

**SEED-TO-TABLE: Program provides good food, hands-on education**

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picked a planting spot, dug an appropriate hole and eased their plantings out of their containers, gently preparing the roots for the ground. They used butter knives to stir in a bit of bone meal, manure and basalt to make sure the plants had good nutrients to start with.

They learned that their plants would have to be covered at night to keep the Sisters Country chill from doing them in.

“At night we cover these,”

Griswold explained. “Tuck them into bed.”

As one group of students was planting, another was engaged in a blind taste-test of produce typical of that produced by Mahonia Gardens. Farmer Benji Nagel served up beets, kale, asparagus, purple cabbage, brussels sprouts.

“This is a very small sampling of the kinds of things you can grow in Sisters,” he explained.

The sixth-graders tasted with blindfolds on while a partner asked them survey questions. Some of the students found the produce to taste; some didn’t.

Students also explored compost, and Nagel quizzed

them on what they’d learned about its properties.

Beyond “poop is ‘green!’” they learned that compost holds moisture and provides nutrients that help make plants grow in a challenging Central Oregon climate.

The Seed-to-Table program is designed to provide nutritious alternatives for Sisters students to eat at school while providing them with hands-on science and arts education opportunities. From the Seed-to-Table Program’s farm plot, students and community members provide fresh produce to the Sisters Kiwanis Food Bank and to Sisters schools. The program works with Oregon farmers and distributors and



PHOTO BY JIM CORNELIUS

Lauren Griswold explains the planting process to Sisters students.

has brought in over 2,500 pounds of nutritious, locally grown and processed foods to the Sisters schools.

The program is one of several innovative education

programs in Sisters schools, supported by community members and organizations that strive to expand local students’ experiences and educational experiences.

**Building a program...**



PHOTO PROVIDED

Little League Minors Softball is underway in Sisters as young players rebuild the local softball program.

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