

# CONNECTING CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY: KELLI BREW'S ROLE AT UF'S FIELD AND FORK

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Brew encourages visits to the farm.



Fields are planted with crops.



Photos: Peyton Chandley



Signage helps visitors.

Kelli Martin Brew, Program Coordinator for the University of Florida's (UF) Field and Fork Farm and Gardens thrives in her role to help students and the Gainesville community come together to learn about sustainable agriculture and food security. The garden connects UF students and faculty to agriculture while providing fresh produce for the Alan and Cathy Hitchcock Field & Fork Pantry. Brew's leadership has helped shape the farm and gardens into a vibrant resource for the university and the broader Gainesville community. The farm is conveniently located on campus, across Museum Road from Lake Alice. Brew facilitates interactions between the farm and UF's various departments.

work, creating opportunities for learning outside of the classroom. One of Brew's primary goals is to expand the garden's reach beyond students traditionally involved in agriculture. Brew emphasized how the farm can offer an in-person experience for students after years of remote learning. The hard work students put in during their volunteer shifts does not just benefit them—it serves the community. Produce grown at Field and Fork is donated to the campus food pantry, ensuring that students have access to fresh, organic food. If there is more harvest than the pantry can handle, produce is donated to the local food bank or other projects promoting community food security.

"One of my goals, given to me by Dean Elaine Turner of the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, was to reach out beyond just the typical ag student and try to reach other students as well," she described.

## *Kelli's Duties*

"My job is to manage the interface between the farm and the larger UF community," Brew said. Her duties include scheduling tours, supervising interns who help manage the garden's social media and community outreach programs. Brew also connects UF students, and faculty, with hands-on

## *Impact of the Farm*

While Field and Fork directly support UF's student body, its impact also extends to the Gainesville community. Brew has helped rebuild hands-on community experiences that were disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. One initiative involves a chef who teaches students how to cook the garden's produce.



“ Local agriculture is really important to food security overall ”  
Brew said

## BREW’S VISION FOR SUSTAINABILITY

For Brew, the garden is not just about growing food—it’s about fostering a deeper understanding of sustainability and the cultural significance of agriculture. “Having a robust agricultural system in your locale is just really important to food security,” she explained. In addition to growing crops, the Field and Fork Farm and Garden engages students and visitors in discussions about the history and cultural uses of plants, helping them appreciate the broader food system and its role in building community.

Despite its many successes, the garden faces challenges, particularly when it comes to space. UF’s ever-expanding campus puts pressure on the garden’s footprint.

“We want to make sure people know about the farm and the ways it benefits the community,” Brew said.

Nevertheless, she remains optimistic about the future, focusing on strengthening the garden’s community outreach and educational programs.

Looking ahead, Brew is optimistic about the garden’s future, envisioning continued growth in its educational and outreach initiatives. The potential for Field and Fork to make an impact remains vast. Brew hopes to see the farm continue as a vital resource for both UF and Gainesville, helping to cultivate not only crops but also a more sustainable, resilient community. For those interested in learning more about Field and Fork, Brew encourages visiting the farm. Website: [FieldandFork.ufl.edu](http://FieldandFork.ufl.edu)

