

## **Garden Institute Program Report 2025**

### **Background Information & Program Mission:**

Garden Institute ran from March 22nd to the 29th. Our goal for the week-long program was to steward and rework the back half of the garden while providing agricultural education to those in attendance. Through this goal we hoped to foster continued engagement in the garden, and provide campers returning for the summer with the tools and knowledge to become leaders during work project time. Projects that we focused on include :

- Tilling the soil, removing weeds and dead plants from previous years
- Laying down cardboard and creating raised beds from purchased soil
- Building a windrow composting system, using manure from the property
- Hands-on and classroom style lessons in crop planning, sustainable agricultural practices, garden layout, compost systems, bed building, seeding, and food sovereignty.

### **What we Accomplished:**

- Organization and inventory of garden supplies and tools.
- Developing an understanding of tool etiquette, use, and safety in the garden.
- Completion of our build out of the 1/16th acre garden space within just 3 days of programming.
- Purchasing and laying down 10 cubic yards of soil due to poor soil health. We were able to accomplish this because I donated my paycheck for it.
- Facilitation of an intergenerational learning environment with 20 people in attendance ranging from ages 10 to 70.
- Revitalization and strengthening of compost use in the garden, through the creation of a larger scale windrow composting system.
- Creating a map of the garden and recorded measurements for use in future crop planning and development of the space.

### **Outcomes:**

Throughout the Garden Institute we heard statements from multiple campers and parents expressing pride in what they accomplished, hopes for what can be done next (both over the summer and in years to come), as well as surprise that they were able to do something that was simultaneously productive and fun. Those in attendance were engaged, present in learning, curious about what might be possible next in the garden, and joyful in taking part in caring for the land.