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**SDJA To Host Jewish Farm School's Alternative Spring Break Program**

*Nearly 60 East Coast college students will travel to San Diego County in March to learn about sustainable agriculture and volunteer at SDJA's garden.*

**San Diego, CA – February 17, 2011** – Almost 60 college students from the University of Pennsylvania, New York University and Cornell University will visit San Diego Jewish Academy (SDJA) in March to volunteer at the school's garden as part of Jewish Farm School's alternative spring break program. "For the third year, we are delighted to host college students participating in the Jewish Farm School's program," said Larry Acheatel, executive director. "While on campus, students will be involved in a variety of work projects, including building terraced plantable beds that enhance water conservation and drainage."

Each year, the Jewish Farm School (JFS) organizes week-long immersive service learning trips on sustainable organic farms across the country. JFS is an environmental education organization whose mission is to practice and promote sustainable agriculture and to support food systems rooted in justice and Jewish traditions.

"Upon their arrival in San Diego County, students will travel to Tierra Miguel Farm in the Pauma Valley in North San Diego County," said Rabbi Jacob Fine, JFS director of programs. "During their time on the farm, students will learn about sustainable agriculture, explore Jewish and secular perspectives on agricultural law and policy, consider ethical food production and consumption, learn about food justice issues and learn hands-on sustainability skills including fermentation and natural building."

The college students will then visit SDJA in San Diego to volunteer at Levana's Garden, a learning garden situated on a third of an acre that was created to honor the memory of kindergarten teacher, Levana Estline, who taught at the school for 18 years and passed away in 2003. "The garden, which is known as the 'heart' of the Academy, was created in 2005 to foster an outdoor learning environment," stated Acheatel.

"Levana's Garden supplies food to our school's lunch program and includes a butterfly garden, a water feature, a secret garden protected by hedges, a vegetable garden, compost bins, a greenhouse, citrus groves and fruit trees." He added that the garden allows students to apply classroom lessons about growing cycles, conservation, nutrition, biology, composting and weather.

"We look forward to partnering with the Jewish Farm School and Tierra Miguel Farm in welcoming the college students and supporting their learning experiences here at SDJA," said Acheatel.

**About SDJA:**

San Diego Jewish Academy challenges infants to high school seniors to achieve their full academic potential and become individuals of strong character, while inspiring them to make Judaism a vital and relevant aspect of their lives.

For more information about San Diego Jewish Academy, visit [www.sdja.com](http://www.sdja.com).

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Photo caption: College students from across the country visit SDJA to work and learn in Levana's Garden.