



Co-op Seedling Grant 2023: The Fruit Tree Project Narrative Update

Project Updates:

- This Seedling Grant allowed Lund to purchase fruit trees to plant in our existing pollinator and vegetable gardens. This pollinator garden, made possible through a 2022 Seedling Grant, has allowed children to engage with the outdoor world up close, seeing firsthand how pollination happens and build respect and compassion for the living things that make it possible.
- Lund's 2023 Seedling Grant expanded upon our existing gardens by helping us to purchase five fruit trees – apple and pear – which we planted in the fall of 2024.
- Children were involved in the planting process and have learned about fruit trees as part of the pollinator garden and as part of the whole ecosystem.

Long Term Impact as the Trees Grow:

Before planting the trees, Lund engaged with local resources to teach LECP students about how these fruit trees would contribute to the world around them: starting small with our existing pollinator garden, these trees are a key component to children drawing connections to the ecosystem as a whole. The children see directly where their food comes from, the process of how trees grow and what they need to thrive, and the compassion it takes to nurture a living thing and care for these trees as a community. Childcare staff shared that seeing the process of planting a tree, caring for it as it grows, and ultimately picking and eating the fruit directly correlates to LECP's beliefs: teaching children to respect and understand the ecosystem, create and observe habitats and living things, and becoming stewards of the earth. Children and their families will eventually be able to pick and eat fruit directly from these trees, seeing firsthand how their work in growing the trees and caring for a garden allows them to access nutritious foods in a sustainable way.

Making Adjustments and Learning as We Go:

While Lund originally intended to plant these trees in the spring of 2024, the weather had other plans! Due to rain and unexpected temperatures, we ultimately delayed planting to the fall of 2024 to ensure the fruit trees had optimal conditions and a chance to thrive so that children could benefit from them. In the meantime, students are still engaging with the trees in other

ways, focusing on learning about fruit, nutrition, gardening, and how food is sustainably produced and consumed in our ecosystem and society. In addition, this change in timing is an opportunity to teach the children about the effects of the weather and the environment on the tree's wellbeing. Lund is excited to see the trees begin to produce fruit and to have children experience a harvest!