

The Clanton Advertiser



photo by Special

Chilton County High School student Stephen Johnson helps Clanton Elementary students plant broccoli in the school's new garden.

CES students plant, eat healthy snacks

By **Scott Mims** ([Contact](#)) | Clanton Advertiser

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The students at Clanton Elementary School are getting green thumbs, not just from eating healthy snacks but also from planting vegetables in a garden.

With the help of Chilton County High School's Agriscience department and other volunteers, the kids planted broccoli and cauliflower in their own garden located near the elementary gymnasium.

It's all part of a program to encourage healthy snacking made possible by a \$50,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"The children are thoroughly enjoying it, the teachers are enjoying it, and it's been such a positive thing for the community," said Pat Clements, child nutrition program director for Chilton County Schools.

The grant funds healthy snacks at the school, which are provided at a "fruit stand" called Tiger Treats. The students can go to the stand and carry small baskets of fruit back to the classroom for snack time.

In addition to baby carrots, broccoli, bananas, apples, pears and grapes, the students are getting to try many exotic fruits like persimmons, satsumas, kiwi, star fruit, pluots and Grapples.

Clements said the pluot is a hybrid of the plum and apricot, and Grapples are apples soaked in grape juice.

"It tastes like a grape when you first bite into it," she said.

Many of the fruits and vegetables are donated by local farmers, and others are supplied by a Birmingham-based company. The broccoli and cauliflower for the garden were donated by Bonnie Plant Farms.

Marlon Harton, CCHS agriscience instructor, and his students were in charge of the garden project. Mickey Bates also helped prepare the ground for planting.

Last week, elementary students joined agriscience students to plant the vegetables as part of a hands-on science project.

"Those [agriscience] students are keeping an eye on the vegetables, making sure they get water," Clanton Elementary Assistant Principal Robin Cagle said. "Our students are keeping an eye on them also."

Alabama Public Television filmed the planting as part of its annual "State of Our Schools" special to be aired Thursday night at 7 on APT. They interviewed Clements, along with Jim Pitts of the Chilton Research and Extension Center and Jason Powell of Petals from the Past.

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Posted by **alive** (**anonymous**) on October 28, 2009 at 9:11 a.m. ([Suggest removal](#))

This is fantastic! Great job on the garden kids!

This is great practical knowledge they are learning. So many skills required for sustaining oneself and family have been lost over the years. I'm proud of our schools and all who made this possible.

Posted by **Lifeinthecountry** (**anonymous**) on October 28, 2009 at 7:54 p.m. ([Suggest removal](#))

This is a great! Hurray! Stay away from junk food, kids, eat your vegetables and you will never get fat!

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