

Green Giants

It's easy being green with Bonnie Plants' Cabbage Program

Brittany Grigg's 45-pound cabbage has earned her a lot of green. She grew the mammoth cabbage in her Idaho family garden as part of a national contest sponsored by Bonnie Plants. And after nurturing her plant from seedling to a green giant, she won a \$1,000 scholarship for her efforts.

Each year, Bonnie Plants distributes free cabbage plants to third-grade classrooms whose teachers have signed up to participate. First launched in 1995, the program awards a \$1,000 scholarship to one student in each participating state. Last year, more than 1.2 million students from 45 states participated in the program.

Along with step-by-step growing instructions, students get their very own cabbage seedling—an O.S. Cross, known for producing giant, oversized heads—to plant, take care of and harvest. Sometimes the students encounter problems. "I couldn't lift my cabbage," says West Virginia winner Allie Shreves. "My mom picked it up and put the cabbage in my lap so we could take a picture."

"The most fun was just watching it grow," says 9-year-old Jenna Meyers, whose 23-pound cabbage earned her the scholarship awarded in Michigan.

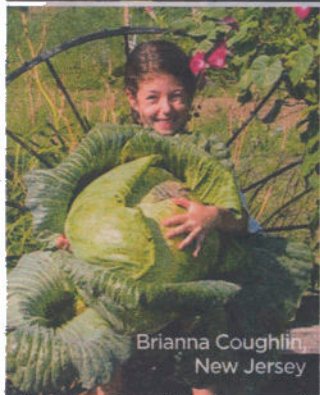
Teachers appreciate the valuable lessons this program provides. "It helps students learn about nature, soil composition and plants, but it also shows them where food comes from," notes Melody Witt, principal of Alto Elementary in Texas.

Ultimately it's all a part of how nature can nurture. Bonnie Plants General Manager Dennis Thomas knows the joy and peace gardening can bring. "We want to afford the opportunity to children to experience this same joy and sense of accomplishment." †

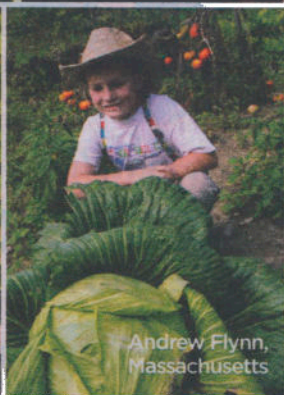
Story by Kris Wetherbee, a writer in Oakland, Ore. To register your school for 2010, visit bonnieplants.com.



Brittany Grigg,
Idaho



Brianna Coughlin,
New Jersey



Andrew Flynn,
Massachusetts

How ONE cabbage
fed 300 people.

For a video of one
10-year-old's garden
and quest to feed
the homeless, go to
relishmag.com/quest.