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Saratoga Independent School

Grade 8

Here on Earth, we are highly reliant on farms for food. According to Science Direct, 80% of food and drinks come from farms. How often do we stop and think about how much farming and farmers have changed our lives for the better?

When I was younger, my mom had a garden in the backyard. We had strawberries, carrots, peas, and tomatoes. Sometimes, I helped her water or pick the plants and wash them.

Once, my mom was watering the tomatoes when she called out to me. When I came over, she used her pinky finger to point to a huge green caterpillar sitting on one of the vines. "Look at this," she whispered. It had black and white markings all over its body, and there were large creases everywhere it moved. It was mostly green, blending in with the leaf it was lounging on.

I was in awe. It was one of the biggest insects I'd ever seen in real life. I was also scared. The caterpillar was the size of my mom's finger. It had a horn coming out of one end and curled in at the other. It looked unreal.

Lots of people I know have gardens, and it's not always easy to take care of or keep alive. There are so many things that can go wrong. Not enough sunlight, not enough water, too much water, too many weeds, too many pests, and so much more. And having thirty acres of that? That's thirty times as hard to keep under control. More, even. No one I know has an acre of garden.

I am grateful for the people at Pitney Meadows and the work they do to give people a place to garden and grow things. For what they grow by themselves, and that they let us, as a school, come in and help them. Even though we are helping them, it takes time and effort on both sides to make it happen.

Gardening and farming can be difficult. We use so much food that was grown here, with only around 15% being imported from other places. And anywhere from 30 to 40% of it is wasted every year. I am grateful that people still work to grow food, to feed themselves and us. One way we can show gratitude for farmers and for the earth is by working to create less food waste.

We rely on farms. We use things from farms to eat and bake. Even wool and rubber come from different types of farms, things you wouldn't usually expect. We rely on farms and the people who spend their lives working on them, and I am grateful for them.

Sources

<https://www.pitneymeadowscommunityfarm.org/> (Pitney Meadows official website)

<https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/ag-and-food-statistics-charting-the-essentials/farming-and-farm-income> (USDA)

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