



## South Conejos School District

Antonito, CO

**District Enrollment:** 218

**Production Model:** Partial Scratch Cook

**District F/R:** 100%

**School Year Implemented:** 2015/2016

**District ADP:** 96%

**No. of Grants Awarded:** 1

## South Conejos Schools

**Age Group:** k-5, 6-8, 9-12

**School Size:** Small (Under 300)

**School Environment:** Urban

**School F/R:** 100%

**School ADP:** 96%

## Project Description

### Connecting with Local Farms to Address Food Insecurity

Twice a week throughout the school year, the 218 students at Guadalupe Elementary, Antonito Junior High, and Antonito High Schools were offered a sampling of fresh fruits and vegetables as an afternoon snack.

The school district partnered with Valley Roots Food Hub, a local nonprofit that connects local producers with local buyers. Students had the opportunity to sample local produce during harvest months and non-local produce during the winter months.

The tastings included information about the origin of the produce, an overview of the farm and farmer, and details about how families could access the food on their own. The school also displayed a map that showed the origin of the local produce within the San Luis Valley.

JoAnn Garcia, district food service director, noted that the program made a huge difference in the health of her students.

“We were able to provide our students with easy access to healthy afternoon snacks twice each week. This is most definitely one step in the right direction of addressing food insecurity right here at home, along with health issues such as diabetes and obesity.” Garcia also noted that, “Students were also exposed to a greater variety of fruits and vegetables, giving them the opportunity to try foods they otherwise may never have crossed paths with.”



## Successes

- Exposing children of all ages to fresh fruits and vegetables, along with the health benefits of such foods.
- Students were able to learn about and try vegetables grown on farms near the school, including vegetables they do not regularly have access to.
- Through the grant, South Conejos Schools were able to provide students that may come from food insecure households with a healthy afternoon snack.

## Challenges

- It was challenging for the school to have enough time to prepare the tastings in addition to regular meal service.