



# *Rio Grande Community Farm*

*2011 Annual Report*

*[www.riograndefarm.org](http://www.riograndefarm.org)*

# MISSION & VISION

**Mission:** To improve the health of our community through sustainable agriculture, fresh food, and education.

## **Vision/Strategic Directions:**

### **1. Demonstrating sustainable urban agriculture**

RGCF operates a certified organic farm on public land using sustainable agricultural methods with the goal of growing food as well as demonstrating these methods for the farming community. RGCF blends the best of traditional agricultural practices with more progressive strategies to improve yield, conserve water, and improve soil fertility. RGCF collaborates with other farms and agencies and disseminates information as appropriate.

### **2. Growing food for and with our community**

RGCF grows and distributes fresh, organic produce to diverse populations in Albuquerque including schools, food banks, non-profit organizations, grocery stores, restaurants, and other consumers. RGCF operates a community garden that welcomes volunteers and encourages its members to donate produce. RGCF supervises a cooperative pool of labor to assist other public and non-profit farms throughout the winter season.

### **3. Providing education and training opportunities in agriculture**

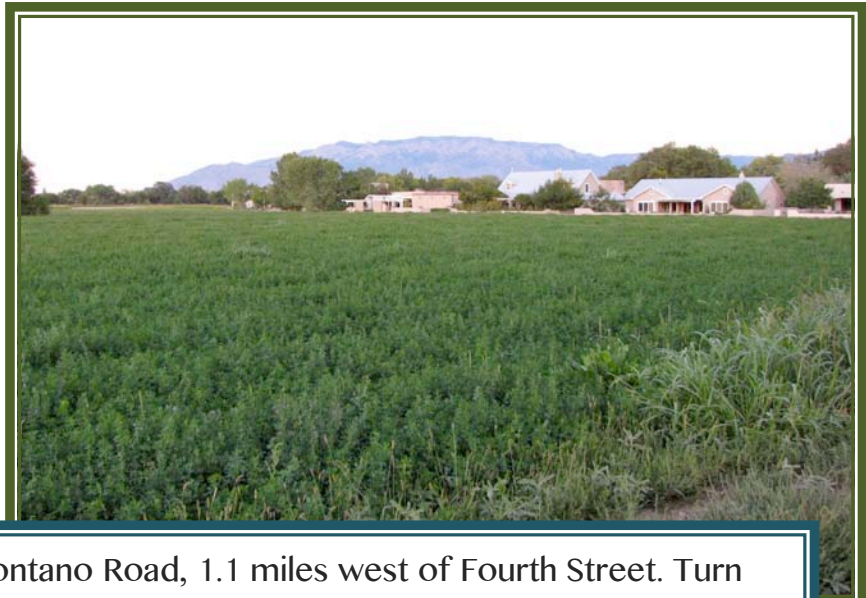
RGCF provides year round education programs and special events that teach the community about sustainable agriculture, organic gardening, nutrition, and wildlife. RGCF trains young farmers and engages them in the process of farming public land for the public good.

#### 4. Enhancing urban wildlife habitat

RGCF plants wildlife crops with the goal of maintaining and enhancing wildlife habitats. The community is encouraged to visit the Farm for the purposes of recreation and appreciation of the natural world.

#### 5. Growing and celebrating the farming community

RGCF hosts events that celebrate our own work and participates in community events sponsored by other organizations that celebrate farming and farm education in our community.



**Farm Location:** 1701 Montano Road NW – On Montano Road, 1.1 miles west of Fourth Street. Turn north on Tierra Viva, and park in the gravel lot to your left.

**Mailing Address:** 6804 – 4th St. NW, #114 Los Ranchos de Albuquerque, NM 87107

**Phone:** 505 345 4580

**Email:** [info@riograndefarm.org](mailto:info@riograndefarm.org)

**Website:** <http://www.riograndefarm.org/>

# DEMONSTRATING SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

## ADDING IT UP

### Methods

Sub-surface drip irrigation

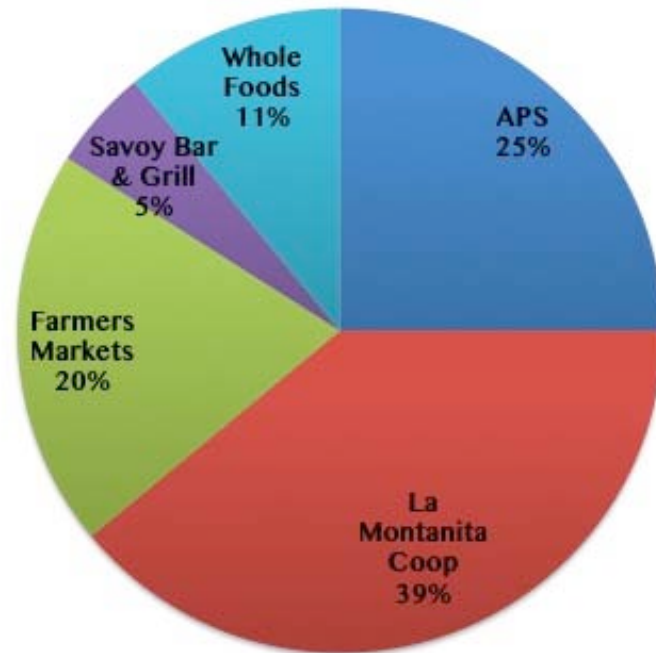
- + Laser leveled fields & strip flooding
- + No-till methods
- + Crop rotation
- + Organic chicken manure

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### Results

- = 50 acres of cover crops including  
17 acres wildlife crops
- Decreased water use
- Increased soil fertility
- Decreased soil erosion

2011 Produce & Flower Sales



# EDUCATION & TRAINING



## ADDING IT UP

1 new Education Coordinator

+ 4 awesome volunteer Farm Docents

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= 860 students attending farm tours

*Teacher Testimonial: "The Growing Up to Succeed (GUTS) program sincerely appreciated your wonderful tour and activities at the Rio Grande Community Farm. Our students learned a lot about the web of life and where our food comes from. The GUTS team looks forward to visiting the farm again in the future." Jodi R., Growing Up To Succeed program leader*

*A story from our Education Coordinator, Julie Hirshfield: "When I asked the class what organic means to them, most of the kids gave me the usual answers - fresh, natural, from the garden. He was the last student to speak up, and when I called on him he told me that organic meant 'hope' to him. He then explained, 'organic will help Mother Earth to be healthy, and gives me hope for a healthy life for my family.'"*

# GROWING FOOD FOR & WITH THE COMMUNITY

## ADDING IT UP

17 AmeriCorps members  
+ 3 affiliate intern locations  
+ 5 acres of food and flowers

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= 1,075 pounds donated to food banks  
563 pounds sold to Albuquerque Public Schools  
Lots of produce sold at local farmer's markets

*Rio Grande Community Farm is in its 2nd year as an AmeriCorps Program Services agency. The overarching goal of our AmeriCorps program is to support and improve the infrastructure for sustainable farming in Bernalillo County, in order to increase the availability of local, organic food to our citizens.*

*We have partnered with the Bernalillo County Extension Office and the American Friends Service Committee and have placed 17 young farmer interns at 3 host sites. We have seen great progress in the last two years including:*

- Restoration and expansion of the Hubbell House historic gardens in the South Valley;*
- Expansion of the Agri-Cultura Network serving the South Valley;*
- Increase in local produce sold to Albuquerque Public Schools;*
- Creation of demonstration gardens at Los Poblanos Fields and the Extension office; and*
- Initiation of an AmeriCorps Winter Work Crew, which helps public and non-profit farms with infrastructure projects.*

# IN THE COMMUNITY GARDEN



## ADDING IT UP

In Albuquerque's oldest Community Garden:

2 acres

+ 82 gardeners

+ 52 Master Gardeners

+ Alvarado Elementary School Garden

+ 500 volunteers

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= 157 pounds donated to food banks

1/2 acre of wildlife food

Lots of successful gardeners

*Community Gardener Testimonial: " I joined the CG many years ago. Since then I have been growing a large percentage of my own ORGANIC vegetables and herbs. The feeling of accomplishment and satisfaction from my garden has been a life changer, and certainly an eye opener as to what is possible via community cooperation. Thank you very much." - Ed Stevens, Community Garden Member*

# ENHANCING URBAN WILDLIFE HABITAT

## ADDING IT UP

17 Acres of wildlife crops

+ Certified organic farming methods

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= Thousands of migrating Sandhill Cranes and geese

Hundreds of seasonal bird species

Home to coyotes and 3 kinds of hawks



*Member Testimonial: "In terms of the wildlife at Los Poblanos Fields (the location of Rio Grande Community Farm), throughout recent years there are more migratory birds than in the past. As for migratory birds, I see many Sandhill Cranes, Canadian Geese, and Mallards from the middle of October through sometime in late January and possibly through late February." - Ruth Reidy*

# GROWING & CELEBRATING THE FARMING COMMUNITY



*Dinner in the Field Testimonial: "The Dinner in the Field was lovely. The food, the setting, the music and the wine contributed to make it a beautiful evening. Of course, the weather and the sunset also helped. Congratulations to the board of Rio Grande Community Farm and your staff for putting together such a lovely event. As some people at our table said, 'might this become an annual event?'"*

## ADDING IT UP

### **Dinner in the Field (September 25<sup>th</sup>):**

- 4 Outstanding restaurants & catering companies
- + 1 Local winery
- + 11 Local farmers, ranchers, cheese makers & bakers
- + 1 Live jazz band

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= 100 happy guests at Dinner in the Field

### **Maize Maze (September & October):**

- + 7 Acre corn maze boasting a dinosaur theme
- + 1 Successful partnership with New Mexico Museum of Natural History & Science
- + 5 Generous sponsors

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= 12,000 attendees at 14th Annual Maize Maze

## Staff

Executive Director, Minor Morgan

Chief Farmer, Dan Schuster

Maze Coordinator & Sales, Kemper  
Barkhurst

Education Coordinator, Julie Hirshfield

Office Manager, Marcia Walton

Assistant to Executive Director, Ellen  
Goldstein

## Board of Directors

President, Stephanie Dobbie

Vice President, Vacant

Treasurer, Ursula Thayer

Secretary, Becky Pierce

Elizabeth Baer

Kemper Barkhurst

Casey Citrin

Joan Marsan

Lora Roberts

Olga Schifani

Dan Schuster

Lindsay Wood

Open Space representative, Kent Swanson



2011 "Dino" Maize Maze

## Our Funders

Albert I. Pierce Foundation

Albuquerque Community Foundation

AmeriCorps

Clear Channel Outdoor

Clear Channel Radio

Comcast

General Mills

Junior League of Albuquerque

Lavender in the Village

McCune Foundation

PNM

Shepherd of the Valley

USDA

Wells Fargo

Western SARE

## Our Partners

Agri-Cultura Network

American Friends Service Committee

Bernalillo County Open Space

City of Albuquerque Open Space

Hubbell House Alliance

NMSU Cooperative Extension Service

Village of Los Ranchos de Albuquerque