

A photograph of four young people (three women and one man) standing under a wooden frame structure, eating slices of watermelon. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera. The man is wearing a white tank top and a white baseball cap. One woman is wearing a blue basketball jersey with 'DUKE' and 'D' on it. Another woman is wearing a white t-shirt and a gold chain necklace. The background shows a red building and a blue sky with light clouds.

DUKE CAMPUS FARM
annual report 2013

A LETTER FROM THE FARM MANAGER

“Duke has a farm?!” is a question I have heard often, particularly during Freshman Orientation Week. At the signature welcome picnic, a mountain of our multi-colored watermelons greets new families, inviting Duke’s youngest student crop to commune and prepare for four years of growth. Three years into the farm’s life, most first-years arrive aware of the farm, and more each year cite DCF as an influential factor in their decision to apply and enroll. The 2013 picnic marked a turning point for the farm, as exclamations of disbelief were replaced with inquiries about internship applications, workday carpools, and how to buy our produce.

This new awareness is testament to the permanent space and community we’ve created here at Duke. Major infrastructure developments and enthusiastic demand for programming speak for themselves: the farm is here to stay.

The farm arose out of need for alternative spaces and dialogue around food and agriculture, and we continue to fill those gaps. We help students, faculty, and our extended community discover new ways to study, engage, and even socialize. As a student myself, I couldn’t have eaten a meal grown by my peers or joined discussions about food politics in a living-learning laboratory like the farm. I look at the happy faces in this report and smile knowing these opportunities exist for current and future Duke students.

There is still much work to be done, but we take a moment now to thank you, our incredible network of advocates and supporters, without whom this project would not continue to thrive.


Emily Sloss



“Starting Fresh”: Local food writers joined together this year to write a cookbook about Durham’s agricultural evolution from tobacco town to foodie center. DCF along with other local farms will be featured in the book, coming soon.
Photo credit: Megapixie

DUKE CAMPUS FARM

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COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE

CAMPUS SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE

It takes a campus to raise a farm. The Duke community supports our agricultural enterprise by purchasing produce for its dining halls and home kitchens. After a successful summer CSA venture spanning May through August, we launched a fall CSA and delivered weekly produce boxes to offices and dorm rooms across campus. From April through September, we sell produce at Live for Life's on-campus farmers' market. Additionally, students swipe their Food Points to enjoy our produce in campus dining halls, the Marketplace and new Events Pavilion on West Campus.

AROUND TOWN

The farm has expanded its business to include local restaurants in the South's Tastiest Town. Piedmont Restaurant, NOSH and the Refectory earn their farm-to-table reputations by featuring DCF produce grown just miles from their Durham kitchens. Piedmont even featured our produce at its Young Farmer's Dinner, where DCF staff shared conversation and an elegant meal with enthusiastic locavores.



Taste the rainbow: Summer tomatoes come in an incredible spectrum of colors, from pale yellows to bright purples. Tomato varieties this year included: Sungold, Lolipop, Orange Banana, Eva Purple Ball, Green Zebra, Indigo Rose, Dad's Sunset, Taxi, Jasper and Black Cherry.

CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS



“My 2-year assistantship at the Duke Campus Farm has been a vital part of my graduate education at the Nicholas School. It has been a place where I can viscerally experience my natural science course material, creatively solve problems, learn how to grow vegetables and find a few peaceful moments away from a computer screen. The farm has been a home for all of my creative and intellectual energies, from starting DCF’s mushroom log and compost operations to building pilot plots for my masters project about sustainable ag. education.”

- Damon Cory-Watson, MEM ‘13



“I hopped onto the wrong freshman orientation bus in fall 2011 and ended up touring the farm. Afterward, I applied to be an intern and the rest is history. Working at the farm has been the best part of my Duke experience. Learning growing techniques, teaching workshops, and facilitating our Alternative Spring Break have all helped me embrace education beyond the classroom. I’ve since developed a passion for field research and the environment. Although I may not pursue a career in farming, the experience and perspective I’ve gained on the farm will strongly impact my future career choices, whatever they may be.”

- Anna Willoughby, Evolutionary Anthropology Major, Class of 2015

LEARNING INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Students engage with our living-learning laboratory in many ways. Professors teach and break bread with their classes under our new pavilion, while students join community workdays and design memorandums, short documentary films, and field experiments around the farm. Farm staff mentor those completing projects at the undergrad and masters levels; we believe students’ food-related interests, from crop genetics to creative writing, deserve space to grow at Duke. Through interviewing local farmers and food business owners, DCF has identified research gaps in sustainable agriculture. Students and professors now have access to an online database of past, current and potential research projects at Duke around food and agriculture.

STUDENT INTERNSHIPS

DCF interns receive a more intensive ag education and leave a lasting footprint on the farm. During the school year, 4 undergraduate and graduate interns labor to keep the farm running from September through May while two students work 20 hours per week May-August for their summer internships. Our workers plant, harvest, and maintain our site, but also host dynamic workshops, write thoughtful blog posts, and design new structures, among other accomplishments. We hope to grow both healthy plants and good people at the farm, and interns are integral parts of both equations.

2013 COURSES

Spring Semester

ENV 245: Food & Energy, Dr. Charlotte Clark. “Transportation to DCF”

ENV 806: Program Management, Dr. Dave Hinton. “Edible and Native Landscaping on Campus”

DOCST 710S: Short Audio Documentary. Prof. John Biewen. “Duke: A Food Sweet Spot?”

Fall Semester

ENV 245: Sustainability: Theory and Practice, Dr. Charlotte Clark. “Unexpected Edibles”

DOCST 215: Documentary Photography and the Southern Cultural Landscape, Prof. Susie Post-Rust. “Fire It Up: Rekindling Southern Foodways at Piedmont”

ENV 226S: Field Methods, Dr. Gary Dwyer. “Soil Science”

ENRICHING STUDENT LIFE

ALTERNATIVE SPRING BREAK

The farm hosted its second annual Alternative Spring Break, an intensive 3-day program that explored the people, processes, and politics behind “farm-to-fork”. An interdisciplinary group of undergraduate and graduate students spent their days working on farms, meeting local food entrepreneurs, and exploring Durham’s extensive network of community food organizations. Each evening, the students prepared a locally-grown feast for guest experts, who facilitated conversations on topics ranging from genetic modification to food labeling laws and the Farm Bill. In farm fields and crowded kitchens, we watched Duke students grow closer to the Triangle food community and to each other.

PROJECT BUILD

In August, small armies of incoming freshmen arrived at the farm with their Project BUILD leaders. The 64 pre-orientation participants worked in teams of 8 to build permanent beds and harvest summer’s bounty. Duke’s newest students enjoyed the fruits of their labor (see front cover for evidence), leaving watermelons seeds and promises of future return in their wake.

Prepping with Project BUILD:
“During our farm visit, we prepared the soil for new plants just like the Duke community was preparing for a group of new students. Like seeds awaiting cultivation, we arrived with hopes of blossoming into young adults.”
- Kevin Lin, Class of 2017



CAKALACKY CASH CROPS



MONTHLY WORKSHOP SERIES

This fall DCF launched its “Cackalacky Cash Crops” workshop series to pay homage to North Carolina’s rich agricultural history. We planted an educational heritage plot including tobacco, cotton, indigo, peanuts and field corn. The workshop series hosts experts from across the state offering participants context for our modern food and textile industries.



SOCIAL CONTEXT

Our workshop series goes beyond seed and soil science to address the social, political, and economic impacts of cash crop industries. DCF offers a realistic analysis of the relationship status between commodities like cotton and tobacco and their historic legacies: it’s complicated.



Like most crops, peanuts also come in many shapes and colors that we can’t find in the grocery store. This year we experimented with black, red and the more common brown peanut.



SUSTAINING AG’S FUTURE WITH HINTS FROM THE PAST

Our corn workshop featured Duke Biology professor Mary Eubanks, a corn geneticist who studies native grasses to breed competitive varieties of non-GMO, organic corn which are incredibly drought tolerant and protein dense. Like Eubanks, DCF embraces historical roots to inform and improve our production practices today.



Shiitake Scavengers: *“My 6th graders are so proud of their efforts working on the farm. The partnership between DCF and TDS’s 6th grade has been a formative part of my students’ experience and will impact their food choices for a very long time.”* - Kate Newman (T’ 12)



CULTIVATING COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY WORKDAYS

Volunteers ‘learn by doing’ on Thursday and Sunday afternoons. Student groups, families, and curious citizens logged 2000 sweat- and story-filled hours in our field. These folks - first-time farmers to seasoned greenthumbs - remind us why we are here: to teach, learn, and grow together.

CONNECTING THE FARM TO K-12 STUDENTS

The farm built a new partnership with Durham’s Triangle Day School (TDS) thanks to Kate Newman, a 2012 Duke alum-turned-science-teacher. TDS 6th graders now visit once a month to lend their hands and energy to the farm.

Additionally, Farm Fellow Emily McGinty conducted “Virtual Field Trips” with 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade classrooms in her native Pittsburgh, PA. More than 300 elementary scientists researched campus farm conundrums and presented their findings during a series of video chats. Farm staff has promised to stay busy implementing the young experts’ advice on good composting, crop rotations, and more.

CEMENTING OUR LEGACY

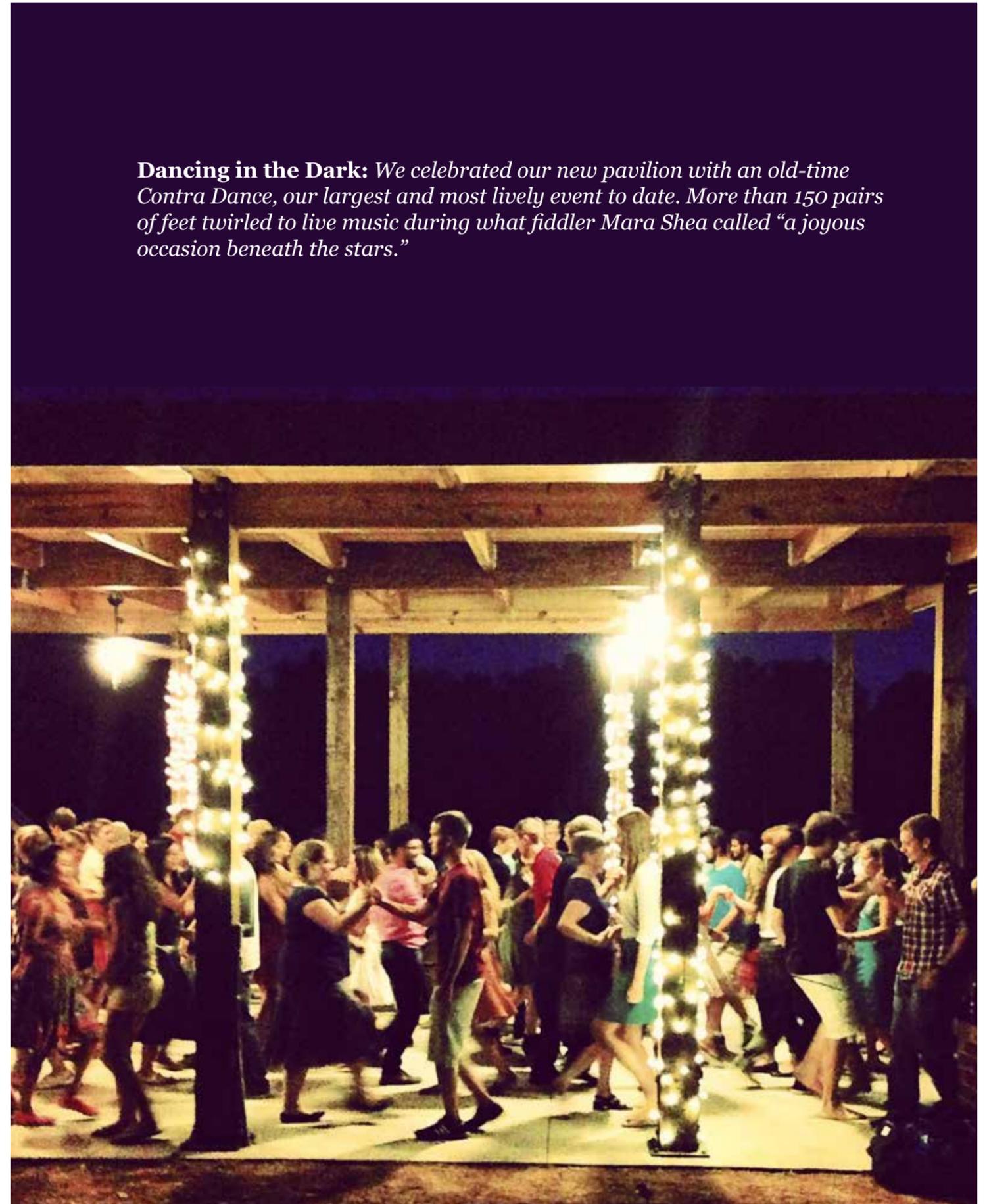
A ROOF OVER OUR HEADS

As summer settled in, piles of blueprints and permits transformed into a community pavilion and much-needed storage shed. Thanks to generous funding from The Duke Endowment and others, the farm now has an outdoor classroom, a social gathering space, and a physical representation of the farm's permanence at Duke. As summer intern Josh Barfield aptly states, "There are now more places to hang the tools, rest the bodies, and facilitate the conversations that make DCF a hub of agricultural innovation, education, and involvement."

INTERNS PUT SKILLS TO WORK

With a nod to both form and function, our summer student-farmers built new structures to enhance DCF's humble acre. A central pergola will boast hardy kiwis and muscadine vines in seasons to come, and artistically constructed cedar gates provide a warm welcome into the farm. New benches, permanent pathways and educational demonstration gardens around the perimeter of the field allow visitors to engage with the farm in new ways.

Dancing in the Dark: *We celebrated our new pavilion with an old-time Contra Dance, our largest and most lively event to date. More than 150 pairs of feet twirled to live music during what fiddler Mara Shea called "a joyous occasion beneath the stars."*



GROWING

TOGETHER



LEND A HAND

"I love my time at DCF...watching the cycle of life, being involved in the grind - and watching progress happen slowly and steadily. The CSA boxes rock. I've become a more conscious eater - and I think on a much broader level about what my food choices mean." - Liz McInerny, regular farm volunteer and CSA customer

USE YOUR SKILLS

"Building projects were special because we built structures designed to bring people together: a pergola with benches to give volunteers a rest; cedar gates to make our plot both more appealing and to allow quicker passage from work to leisure. I take pride in having helped grow the farm and our community." - Josh Barfield, DCF summer intern '13 and MTS '14



SPARE SOME CHANGE

"To support the Duke Campus Farm through service on its board and through donations is to enable Duke students to eat organic, fresh, locally grown produce. And to teach those students who volunteer or serve as interns the skills of farming which will last a lifetime." - Brenda Brodie, donor and board member

SUPPORTING THE FARM

At year's end, we are proud to share the farm's accomplishments because they are a product of your support. Thank you for lending a hand, a skill, or some spare change to the continued growth of our community-supported venture. We welcome financial gifts to the farm at www.sites.duke.edu/farm/giving-opportunities and welcome your time and talents any Thursday or Sunday at community workdays throughout the year.

2013 BY THE NUMBERS

Your generous support helps our numbers grow.

- 5,600** pounds of produce sold
- 2000** volunteer hours logged
- 125** varieties of crops grown
- 23** summer CSA members
- 18** fall CSA members
- 16** educational outreach events hosted
- 15** Duke class tours
- 12** K-12 farm visits
- 9** student internships
- 8** individual and group student projects
- 3** years in production
- 2** full time staff
- 1** overarching goal: providing sustainable produce and food education to the Duke and Durham communities

THANK YOU...

The Duke Campus Farm thrives on rain and sunshine, on the sweat of interns and volunteers, and on the dedication and work of its many supporters across the University and its Durham community. As 2014 begins, we thank you for everything you've done for DCF in 2013.

DUKE CAMPUS FARM STAFF

Emily Sloss, *Farm Manager*

Emily McGinty, *Fellow '13-'14*

Sarah Parsons, *Fellow '12-'13*

CAMPUS STAKEHOLDERS

Sustainable Duke

Duke Forest

Office of Executive Vice President

Duke Dining

STUDENT INTERNS

Anna Willoughby

Damon Cory-Watson

Steve Kuznetsvtov

Josh Barfield

Henry Frank

Sam Jolly

Simone Serat

NICHOLAS SCHOOL ASSISTANTS

Theo Collins

Sara Overton

BOARD OF ADVISORS

Larry Bohs

Jedediah Purdy

Brenda Brodie

Charlie Thompson

Charlotte Clark

Daniel Vermeer

Mary Eubanks

Norman Wirzba

Michelle Nowlin

DONORS

INDIVIDUAL

Keith and Brenda Brodie

Charlotte and Jeff Clark

Karen Schweitzer

Carolyn Van Meter

GRANTS

The Duke Endowment

IN-KIND

Billy Yeargin

Brooks Contractor

Carolina Friends School

Duke Gardens

Duke Grounds

Duke Mycology Lab

Frog Pond Farm

Woodfruit Farm

Lee Miller

Donna Devanny

Jack Hunt

Michael and Gretchen Morrissey

North Carolina Humanities Council

Small Town Records



MISSION

The Duke Campus Farm is a production farm and educational facility dedicated to providing the Duke and Durham communities with fresh, sustainable produce by creating a living-learning laboratory around all things food and agriculture.



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