

LAFARM ANNUAL REPORT

2025

Reflections on the Season

Succession planting is a common practice in diversified vegetable farming. Farmers will plant the same crop every few weeks to ensure a continuous harvest throughout the season.

We welcomed the largest team yet of new students in Fall semester. Uniting theory and practice, the students who worked at LaFarm in 2025 have grown food for our community, preserved heirloom seed varieties, and built relationships with local and indigenous partners. They've conducted class projects and research that have reshaped both the physical space of the farm and helped to refine its mission. And they've gained a wealth of experience that they carry into careers in food and agriculture systems.

As LaFarm attracts new students with a passion for hands-on learning that makes a real impact, I'm excited to see what further fruit our graduating "crop" of farmers bear, and what seeds they sow.

Josh Parr, Food and Farm Manager

Training More Student Farmers 2025 saw greater interest than ever in paid student positions at the farm. In addition to the largest number of students working on the farm yet, we also expanded our Diversified Vegetable Pre-apprenticeship program. While in past years we have had one apprentice, this year four students completed the program, which prepares them to become leaders at LaFarm and in the future of food and farm issues. We look forward to another cohort of apprentices in 2026.



Jane McKenney 25' leading a tour of LaFarm at the Northeast Student Food & Farm Conference



Seed saving in EVST 370 for the Delaware Nation of Oklahoma, the native residents of the land

BY THE NUMBERS

New Records*

24,000 lbs.

of produce grown*

24 courses

incorporated the farm into their syllabus*

900 visitors & volunteers

spent 1,300+ hours at LaFarm

72 events

hosted on the farm

2,600+ plants

sold and donated from our third annual plant sale*

30 student employees

worked 5,000+ hours at LaFarm*

SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

Plant Sales Nearly Doubled... Again! Since our first sale in 2023, the LaFarm Annual Plant Sale has grown into a cornerstone of LaFarm's operations and community outreach. This year we had great success expanding our selection of native plants, while also selling out of many garden vegetables, herbs, and flowers. Next year we will grow many new varieties, as well as adding pre-orders and a Friday shopping time in addition to weekend hours.

New Wash Station With the help from professor Brandes' CE 475 class, the summer student farm crew constructed a 12' x 16' pavilion just outside our greenhouse, and during the fall semester, Engineers Without Borders designed, built, and installed a multi-function spray table for washing produce. Complete with an electric greens spinner, this pavilion will serve as our new wash station in the 2026 season, improving food safety while also allowing us to efficiently handle our ever-increasing volume of produce.

NORTHEAST STUDENT FOOD AND FARM CONFERENCE



Students from the Lafayette Food and Farm Cooperative worked with the college to host the 3rd Annual Northeastern Student Food and Farm Conference at Lafayette, attracting over 125 students from 16 different institutions. This conference, which started at Penn State in 2023, gathers students from colleges across the region to engage with peers and professional farmers locally through conversations, seeds, meals, workshops, presentations, and panel discussions.

This year the conference featured a keynote panel with three Lehigh-Valley food justice leaders, focus-topic discussions, a tour of LaFarm, composting facilities, and demonstrations of sustainable initiatives on campus and in the community. The conference showcased the ways our collaborations provide a model for food and farm systems at liberal arts colleges. The 4th annual Northeast Student Farm & Food Conference (NSFFC) will be held at Bard College on April 18th-19th, 2026.

CONNECTING LAND, CURRICULUM, AND COMMUNITY

During the spring semester a new course was offered at Lafayette that was deeply embedded in work at the farm. Students in professor Kyle Keeler's Land Acts class paired theoretical readings about land's agency in indigenous thought with numerous visits to the farm to participate in practical hands-on work with the land. The result was a new relationship between Lafayette and the Delaware Nation of Oklahoma, in which students grew, saved, and delivered the seeds of traditional Delaware food, medicine, and ritual crops. Future iterations of this class will continue this work and deepen the relationship between the college and the Delaware Nation.



In another field at LaFarm, one student from Land Acts, Olivia Simone '26, conducted an independent study that paired research in regenerative agricultural practices with hands-on application using cover crops to restore an acre of land on the perimeter of the farm that had been used for conventional corn and soy production for many years. In spring 2026 she will continue her restorative relationship with this piece of land, while completing her senior thesis on seed saving.



NEXT SEASON

There are so many amazing new projects lined up for 2026 that promise to make it an exciting year for LaFarm. Here are just a few of the major items coming up next year:

1 More Engineers Without Borders partnerships, including root barrel washer

3 New compact tractor

2 Automating field irrigation; potential capacity increase

4 New date for weekly farmstand with delivery option

A big thank you to the 30 student employees, numerous staff and faculty members, and 900+ visitors and volunteers who made 2025 such an excellent year. See you in the spring!

For more details, visit garden.lafayette.edu

LAFAYETTE
SUSTAINABILITY

