

[https://www.hmbreview.com/community/big-ideas-at-cunha-s-little-farm/article\\_4b0530ce-c550-11ee-9132-6fe5fca5dc8a.html](https://www.hmbreview.com/community/big-ideas-at-cunha-s-little-farm/article_4b0530ce-c550-11ee-9132-6fe5fca5dc8a.html)

# Big ideas at Cunha's little farm

Rain barrels the latest addition to outdoor learning space

By Peter Tokofsky  
Feb 6, 2024



Anna Hoch-Kenney / Review

The Little Cunha Farm, Cunha Intermediate School's agricultural science learning area adjacent to the soccer fields along Highway 1, will host a workshop on rainwater collection systems on Saturday from 9 a.m. to noon.

The public is invited to join science teacher Sonia Myers and her 8th-grade students at the farm to hear from Flows to the Bay about the installation of rain barrels and other devices that conserve water, reduce irrigation costs and help prevent stormwater from polluting creeks and the ocean.

A rain capture system is the latest addition to the farm that has grown considerably in scale and ambition over the past three years.

#### ADVERTISEMENT

The farm started in 2018 as a collaboration among the school, the San Mateo County Office of Sustainability and the San Mateo Resource Conservation District. The pandemic shutdown in 2020-21 brought a setback for the farm that was previously located on a smaller space on the opposite side of the fields.

After the return to campus, the school's ag-science team made plans to revitalize the farm by moving to a larger plot and developing the curriculum it supports to include electives in grades 6 through 8.

Myers now envisions the farm becoming essential for staple programs at the school. This year, 250 students will take courses on the farm, gaining hands-on learning for science topics such as carbon sequestration in soil and the chemistry of photosynthesis.

Myers also sees the farm as a site for career technical education that can include agriculture, raising animals, nutrition and developing plans for food distribution and providing resources for the community.

"We love all the hand-on experiences that come with this class," 8th-graders Makena Glynn and Kristina Reyes said when asked what they appreciate most about the farm.

Lisa Longaker, coordinator for career technical education at the school, helped the farm team successfully apply for grants that provided funds to purchase a shed, a new greenhouse, paths and fencing for the expanded farm.

The Cabrillo Education Foundation added to an earlier grant and supported purchase of a chicken coop. The little farm is now home to 12 chickens that students adopted from Half Moon Bay Feed and Fuel when they were just a day old. Recently a duck joined the brood and two goats are expected to arrive soon.

#### ADVERTISEMENT

In addition to garden beds, a small greenhouse and compost bins that recycle food scraps from school lunches, the compact landscape also includes 20 fruit trees, more than 100 native plants and a pond.

As the landscaping fills in, Myers hopes that students can spend time outdoors and maybe even grab a piece of fruit from a tree or pull up a carrot for a snack.

Flows to the Bay, the group leading the workshop on

Saturday, is the public outreach arm of the San Mateo Countywide Water Pollution Prevention Program, a partnership established by the 20 cities in San Mateo County. The presentation will explain how to set up barrels and install drip irrigation systems. Snacks, educational materials and, of course, water will be provided. Anyone interested should register at [flowstobay.org](http://flowstobay.org).

---

**Peter Tokofsky**

[Learn more about your privacy options](#)