

## **Rooted in Place: Preserving Native Agricultural**

Outside the gates of student-tended beds at The Farm, sustainability continues to take shape, even along the edges. Planted not for harvest, but for habitat, The Farm's native landscaping project establishes a diverse selection of plants chosen to support pollinators, build soil health, and reflect the ecological character of Southern Oregon. Interested in supporting our mission? Consider signing up for our Community Supported Agriculture program - signups are live on The Farm website!

What does it mean to landscape a farm with native shrubs, perennials, and grasses? By selecting species that have evolved alongside local insects, birds, and soil communities over thousands of years, native plants support the farm's broader mission of ecological responsibility by maximizing water usage and steering clear of excessive fertilizers. The project features a myriad of species, including Oregon grape, Western sword fern, oceanspray, and woods rose, alongside a rich mix of native perennials like goldenrod, Douglas aster, coyote mint, and white yarrow.

The plants selected, in collaboration with Ahimsa Gardens, integrates purposeful approaches to biodiversity. Shrubs like silk tassel and snowberry provide structure and shelter. Perennials, including Penstemon and Phacelia, bloom in staggered stages across spring, summer, and fall to support pollinators, ensuring food supply throughout the growing season. Grasses like California fescue weave texture and movement through the landscape.

A farm that tends not only its crops but also its surrounding ecology models whole-systems thinking prioritized in sustainable agriculture. Students who help plant and maintain these native borders learn to think about the farm as part of a larger living system. Want to see the native landscaping in person, or learn more about how The Farm integrates ecological practices into its operations? Visit us at [farm.sou.edu](http://farm.sou.edu) and stay connected through The Farm's Instagram and Facebook.

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