Opening Circle:

We start out in one large opening circle where the farmers introduce our program theme: “In the fall, we can discover six plant parts that all work together to make energy!” Students learn that all of the fruits and vegetables they love are plant parts with a specific function, other than being tasty. We sing a song about the plant parts, and after learning the farm rules, we divide into smaller groups (keeping about a 12:1 student to farmer ratio) and begin our Farm Adventure!

Farm Rules:

1. Watch where your feet go! We can walk on grass, straw, woodchips, and in-between the rows in the Kids’ Farm. It’s difficult for baby plants to grow when feet are on them, so please walk only where plants are not growing (except for grass!)
2. Please wait to be invited before picking and eating anything. Some things aren’t ready to be picked, and the farmers know where the good stuff is.
3. When it is time to pick and eat, please use two hands: hold the stem with one hand and pick what you want to eat with the other—that way we don’t rip up the whole plant.

Fall Farm Adventure at a glance, stations descriptions:

In the Kids’ Farm field

**Activity:** Students are led through the farm fields on a 6-plant-part scavenger hunt. When groups find the plant parts, they learn the function of the part and then taste them!

**Theme:** “In the fall, we can discover six plant parts that all work together to make energy!”

In the Living Playground

**Pre-K and K students:**

**Activity:** Students go on a color search, looking closely to match their paint chip with autumn leaves and plant parts; they collect matching items from our raised garden beds and share their findings with the group.

**1st grade and up:**

**Activity:** Working in pairs, students collect leaves, selecting some that are growing and some that are fallen, then use scientific tools to take a up-close look, sharing what they know about the role of leaves in making food for the plant. Next, students will use observations and their experience to formulate theories about why leaves turn brown in the fall.

**Theme(s):** “The leaves are the kitchen of the plant.”

In the Kids’ Clubhouse

**Activity:** Students collect seeds from mature plants and sort them into plant families, exploring the purpose of seeds and their structures.

**Theme:** “Plants make new life while they die back in cold weather!”
Oxbow supports new science standards
On-farm or garden-based environmental education is an excellent platform for exploring Life Sciences through hands-on activities and guided inquiry. During an Oxbow Fall Farm Adventure, students make observations, ask questions, and use evidence to communicate their findings.

NGSS Core Disciplinary Ideas introduced:

Structures and Processes: Students learn about the parts of plants and how those structures function to help the organisms grow and survive. Students review the life cycle of a plant and how reproduction is essential to continue the existence of every kind of organism.

Inheritance of Traits: Students make observations and have a discussion about the similarities between young plants, seeds, and the adult plants in those plant families.

Unity and Diversity: Students observe that while many plants have similar parts that serve the same function, they can appear very different depending on the type of plant and natural or artificial selection.

Interactions, Energy, and Dynamics: Through exploring plant life cycles and their physiological responses to seasonal changes, students learn about energy flow in a plant and how it changes through different seasons.

Several early elementary NGSS performance expectations are supported through our programming—contact us if you would like more information!