

Costilla County Conservancy District Scholarship Essay

To whom it may concern, my name is Adriana Vigil-Gardea and this year I will be graduating from Centennial High School. As a San Luis native I know the struggle it can be to not have access to fresh produce for the days you need one lime, or one avocado or just one fresh jalapeno for that sandwich you've been waiting all day for. Having to go all the way to Alamosa, La Jara or Antonito for fresh produce, to say it bluntly, really sucks. A trip for one item becomes an expensive trip because not only do you go for the thing you need but you may also need to put gas to make it there and back. Though our options for fresh produce here in San Luis are expanding now that Sonias has a bit more of a variety as well as Central Oil, we still struggle due to the fact that these things run out so quickly because they are in such high demand.

A community "Farm Park" would really benefit our community. I believe a Farm Park would get the youth more involved and show them that they can make an impact on the community even if it's in small ways. Making their own produce can teach them why fresh produce is such a privilege while also teaching them of our cultural practices and agricultural practices that have been passed down by generations on the use of flood irrigation by means of our acequias. Overall it gives them access to learn about water conservation and water conservation practices as a whole, while giving back to the community by being able to have a place that sells fresh produce in bulk by local growers. Even though we do not have a Farm Park I think it's a really great and creative idea that would really benefit our community by means of having fresh produce, work and teaching experiences for local youth, while also teaching about cultural and sustainable agricultural practices that represent us and our culture. "*La Agua es Vida*" is a common saying here in San Luis and I could not agree more, it is important that we continue our ancestors legacies and continue passing down knowledge through the past

generations to the future ones, while also continuing to help one another so that we can have a successful and thriving community.