happy kid eats healthy carrots
It is time to leave
Smiles turn upside down

Carrots

Asata Cineus;
Tenacre Country Day School

The warm sun beats on my face.
The cold steady wind
keeps me cool.
One two three pull.
Carrots,
carrots are half pulled out of the ground.
I get ready to pull one more time.
One two three pull.

Three carrots wrapped around each other
like a warm embrace.
I plop the carrots in the crate.
And heave it over to the wagon.
Carrots.

Spring is in the Air

Isla Epstein;
Tenacre Country Day School

Plants sprout
Flowers bloom
New life is all around
The soil damp
From fresh rain
The scent fills the air
Vegetables are harvest
Baby chicks hatch
Bunnies are born
The air gets warmer
Animals come out to play
The grass grows back along with leaves
Spring is here!

Carrots

Cole Costin;
Tenacre Country Day School

I see the green leafs that are supposed to be carrots
I don't think it's true
I reach down and grab them
And with some effort
A shiny orange carrot springs from the ground
In shock and joy,
I continue picking the carrots until there are none left
Now a basket full of carrots
Is resting next to me

Spring

Aidan Gagne;
Tenacre Country Day School

I wake up
On the first day
Of Spring
I throw open the curtains
Sunlight pours into my bedroom
I rush downstairs
And out the door I go
The birds fly happily in the sky
Ducks swim energetically in the pond
When I get home
From the park
I eat dinner
Watch a little TV
And then I go to sleep
Waiting for the next day of Spring

Carrots

Cole Costin;
Tenacre Country Day School

Plants sprout
Flowers bloom
New life is all around
The soil damp
From fresh rain
The scent fills the air
Vegetables are harvest
Baby chicks hatch
Bunnies are born
The air gets warmer
Animals come out to play
The grass grows back along with
leaves
Spring is here!

Carrot Harvesting

Ella Gordon;
Tenacre Country Day School

Orange, purple, yellow
The carrots lined up in the field
Some big
Some small
Some twisty
Some straight
All equally great
Digging into the soil
Big hands reach for the carrots
Yanking multiple carrots out three at a time
Making a difference
Each carrot at a time
Making a difference for people like you and me
One
Step
At
A
Time
This is what makes Gaining Ground so special

Spring

Peter Helm;
Tenacre Country Day School

I wake up
to the birds chirping
outside my window.
The grass is becoming
a beautiful green,
and the snow
has been
melting away.
The trees
are blossoming,
and the
green stems
of the flowers,
are popping up
from underneath
the soft soil,
and I know it,
it is Spring

Carrots

Julia Consigli;
Tenacre Country Day School

In order to grow
I need cold droplets of water to be poured on me
In order to grow
I need the steaming sun to shine down on me
In order to grow
I need to bunch together with friends
In order to be harvested
I need to be ready
In order to be harvested
I need to be lightly tugged away from my roots by my stem
In order to be eaten
I need to soak under water to scrub the soil off my body
In order to be eaten
I need to be prepared the right way
In order to be a delicious carrot
You need to follow all these instructions

Nature's Recipe for Success

Lana Herron;
Tenacre Country Day School

A seed is an opportunity,
A chance to create something new.
Soil is like a comforting embracing,
Or the fuel for that opportunity.
Water is what breaths life
Into all living beings,
And helps it thrive.
The sun is the whisper of encouragement,
That says "keep trying".
The seed,
The soil,
The water,
And the sun
Are like a family.
Each one supports another
To let them grow.
To let them achieve.

Small Seed, Big Dreams

Olivia Gladding Lane;
Tenacre Country Day School

I start big and strong
Then fall to the ground
Someone picks me up
Then toss me around
Then not long after
I'm placed in the ground
Then after that
I just grow & grow
I dream of what I could be
A carrot or a tomato
Or an ol' root beer
As I start to sprout
And as I start to flourish
I know that eventually
I will succeed
And grow
Big & Strong
For I am
A small Seed
With Big Dreams

The Flowing River

Andy Jin;
Tenacre Country Day School

We stumble past
a shiny river
glimmering with luminosity
as the sunset beams down
It sounds like how nature should sound
Tranquil, happy, and relaxing
I stare down at my reflection
and can just see it waving back at me
It emits an earthy smell
as if it rained down on bright green grass
When we walk away
I look at the sunset,
wave goodbye,
and look down on it
one last time.

Sun

Margot Marx;
Tenacre Country Day School

We dug a hole
Put seeds inside
And waited
Morning turned into night
While night turned into day
We waited and waited for this moment
The warm sun shining down on our faces
The amazing feeling it is
As we walked up the garden
Each day we watched
As you grew closer and closer to the sun
All the way up until the experience
The feeling of the sun beating down on your petals
Until fall where they come down one by one.

On the Farm

Will Moore;
Tenacre Country Day School

On the farm, plants grow in every field
Tall grass towers
Trees cover every corner of the landscape
Towering over everything
A mist floats above the ground
Grassy scents fill our noses
There is a mellowness about the farm
Relaxing everybody that steps into the enclosed space
It is as if we are stranded
In a good way
It feels like we are alone
Alone in our own land
Without any cares in the world
Without any disturbances

Picking green beans

Edward O'Neill;
Tenacre Country Day School

The wet morning grass touches my hands
I walk through the field
My hands ready to find the biggest green bean
I touch the wet stock
I look up to the clouds
Instead of clouds I see a huge glowing ball of fire
I walk down to the end of the row
My hand grasps a huge pouch of green beans
The sun glows on it
It's like I was supposed to find it

Come On Cows

Lily Reece;
Tenacre Country Day School

The hot sun beats down and the smell of fresh soil
grass
and manure envelopes us.
I inhale.
The farmer next to me calls
“Come on cows.”
Nothing
“All together,” she says.
All six of us shout
“Come on cows!”
We look over the bush.
In the distance we see the cows looking over
“3,,2,,1”
“COME ON COWS!”
We see them move to the path slowly
They meander up and into the barn

Gaining Ground

Ellie Reynolds;
Tenacre Country Day School

The wind blows
The carrots grow
The green grass glistens in the sun
Swaying to the melodies
Of birds above

The greenhouse
All warm inside
Provides a safe haven
For plants
Of all kinds

The bee's buzz
Find a flower
Extract nectar
Focused
On her way

The plants
Arise from the ground
Almost ready
To be picked
And free from the
Soil

Spring Sprung

Sage Roper;
Tenacre Country Day School

As I'm patting down soil
Getting the seeds all tucked in for winter

It was a long dull winter
Finally the birds are chirping
The sun is out
It's spring
Flowers bloom, birds sing
It's time to pick out all of our little seeds
Which now are plants
Bees buzz, plants sprout
Now you know spring has finally sprung

Collecting Carrots

Nicholas Salguero;
Tenacre Country Day School

Orange as a tangerine,
Many and many,
Some big and small
And some the strangest of all
Bunches of carrots o' so hard to carry,
With the scorching sun
That hurts so many
The carrots are safe and homey
For the people to harvest,
And end up in the soups of many

Gaining Ground

Juliet Scheyer;
Tenacre Country Day School

As I start picking
Carrots out of the ground
I start to think
How much will it impact people?
How many people will appreciate
All of the work that I have done
Including, getting down on my hands and knees
On the soft, wet soil
Work in the scorching hot sun beating down on me
Just enough to make me sweat
And making sure that all of the carrots are pulled
How many people with food insecurity
Are getting help from nonprofit organizations like this?
I now come to realize all of these notable deeds
that the people working there are doing.

Carrot

Grady Steeves;
Tenacre Country Day School

I am yanked forcefully
From my place in the dirt
A young human
Tosses me
Into a wheelbarrow
And I land with a thud
The bright sun shines down
Warmer than ever
I see the world
All around me
I am finally free
From my enclosed spot on this earth

The Life of Nature

Mia Thorpe;
Tenacre Country Day School

The soft sun
Rubbed against my skin
My sweat dissolves
Into soil of the land
Everything within me tried my hardest
To do my job
The scratchy leaves itched
Against my legs
The murmuring of bees in the wind
Getting closer
Then farther
The beauty
Of the breeze
Refreshes me

Seed to Stalk

Tiernan Yieh;
Tenacre Country Day School

Wind blows through the sky
And it pierces through the leaves
The dirt a wet rock
Once rough, now smoothed by water
Filling up the creases
Of hands all around
Plop, plop, plop
Seeds grace the ground
They fall like skydivers,
Into the soft cushion of dirt
In time they will grow
Blossom
Into stalks
That feeds the hungry
And then
The next year
It will be repeated.