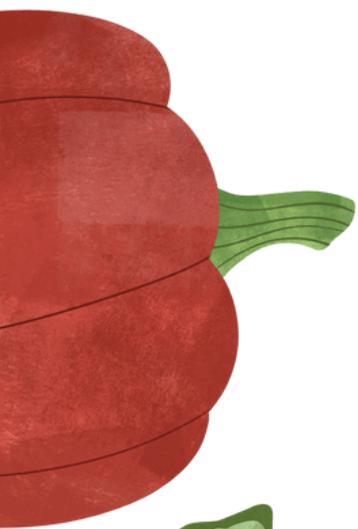




# *Poetry on the Farm*

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](http://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  
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*Spring Morning* by Michael Ansara  
*Our Times* by Michael Ansara  
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*The Field* by Sean Leclair  
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Aparna Paul  
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*Mulberry Prayer* by Laura Veligor  
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# *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 Leclair

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

# GG

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.