

# ALTERNATIVE SPRING BREAK 2012 FARMING, FOOD, AND FUN IN THE FLATHEAD



## Spend your spring break building a vibrant food system in the Flathead Valley

### Purple Frog Gardens is the perfect place to kick off your spring break!

Join food activists, farmers, and students for five days of in-depth conversation and community outreach to realize a more food secure community in the Flathead Valley.

Alternative Spring Break is a chance for university students from across Montana to converge and learn about the challenges and ongoing solutions facing the Flathead foodshed. Students will spend the week participating on a working farm for at least four hours each day, punctuated by field trips to local farms, community outreach projects and evening group discussions. Activities are designed to be place-based and solutions

oriented, with the focus on creating a more vibrant food system within the communities of the Flathead Valley. Alternative Spring Break is a hands-on opportunity for students to engage with issues like:

- How-to's about farming in short seasons
- Food justice
- Agricultural policy
- Economic factors influencing local food production
- Infrastructure and facilities required for value-added food processing
- Community-led initiatives to increase food access to underserved communities

### Sign-up Now!

Space is limited to 12 students per week, so RSVP soon to reserve your spot for 2012.

Cost is \$30 + the contribution of one meal made to feed 20 participants.

Entry can be paid on-site with cash or check. Please send an RSVP to:

[pandora@cyberport.net](mailto:pandora@cyberport.net)

Purple Frog Gardens can be found at:

170 Blanchard Lake Drive  
Whitefish, MT 59937  
Phone: 406.862.0621  
Website: [www.purplefroggardens.com](http://www.purplefroggardens.com)

Purple Frog Gardens is a family market farm on the outskirts of Whitefish, Montana. Since 1991, Pam Gerwe and Mike Jopek have slowly coaxed this farm out of rocky clay soil with the help of countless volunteers, community members, and young people.

# Schedule

Daily events typically include four to six hours of on-farm work at Purple Frog Gardens, followed by community outreach and an evening discussion or workshop. Schedule is subject to change.

	<b>Montana State University Spring Break</b>				
<b>Saturday</b> March 10	<b>Sunday</b> March 11	<b>Monday</b> March 12	<b>Tuesday</b> March 13	<b>Wednesday</b> March 14	
	<b>University of Montana Spring Break</b>				
<b>Saturday</b> March 31	<b>Sunday</b> April 1	<b>Monday</b> April 2	<b>Tuesday</b> April 3	<b>Wednesday</b> April 4	
	<b>Northland College Spring Break</b>				
<b>Saturday</b> April 21	→				<b>Sunday</b> April 29

## Place-based Learning

Alternative Spring Break (ASB) is designed to give participants insight into the food and farming issues facing the host community. All activities are highly participatory in nature and are designed to stimulate discussion and facilitate collaboration between ASB participants and community members.

The Flathead Valley is a unique venue for Alternative Spring Break 2011. The valley supports the towns of Columbia Falls, Kalispell, and Whitefish, each with their own challenges and opportunities for developing a secure food system. ASB participants spend each day getting hands-on experience on a working farm, while afternoons and/or evenings entail in-depth conversations, tours with local food-related organizations from the three neighboring towns, and a capstone community outreach event.

Participating organizations include 1000 New Gardens, Alternative Energy Resources Organization, Bozeman Youth Initiative, First Best Place, Nourish the Flathead, and University of Montana Farm to College program.

## So Much to Learn During ASB

Each ASB week will be packed full of useful information for students to both get their hands dirty while learning about a variety of agricultural practices. Most days will be devoted to on-farm work and workshops including:

Mushroom cultivation, vertical growing practices, orcharding, hoop house growing practices, hot houses/compost heating, vermiculture, season extension, and homesteading.

One day will be devoted to touring other food producers in the area. Possible field sites include algae to energy production, apiaries (bees), biofuel processing, and dairies. Field trips sites will be presented as a menu of options to each group at the beginning of the week in order to customize the learning experience for all students.



## On-Farm Housing

Alternative Spring Break participants will be housed on the grounds of Purple Frog Gardens. Housing for all five days is included in the cost of attendance. In appreciation for these accommodations, participants will be asked to help with chores and meal preparation during their stay.

### Items to bring with you to

#### Purple Frog:

- **Sleeping bag/sleeping pad**
- **Warm, waterproof work clothes**
- **recreation equipment**
- **1 meal to share with 20 participants**
- **1 large snack item to share**

### Interested in leading a skills workshop or talk to your fellow students during ASB?

Contact Morgen Hartford at [morgen.hartford@gmail.com](mailto:morgen.hartford@gmail.com) with a list of necessary supplies and a proposed workshop idea.