

Fruit Tree Tour ~ Information for Schools 2008



Founded in 1999, Common Vision is a solution-focused nonprofit organization, a project of International Humanities Center. Common Vision's mission is to cultivate ecological awareness and respect for the Earth while generating social and environmental changes towards sustainable lifestyles. We integrate concepts of ecology with the traditions, music, and art of cultures that live or have lived in harmony with the Earth.

~Fruit Tree Tour~

Next spring Common Vision will run its fifth annual Fruit Tree Tour—a 20-city, 70-day tour planting over 1000 fruit trees at urban schools and community centers from Los Angeles to Sacramento. Traveling in veggie oil-powered caravan, 25-earth educators from Common Vision will teach students about sustainable ecology through a daylong program that includes West African agricultural drumming and earth-conscious hip-hop. The goal of this annual tour is to develop working relationships with teachers, administrators, and community members to integrate sustainability and nutrition into the learning and landscapes of local youth.



~The Program~

- Common Vision arrives at each school with a crew of twenty-five farmers, earth educators, and performance artists and twenty plum, apple, peach, pear, persimmon, and apricot trees aboard 2-3 vegetable oil powered buses.
- The program begins with a performance that uses planting rhythms, harvest dances, eco hip-hop, and a colorful storyline to illuminate an ageless integration of cultural artistic expression and stewardship of the earth.
- Students work in small rotating groups that plant trees, play drums, and write and perform eco hop-hop. The integration of music, community, and work with the earth provides an empowering and memorable experience for students and teachers.
- Common Vision provides fruit trees and an ever growing list of web resources to help students and faculty to care for the trees and to understand the implications of localized food systems for the environment and for local and global community health.

Page 2: Day-long Program Overview

Page 4: Key Concepts and Daily Schedules

Page 5: Costs, scholarships, and fundraising

Page 6: AB1535 Guide



Program Overview ~ Fruit Tree Tour 2008

Performance – Green Theatre

The performance is a 45-minute theater piece that Common Vision usually performs as an assembly for the entire school.

Planting rhythms, harvest dances, eco hip-hop, and a colorful storyline illuminate an ageless integration of cultural artistic expression and stewardship of the earth. Fruit Tree Tour storytellers bring to life tales of African farming villages working in rhythm with the drums, of communities in Mexico organizing to protect their ancient corn seeds, and of urban youth hearing the calling to find healthier, more meaningful relationships with the earth and the life upon her.

The performance brings students on a journey that inspires a deeper look at the state of the environment today and this generation's role in solution-focused action. Fruit Tree Tour performers open up a dialogue with the students regarding being part of a movement of youth who are willing to take initiative towards healing the environment by taking direct steps in their local communities. The students are encouraged to re-center the values that are most important including cooperation, respect, health, community, positivity, and service of each other and the earth.

Workshop Rotations

At the end of the performance we work with 100-150 students in 3 rotating groups. Each group takes part in all 3 workshops. Each workshop lasts 45 minutes.

~ Drumming

Common Vision brings enough drums for all the students in the workshop to play a variety of rhythms together. In the drum group, facilitators bring to life the importance of communication, respect, and recognition of interconnectedness within the group and greater community. Students learn about traditional and contemporary cultures that use music and rhythms to celebrate seasonal cycles and to accompany agricultural work. The drumming group marks time for their classmates to pickax, plant, and transform their schoolyard.

~ Tree Planting

At each site we plant 10-75 trees in time with the music. Students have the opportunity to become physically active through shoveling, picking, moving soil, and hauling water. Facilitators engage students in dialogues around key ecological and cultural concepts such as health, physical activity, nutrient cycles, interconnectedness, global climate change, and the importance of fresh food. Tree plantings have a 5:1 student to facilitator ratio and provide a setting for intimate discussions and stories. The groups discuss some of the challenges to health in the urban communities, particularly access to fresh, healthy food and inspire them to take part in caring for the health of themselves, their community, and the earth.

~ Eco-Beats (with Eco Hip-Hop)

In the Eco-beats workshop, Common Vision's facilitation team challenges students to draw connections between the concepts from the performance and the changes that they see as important in their school, neighborhoods, and communities. From these dialogues, students work together to create a rhyme to

express their key messages. On drums and percussive instruments that students learn to make out of materials that can be found for free in their neighborhoods, the students play hip-hop beats and bring their rhyme to life. Eco-beats creates an experience for the students that inspires empowerment, self-/group-expression, creative use of local resources, and using familiar cultural arts for positive change.

~ **Fruit Tree Grafting and the “Roots to Fruits” Nurseries**

For schools with less plantable area and/or with a dedication to increasing the outreach of the Fruit Tree Tour program to their communities, Common Vision helps the students to start a nursery with baby apple, fig, pear, and lemon trees. Students learn the basics of grafting sweet-fruit bearing branches, to strong rootstocks, and help to propagate up to 200 baby fruit trees. The students and teachers care for the nursery for 2 years, when they will be planted at surrounding schools and low-income neighborhoods.

Closing Circle

After the workshops, drummers perform Dun-Dun-Bah rhythms that are traditionally played to celebrate the end of a long day’s work as students, teachers, and Fruit Tree Tour volunteers gather for a closing circle. Here we review key concepts, answer questions, and leave the students with final inspirational messages. Students present the Eco-Hip Hop that they developed earlier in the day.

Follow Up

Garden Coordinators, principals, and/or any interested staff receive a basics-of-pruning and young tree care workshop on just after the planting. Common Vision’s e-newsletter, Harvest Rhythm, offers support materials, seasonal care reminders, tips, techniques, videos, and curriculum / exercise suggestions. Additionally staff from each school will be eligible for participation in regional orchard care workshops provided periodically by Common Vision. Each school can make use of Common Vision’s 12-month-a-year email and phone support with any and all questions about tree care.



Key Concepts and Scheduling

~Key Concepts~

- ☉ Relationship of human cultures, food, and the earth – history and present
- ☉ Interconnectedness – through the food we eat, the water we drink, and the air we breath
- ☉ Cooperation – Working together to develop and carry forth a common vision
- ☉ Respect – Listening, humility, and understanding
- ☉ Earth Stewardship – Caring for the earth by working in your own neighborhood
- ☉ Community – Ecologically and socially, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts
- ☉ Positivity – How positive thoughts, deeds and words can facilitate positive change
- ☉ Health – Fresh food, localized food systems, relating environmental and personal health
- ☉ Being an agent of change in your own community
- ☉ The living biology of trees
- ☉ Soil Micro-life – How millions of little organisms make life possible
- ☉ Global Climate Change – making a difference in the school yard
- ☉ The Heartbeat of the Earth

~Scheduling~

The Fruit Tree Tour Program is approximately 3 ½ hours long.
Earliest Start Time: 10am

Our performance is most often done as a whole school assembly outdoors.

For the rotations,

- (1) We work with the same group of student for the 2 hours and 45 minutes.
- (2) While we can work with 150 students at a time, we find that 90 students makes a good cut off point to assure that students get the individual attention that makes the program most effective.
- (3) Rotation students are to be 3rd grade or higher

SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE

10:00	Performance	(Whole School)
10:40	First Rotation	(The same group 75 – 150 Students)
11:25	Second Rotation	(The same group 75 – 150 Students)
12:10	Lunch/Recess	
1:00	3rd Rotation	(The same group 75 – 150 Students)
1:50	Closing Circle	(The same group 75 – 150 Students)

In some cases, schools are unable to work this format into their scheduling. Common Vision can be somewhat flexible with our program and will consider alternative scheduling on a case – by – case basis.



Cost, Scholarships, Fund Raising

Common Vision is dedicated to working to bring Fruit Tree Tour to every school and community center that sincerely wishes to host the program. Through grants, sponsorships, and private donations Common Vision has raised funding to cover most of the total cost for the tour and prices already represent greatly reduced rates. Grant money from AB1535 (The California Instructional School Garden Grant) may be used to cover much of the cost. (See next page for details)

~Program Cost~

\$800

~Scholarships~

Scholarship eligibility will be determined *after* applications have been received. See the chart below to gauge eligibility for your school. Considerations for scholarships include:

- Demographics served
- Financial need of the school
- Dedication to preparing for the program.
- Intention to integrate the concepts from the day workshops into the curriculum and culture of the school
- Willingness and dedication to perform necessary orchard care.

Reduced Cost:

Who is eligible?:

\$650	\$150 scholarships are available for all low-income schools.
\$500	Some \$300 scholarships are available for low income schools that demonstrate a special need.
\$300	A limited number of these \$500 scholarships will be solicited during Common Vision's upcoming fundraising tour and will be reserved for low-income schools with special needs that are not participating in AB1535.

Contact michael@commonvision.org with scholarship inquiries.

~Fund Raising~

“Sponsor a Fruit Tree Planting”

This program has successfully served to help PTA's and teachers raise funds to cover some to all of the program cost. Donors can have a tree planted in honor of a person or group for a cost of \$50. Honorees receive an artful certificate of thanks and appreciation. We will send donation booklets upon request.



Guide to using AB 1535 funds

Grant money from AB 1535 (The California Instructional School Garden Grant) may be used to cover much but not all of the cost of the program. Note: The pricing listed below reflects a deeply discounted cost of some components of the program.

Program Costs Covered by AB1535: \$500

Materials: \$250

- Bare-root Fruit Trees* \$150
 - 10-25 fruit trees, regionally adapted, harvest time appropriate
- Soil, amendments, mulch* \$100

Professional Development: \$250

- Tree Planting Consultation and workshop* \$125
 - An on-site analysis and consultation regarding planting sites
 - Hands-on workshops provide teachers with all the information they need to care for and plant bare-root trees.
- Pruning Lesson and Orchard Care Support* \$125
 - Garden Coordinators and all interested staff receive a basics-of-pruning and young tree care workshop just after the planting
 - Support material, seasonal care reminders, tips, techniques, videos, and other materials will be sent electronically to garden coordinators and interested staff
 - 12-month/year email and phone support with any and all questions about tree care

Program Costs not covered by AB 1535: \$300

- All school Performance* \$100
 - A 45-minute theater piece that incorporates West African Agricultural drumming, dancing, stories, and earth-conscious Hip-Hop to inspire and educate about the environment, health, and agriculture.
- Workshop Facilitation* \$200
 - 25 Educators working with 100-150 students for 2.5 hours (tree-planting, eco-expression, and drumming)