

**Agency: Commerce, Community and Economic Development**

**Grants to Named Recipients (AS 37.05.316)**

**Grant Recipient: Calypso Farm And Ecology Center**

**Federal Tax ID: 92-0169368**

**Project Title:**

**Project Type: Other**

# Calypso Farm And Ecology Center - Schoolyard Garden Initiative

**State Funding Requested: \$25,000**

**House District: 8 / D**

One-Time Need

**Brief Project Description:**

The Schoolyard Garden Initiative supports agricultural education through active school gardens.

**Funding Plan:**

**Total Cost of Project: \$115,000**

	<u>Funding Secured</u>		<u>Other Pending Requests</u>		<u>Anticipated Future Need</u>	
	<i>Amount</i>	<i>FY</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>FY</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>FY</i>
Federal Funds	\$30,000	08				
Local Funds	\$40,000	09- 10				
Other Funds	\$20,000	09				
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$90,000</b>					

*Explanation of Other Funds:*  
*earned income from produce sales and corporate/ private foundation grants*

**Detailed Project Description and Justification:**

The Schoolyard Garden Initiative responds to the need for hands-on educational opportunities in the schools, a garden connection for children and locally grown food for the community. The goal of the initiative is to support a network of school gardens functioning as an experimental learning environment for teachers and students during the school year and as food production gardens- maintained by Middle and High School students- during the summer months. The project specifically needs to expand the number of gardens it has to accommodate the Schoolyard Garden Initiative.

Since its inception in 2003, the program has been an incredible success, evolving and growing at an astonishing rate. There are currently eight participating schools: five with established gardens (Effie Kokrine Charter School, University Park Elementary, Hunter Elementary, Woodriver Elementary, and Pearl Creek Elementary) and three in the planning phases ( West Valley High School, Randy Smith and the Watershed Charter School). When school is in session over 1,500 students will have access to the program. Additional schools continue to express interest. During the last several years Calypso Farms has received requests for information and resources for creating similar projects throughout the state and nation. State funds will be used to directly support the five schools in the school district with active school gardens and agricultural education.

*For use by Co-chair Staff Only:*

\$25,000  
Approved

5:19 PM 5/4/2010

**Project Timeline:**

Time line – FY 2011- FY 2012

May/June – supplies are purchased for use by over 120 Student Gardeners. Garden preparation and planting begins.

June – Farm Stand and Garden Sheds are built by Student Gardeners under supervision. Neighborhood Farm Stands are open for business

July and August – Student Gardeners work at each school garden to develop the soil.

**Entity Responsible for the Ongoing Operation and Maintenance of this Project:**

Calypso Farm and Ecology Center

**Grant Recipient Contact Information:**

Name: Susan Willsrud  
Address: PO Box 106  
Ester, AK 99725  
Phone Number: (907)451-0691  
Email: susan@calypsofarm.org

Has this project been through a public review process at the local level and is it a community priority?  Yes  No

March 2, 2009

**Maya Dunham**  
**3290 Helen Pl.**  
**Fairbanks, AK 99709**

Dear **Senator Joe Thomas** and  
**Representative David Guttenberg,**

My name is Maya Dunham. I am 12 years old and have lived most in Alaska of my life. I am writing in support of the proposed appropriation for the **Calypto Farms and Ecology Center** organization.

In the summer of 2008, I was lucky enough to be a part of one of calypso's smaller gardens at the Effie Kokrine Charter School. Working at Effie was a very educating experience that all young teens should have.

There are many things that I gained when I was working in the garden. Watching the garden grow from start, to finish was very exiting. All of us kids had to work hard together to make he garden successful. Providing all the fresh produce to the community and our own family was rewording. Being able to work with other young teens was something that was a great learning experience. I learned to cooperate, to listen to others, as well as literacy skills when we sent out our weekly newsletter!

This opportunity would be great for other young teens because it is a positive work experience for kids my age and it males us all realize that we are a part of the community.

Sincerely,  
Maya Dunham

**Contact:**

Susan Willsrud, Calypso Farm Director  
PO Box 106  
Ester, AK 99725

Phone – (907) 451-0691

Email – [susan@calypsofarm.org](mailto:susan@calypsofarm.org)

EIN (Tax ID) # - 92-0169368

Calypso Farm and Ecology Center is making a capital project request for \$25,000 to support the development of the School Garden Initiative in Fairbanks, Alaska. The following budget breakdown is to support capital needs at each of five school gardens (Effie Kokrine Charter School, Woodriver Elementary, University Park Elementary, Peark Creek Elementary and Hunter Elementary)

Each of five developing school garden will need \$5,000 - \$25,000 total.

Capital Needs are broken down as follows:

Gardening Tools - \$2,000  
Irrigation Supplies - \$500  
Farm Stand Canopy - \$500  
Garden Shed - \$1,000  
Top Soil - \$1,000

Timeline – May, 2009 – December, 2009

May – supplies are purchased for use by over 120 Student Gardeners. Garden preparation and planting begins.

June – Farm Stand and Garden Sheds are built by Student Gardeners under supervision. Neighborhood Farm Stands are open for business

July and August – Student Gardeners work at each school garden to develop the soil, care for the gardens and market the produce to the neighborhood

September – Each school uses their school garden for educational purposes – teacher training support from Calypso.

October – Gardens are cleaned, tools and supplies stored for the winter. Teachers gather seeds from the garden and begin year-round indoor garden related educational activities.

November and December – Teachers continue to use the garden for inspiration in teaching core subjects. Calypso provides support and a standards-based garden curriculum guide to all participating schools. Calypso carries out program evaluation and works on materials about the program for use by communities statewide and nationally.

## **The Schoolyard Garden Initiative Fairbanks, Alaska**

*A collaborative educational program led by Calypso Farm and Ecology Center*

Calypso Farm and Ecology Center (Calypso), located near Fairbanks, Alaska (District 8) operates the Schoolyard Garden Initiative (SGI), an innovative community food program which creates school gardens that function as youth-operated food production gardens during the summer months and experiential learning environments during the school year. **Calypso is seeking capital funds (\$5,000 per active garden - \$25,000 total) to support the development of school gardens at this pivotal period of school garden expansion in Fairbanks.**

### About Calypso

Founded in 1999, Calypso is an educational, working farm located in Ester, Alaska, and ten miles outside of Fairbanks. *Calypso's mission is to promote local agriculture and environmental awareness through hands-on education in natural and farming ecosystems.* Calypso provides hands-on educational programs for children and adults, reaching thousands of individuals annually. Programs include: farm field trips, farm and garden workshops, Community Shared Agriculture (CSA), farm apprenticeships and an extensive school garden network. Calypso's programs are valuable models for other communities statewide and nationally. Through all of its programming, Calypso works to provide food and education access for low-income members of our community. Visit [www.calypsosfarm.org](http://www.calypsosfarm.org) to learn more.

### About the Schoolyard Garden Initiative

The Schoolyard Garden Initiative responds to the need for **hands-on educational opportunities** in the schools, a **garden connection for children** and **locally grown food for the community**. The goal of the initiative is to support a network of school gardens functioning as experiential learning environments for teachers and students during the school year and as food production gardens – maintained by Middle and High School students - during the summer months. Calypso plays the lead role in the initiative by caring for the gardens during the summer, consulting on garden design and development, supporting teachers in using the gardens and maintaining a network of communication between schools.

Since its inception in 2003, the program has been an incredible success, evolving and growing at an astonishing rate. There are currently eight participating schools: five with established gardens (Effie Kokrine Charter School, University Park Elementary, Hunter Elementary, Woodriver Elementary and Pearl Creek Elementary) and three in the planning phase (West Valley High School, Randy Smith Middle and the Watershed Charter School). Additional schools continue to express interest. During the last several years we have received many requests for information and resources for creating similar projects throughout the state and nation.

### Program Impacts

The Schoolyard Garden Initiative currently impacts thousands of members of the Fairbanks community, with the potential to reach tens of thousands of Alaskans statewide.

**Community Food** – By designing school gardens as neighborhood food production gardens, local food needs are met. Each school garden meets the vegetables needs for a minimum of 20 families

through the summer months. Food Stamps, WIC and Senior Coupons are accepted. Produce is available through CSAs and neighborhood farm stands.

**Community Vitality** – Food gardens are a beautiful and functional addition to school grounds. The daily presence of a youth garden crew at the school throughout the summer brings life and vitality to neighborhoods. Community volunteers (of all ages) are sought and welcome to work along side the youth in the gardens. Additionally, Calypso offers gardening workshops at the gardens for neighborhood residents several times throughout the summer.

**Education** – During the school year, gardens provide an excellent outdoor classroom for teachers and a focal point for hands-on learning throughout the seasons. Calypso provides an array of educational support for teachers, including facilitated garden-based lessons in math, language and science and printed resource materials. During the summer, student gardeners, volunteers and community members learn about food production, working together and healthy eating habits.

**Youth Empowerment** – Each school garden can accommodate approximately 30 student gardeners through Calypso’s Employing Alaskan Teens in Gardening (EATinG) program. Each student is asked to commit to a minimum of one month in the program. As part of the program, students work for 3 hours daily (M-Th). They are expected to show up on time, work hard, communicate openly, have fun and eat the vegetables they grow! A qualified School Garden Supervisor works with the students to develop these skills. As a result, student gardeners emerge from the program with valuable work and life skills and an enormous sense of accomplishment.

#### Schoolyard Garden Initiative Funding

The SGI is a grassroots effort, fueled by thousands of volunteer hours and in-kind support and funded by a number of sources. Calypso takes a diversified approach to program funding to insure stability.

2009 funds (pending and secured) for the SGI include:

- 35% - \$40,000 – community support – individual private donors (over 200 individuals)
- 13% - \$15,000 – earned income from produce sales
- 26% - \$30,000 USDA – Community Food Projects (Calypso is an 08-10 grant recipient)
- 5% - \$5,000 – corporate and private foundation grants
- **21% - \$25,000 – State of Alaska**

#### How State of Alaska Funds will be used

State capital funds will be used to directly support the five schools in the school district with active school gardens (listed above). Funds will be used to provide essential materials needed for each garden as they develop into fully functioning school and neighborhood food gardens.

Funding breakdown for each of five schools is as follows:

Gardening Tools - \$2,000  
Irrigation Supplies - \$500  
Farm Stand Canopy - \$500  
Garden Shed - \$1,000  
Top Soil - \$1,000

During 2009, approximately 120 students will be hired as Student Gardeners and 4 young adults will be hired as School Garden Supervisors. Over 2,000 lbs of fresh produce is produced per school – 10,000 lbs total. (Note- all School Gardens accept Food Stamps, WIC and Senior Coupons for vegetable sales) When school is in session, over 1,500 students will have access to the gardens as an educational resource.

Project Timeline May – Dec, 2009

**May** – supplies are purchased for use by over 120 Student Gardeners. Garden preparation and planting begins.

**June** – Farm Stand and Garden Sheds are built by Student Gardeners under supervision. Neighborhood Farm Stands are open for business

**July and August** – Student Gardeners work at each school garden to develop the soil, care for the gardens, take produce home to their families and market the produce to the neighborhood

**September** – Each school uses their school garden for educational purposes – teacher training support from Calypso.

**October** – Gardens are cleaned, tools and supplies stored for the winter. Teachers gather seeds from the garden and begin year-round indoor garden related educational activities.

**November and December** – Teachers continue to use the garden for inspiration in teaching core subjects. Calypso provides support and a standards-based garden curriculum guide to all participating schools. Calypso carries out program evaluation and works on materials about the program for use by communities statewide and nationally.