September 10. 2015

Dear parents and guardians of IW Fifth graders,

Hello! We received a grant through USDA/SARE, (SARE is a branch of the USDA that focusses on sustainable agriculture research and education), to help youth understand what sustainable agriculture is and why it is important. Over the next month we will be bringing guest speakers into the classroom, and also taking a field trip in our learning adventures.

On September 15th, Clay County Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) will come to the classroom with rainfall simulators and soil core sampling equipment. The students will learn why the health of the soil is important in food production.

On September 21st, the class will take a field trip to Hebda’s farm in Mission Hill for a tour of the farm’s crop rotations, philosophy for growing, and the vegetable and apple production. The students will be able to purchase produce from Hebda’s to bring back to the school for cooking.

We will then bring a guest chef into the classroom to assist the students in food prep with fresh produce. The students will also receive $5 each in Vermillion Area Farmer’s Market Market Bucks, to be used at the year-round farmer’s market held in Vermillion. The gift certificates will be good through 2016.

In early October, Lauren Hollenbeck, the Clay County 4H leader, will come to discuss water conservation and rain barrels with the class.

Many photos will be taken during our project. With your permission, some of the photos will be used with the local newspapers and by the USDA/SARE office to share our story. If you will allow photos that your child may be in with the public, please sign the permission slip below.

Thank you for your time! Please return the slip by September 21st to Ms. Healy.

Sincerely, Grace Freeman, RN IW school nurse, garden coordinator, community volunteer

Please email, text or call with questions, advice, or comments

605-670-0540; [gracefreeman@live.com](mailto:gracefreeman@live.com)

I, the undersigned parent of guardian, of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ give permission to IW school or USDA/SARE to use photos from the 2015 sustainable agriculture grant, that may contain photos of my child, when sharing our project with the public.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_