

Appendix D

Examples of Community Food Projects by Type of Project

Food Assessments

The Fresno Fresh Access Project was funded at \$200,000 for 2 years. The grantee organization was the Fresno Metropolitan Ministry, Fresno, California. The purpose of this community food assessment was to identify key factors in food availability, accessibility, affordability, and quality in Fresno County. The objectives were to assess a number of districts, involve local residents and community volunteers in the survey process, empower community members to make food policy recommendations to local officials, and create an action plan from data collected during the assessment.

The Fresno Metropolitan Ministry trained more than 80 local neighborhood leaders, conducted more than 850 survey-assessments of consumers, and surveyed 131 retail stores. Numerous activities and several different formats were used to collect data in an effort to assess area food needs. Activities included surveys, use of assessment software, GIS mapping, and local task forces. These methods provided different perspectives on food and nutrition needs in the county. Using software and GIS mapping tools, a base map of the food system in Fresno County was developed.

Some of the findings included the following (Jessup, 2005):

- Low-income people bought fresh produce at flea markets, but some lacked funds to buy fresh food;
- Healthy, culturally appropriate foods were not available in some neighborhoods;
- About one-third of weekly meals consisted of fast food;
- Food resources in the Fresno area that could contribute to both food access and economic development around food production and distribution were abundant; and
- Food acquisition habits varied by ethnicity.

Web site: www.fresnometroministry.org

The Community Tradition, Foods, and Future, an assessment project, was funded at \$13,895 for 1 year. The organization funded was Legacy Cultural Learning Center, Muskogee, OK. The food assessment planned by the Legacy Cultural Learning Center was guided by a publication produced through another CFPCGP grant with First Nations Development Institute (FNDI). FNDI was awarded a grant for training and technical assistance called the Food Sovereignty Assessment Tool (FSAT) (2004). The FSAT publication provides an introduction to the food security movement in Indian country and is a resource for thinking about food systems in Native communities and what can be done to regain control of Native food systems.

The FSAT has been widely used by Native American groups in assessing their food systems.

The Legacy Cultural Learning Center's project goal was to create the first organized collection of data focused on the food, diet, and traditional agriculture issues of the Muskoke People and their neighbors. The project assessed the food assets, strengths, needs, and deficiencies of rural, low-income communities in the Tribal Nation. They conducted meetings and surveys in 17 of the 23 Muskoke communities and in one neighboring Seminole Nation community to assess food system assets, strengths, needs, and deficiencies. There was good participation in discussions focused on diet-related health problems such as diabetes, heart trouble, and high blood pressure.

Data was collected from written surveys and also from more than 17 person-to-person interviews with tribal and community leaders, academics, and project collaborators. Through the surveys, the project learned that the Tribal Elderly Nutrition Service operates 10 fully equipped kitchens and dining facilities serving more than 18,000 meals monthly, including an extensive home delivery network. The surveys uncovered a heavy reliance on fast food, a preference for local food but limited access to it, and significant concerns about rising food costs. Approximately one-third of respondents have gardens. Surveys found a significant positive consumer response to the availability of locally produced foods available directly from farmers and farmers' markets. However, there are few local growers and small farmers do not have the ability to supply the quantities needed.

Following the surveys and interviews, project staff developed a draft plan of action to address the most urgent needs and concerns, including Elderly Nutrition Service purchases of local products, initiation of community gardens on donated land, purchase of a large RV to serve as a mobile resource center, and establishment of a Native Foods restaurant (The Legacy Learning Center, Muskogee, Oklahoma, 2006).

Web site: www.legacycultural.org/artwellness

Food Policy Councils

The project, **Food Access and Food Justice in New Orleans: Rising Above the Waterline**, was funded in 2006 for \$265,000 for 3 years. The organization funded was the New Orleans Food and Farm Network (NOFFN). It was designed to assist in the Hurricane Katrina recovery. The project supported the development of sustainable food projects and neighborhood capacity by facilitating innovative linkages at the neighborhood level. It brought together diverse groups including public health, social work, urban agriculture, and food security sectors via an active food system coalition.

The first component of NOFFN's project was to increase food justice awareness in New Orleans through expanding the membership and representation of "Grow New Orleans," the local food system coalition. Grow New Orleans mobilized and connected food system stakeholders

and community members, and created a formalized food policy network to inform public policy and private development.

The project helped to rebuild the food system by developing a food access and food justice action plan and by creating neighborhood food access maps. These inform both the general public and those involved in rebuilding efforts. To further include and mobilize the public, NOFFN involved communities and leaders to conduct neighborhood-based participatory food assessments. They plan to create sustainable community food projects based on neighborhood appraisals and regional assets, which contribute to local food security. NOFFN plans to facilitate three to five targeted community food projects, which will lead to a sustainable and just food system (World Hunger Year, 2009; Food Security Learning Center).

Web site: www.noffn.org

Educating State Legislative Leaders and CFP Grantees About Policy Options That Support Community Food Systems was a project funded in 2005 for 2 years at \$200,000. The organization funded was the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL). The goal of this training and technical assistance project was to broaden the CFP program's impact on State and local policy by sponsoring site visits and forums for legislators, legislative staff, and community representatives, and by hosting a national training session for CFP grantees to learn about legislative processes, to build capacity of CFP grantees to implement policy initiatives as part of their projects. Policy training on such topics as food policy councils, direct marketing, and procurement policy were offered. In recognition of the role legislators have in crafting policy, NCSL educated them and their staff about the legislative and programmatic components of creating a sustainable community food system and enhancing access to fresh produce. This component had the added benefit of building relationships between legislators and CFP grantees.

The project consisted of two components: site visits and training. Three 2-day site visits provided a forum for participants to discuss problems and progress in implementing community food systems with agriculture, transportation, land-use, nutrition, food service, food security, and education experts. Participants, including legislators, legislative staff, CFP grantees and local stakeholders, visited sites ranging from small farms, distribution centers, schools, or other State institutions that purchase local produce, or farmers' markets. Preference for selection of programs for the site visits were given to past or current CFP grantees. The second component was a 1-day pre-conference training at the 2006 Community Food Security Coalition (CFSC) annual conference to educate CFP grantees about the legislative process and about how to incorporate policy into current or future programs. NCSL partnered with the CFSC throughout this entire project (World Hunger Year, 2009).

Web site: <http://www.ncsl.org>

Youth Programs

Healthy Harvests Initiative: Building Boston's Food Security from the Ground Up was funded in 2000 for 2 years at \$150,000. The organization funded was The Food Project in Lincoln, MA. The Food Project made substantial progress in demonstrating the economic viability of a sustainable metropolitan food system by linking food production with youth and community-based enterprise. It opened and equipped a 1,500-square foot urban center that included a commercial kitchen and involved youth in business startup and management by working with them to research, design, and test a value-added food enterprise: farm-fresh salsa. It also tripled the membership in its Community Supported Agriculture program and increased both its urban and rural farmland.

The kitchen has become an integral part of The Food Project's work. Youth use the kitchen to process and prepare produce for value-added products, a catering business, and weekly food deliveries. All of the programs incorporate culinary and nutrition training, expanding the scope of the involvement of youth in the creation of a local food system. Children from local elementary and middle schools have classes in the kitchen, which is also available to local growers for canning food grown in their gardens.

Healthy food production and consumption skills were further modeled in the community through land remediation, education, and outreach. Under the grant, an additional urban lot was cleared, cleaned, and put into production growing herbs and vegetables. Youth further began a series of regular community lunches and now prepare 11 lunches annually serving over 800 people. The Food Project has also established an education center with a library of cookbooks and resources on food enterprise development. The project also runs two farmers markets a week for the entire local community where youth are employed in marketing and selling the produce they grow (World Hunger Year, 2009).

Web site: <http://www.thefoodproject.org>

"Food for Life" was funded in 2001 at \$180,000 for 3 years. The organization funded is the Youth Farm and Market Project (YFMP) in Minneapolis, MN. A central objective of the grant to the YFMP was to help youth both understand and strengthen the local food system (i.e., to learn to grow food, to plan and prepare nutritious meals, and to increase community awareness, health, and diversity). To that end, YFMP collected recipes that emphasized nutritional content, as well as other cooking class materials. They created and implemented a comprehensive, cultural nutrition curriculum, which called for the participation of parents and local chefs. YFMP has grown a variety of cultural foods, specifically Asian and Latin American, for summer lunches. Meal plans emphasizing the importance of balance were also designed.

YFMP worked with ethnic farmers of the Twin Cities area to plan purchases and distribution in low-income housing developments. YFMP staff also met with school officials to discuss securing more local, organic produce for school meals. They worked to sell produce to several local businesses and

restaurants and to secure culturally appropriate foods that would supplement project-grown foods for summer lunches. Program participants had at least three opportunities to prepare a meal alongside local chefs. Youth-led harvest festivals provided recognition, community meals, and awards for project participants.

Another objective of the grant was to make a wider variety of foods available to low-income consumers via public housing markets. They assisted immigrant growers who were able to sell a variety of vegetables and prepared foods to the project. They also worked with a number of schools on gardens and on getting local foods into school meals. They ran a youth farmstand at a senior public housing high rise, which was very popular with senior residents (World Hunger Year, 2009).

Web site: <http://www.youthfarm.net>

Entrepreneurial Food and Agriculture Activities

Appalachian Center for Economic Networks is an organization in Athens, OH, that has been funded for two separate projects, both involving entrepreneurial training: “Appalachian FoodNet Project” in 2003 and “Rural Food Centers Project” in 2005. The total amount funded was \$200,000.

These projects enhanced the food system in a three-county area of southeastern Ohio by developing linkages between low-income residents, food businesses, consumers, and nonprofit and faith-based organizations. The project developed a gleaning and food processing program, provided training and assistance to food-related businesses started by low-income people, expanded a regional branding program, and convened a local food congress. These projects responded to the goals of the Appalachian Food Congress by establishing three new food centers in isolated rural communities to help meet long-term food and economic needs, provide food processing and gardening training, and expand markets for local products and low-income entrepreneurs.

The project provided direct technical assistance in bringing the kitchen up to commercial codes, developing strategic uses for the kitchens, and providing basic equipment needed for the planned uses. Once operational, these kitchens were able to offer food processing and training to low-income residents hoping to start small food businesses to supplement family income. The kitchens will also be able to process gleaned crops from neighboring fields to assist local food pantries that are housed in their facilities. The commercial kitchens can also be utilized for hosting summer feeding programs for low-income children during the summer months (World Hunger Year, 2009).

Web site: <http://www.acenetworks.org>

Building an Integrated Sustainable Food System was funded in 2005 for \$210,000 for 3 years. The organization funded was the Appalachian Sustainable Development, Abington, Virginia.

This project promoted a “field to table” strategy in southern Virginia and eastern Tennessee to stimulate the development of food and farm-based economic opportunities for limited resource farmers and entrepreneurs, to increase access to local foods for low-income households, to enhance the value-added infrastructure, and to educate the public about a sustainable food system.

The main needs this project addressed were poor or inadequate nutrition; the decline in farm incomes and family farming; lack of access to larger, better paying markets for local farm products; the lack of infrastructure needed to add value to local farm products; the lack of affordable, locally raised organic and sustainable farm products; and inadequate research, education, and technical assistance available to farmers attempting new enterprises and/or production practices. The overall purpose of this project is to help create a more just and sustainable food system in southwestern Virginia and northeast Tennessee, one that can serve as a model for other rural regions around the Nation (World Hunger Year, 2009; Food Security Learning Center, Community Food Projects Database).

Web site: <http://www.appsusdev.org>

Urban Agriculture

Integrated Development Through Urban Agriculture was funded in 2002 and 2005 for a total of \$184,000. The organization funded was Nuestras Raices in Holyoke, Massachusetts. The grantee built an urban agriculture center with classrooms and a community gathering space, as well as a bakery and restaurant that were later spun off to private entrepreneurs. The grantee conducted market research and promotion of Puerto Rican specialty produce, assisted experienced community gardeners in establishing commercial gardens, and aided youth in establishing a market garden.

A second CFP grant in 2002 allowed Nuestras Raices to build on and expand its agriculture-based community development work. The organization took a leadership role in the development of the Holyoke Food Policy Council, a partnership of 30 members from various sectors of the food system. The council conducted a visioning/mapping exercise and interviewed stakeholders to complete a study of the local food system. Nuestras Raices established two new community gardens at public housing projects with plots for 6 families and 40 youth. An existing 17-plot community garden was transformed into a market garden where adults and youth have begun farming commercially. The organization also conducts a Spanish-language promotion program for two farmers’ markets, supports a youth-managed stand at one of the markets, provides technical assistance and shared tools to residents growing Puerto Rican specialty crops not available elsewhere, and is developing seed sources for those crops to sell at farmers markets.

To increase the agricultural space in the community, CFP grant funding allowed Nuestras Raices to look for farmland for purchase. Two plots were identified and in late 2004, with State and foundation funding, the organization was able to buy a 4-acre stretch of land on the Connecticut River near downtown Holyoke. The land, called the Tierra de Oportunidades,

now includes six new market farms, nature trails, an outdoor stage, tropical flowers and crops, and a farmstand. There are plans for a youth center and an office on the land as well, in part to reflect the substantial involvement of community youth in the efforts to purchase the land and to draft a business plan for the farm operation (World Hunger Year, 2009; Food Security Learning Center, Community Food Projects Database).

Web site: <http://www.nuestras-raices.org>

Neighborhood Urban Agricultural Coalition was funded in 2002 for 3 years at \$200,000. Greensgrow in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, was funded for this project. The project provided a comprehensive, practical approach to improving access to fresh food in low-income communities through the establishment of small, locally owned urban farms that use vacant land and “brownfields,” sponsored and developed by community-based organizations and community development corporations. The effort developed neighborhood cooperatives (CSA shares) to be supplied by both urban producers and rural farmers.

The grant helped Greensgrow to establish the Neighborhood Urban Agriculture Coalition to increase access to healthy food in the surrounding neighborhood. The farm has started a twice-weekly farmstand on its property that sells its own produce along with products from other nearby farms and producers. Over 20 farms are part of the project, including Amish farms and some from nearby New Jersey. All food is labeled with place of origin and any special growing practices. The stand accepts food stamps and WIC and Senior Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program coupons, and operates a satellite stand at the nearby Senior Center. Development of the Greensgrow nursery and CSA were also facilitated by CFP funding. Greensgrow is established as a group of producers and farmers who make value-added product and sell them at both the Greensgrow farmstand and to the Reading Terminal Market, a major public market in Philadelphia. The farm has been able to expand into two additional small lots, now used for heirloom tomatoes and bee colonies. Farm staff teach low-income urban consumers about the complexity of community food issues. The staff also brings concerns of consumers to the producer group. Greensgrow also is working with local high schools and Temple University, whose students are learning about the Greensgrow model for urban agriculture.

Greensgrow aims to encourage other similar brownfield land redevelopment in Philadelphia. It is involved in local zoning issues and has developed a preliminary site selection protocol for other groups to use (World Hunger Year, 2009).

Web site: <http://www.greengrow.org>

Rural Producers

The Tribal Fish Market Connection Project was funded in 2003 for \$125,000 for 3 years. The organization funded was Ecotrust, Portland, OR. The project works with the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC) on wild salmon marketing and helps provide more diverse sources

of revenue and employment to the 400 tribal fisher families on the Columbia River. The project helped build a business plan and product development capacity for the four Columbia River treaty fishing tribes represented by CRITFC—the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation, the Yakama Nation, and the Nez Perce Tribe. The tribes are brought together by the struggle to save the salmon and by shared spiritual traditions. Fishers involved in the project are selling their “treaty right tribal caught fish” at Portland Farmers’ Market, with a devoted fan base and the capacity to increase their income fourfold. With Ecotrust spreading the word, consumers are quickly learning that there are plenty of high-quality regional foods that not only taste great but can help maintain a way of life closely tied to the identity and spirit of tribal nations (World Hunger Year, 2009).

Web site: <http://www.ecotrust.org>

Patchwork Family Farms: Value-Added Processing for Community Food Security was a project funded for \$183,898 through the Missouri Rural Crisis Center, Columbia, Missouri. The project built the capacity of two ongoing programs, “Patchwork Family Farms” and the “Food Cooperative,” to become self-sufficient through value-added processing activities. The project increased processing capacity by 20 percent, increasing profitability per hog by finding uses for less popular cuts of meat. The project successfully produced and marketed additional value-added products. Expanding on a food cooperative system already in place, the project increased the diversity and volume of local products available to cooperative members in 23 rural counties in the middle of the State.

Patchwork Family Farms is composed of 15 independent family hog farmers. When consumers purchase a Patchwork product, the money directly supports Missouri farm families. Patchwork Family Farms has been recognized by USDA, the Environmental Protection Agency, and Oxfam America for their efforts to help the environment and sustain the traditions of rural communities. Meat was cooperatively sold to African-American churches in St. Louis and Kansas City at reasonable prices.

During 1999, when hog prices for Missouri farmers averaged 28 cents per pound, Patchwork producers received 43 cents per pound. With the grant, Patchwork Family Farms was able to double their product line, test value-added marketing, and provide a “best sellers” product list. To achieve the goal of expanding the food cooperative system, this project grew the capacity for marketing and distribution of locally raised produce, meat, and other local products to low- and moderate-income families in Mid-Missouri. This expanded marketing capacity allows for local growers and producers to supply the enlarging cooperative system. Also, the project worked to increase the number of farmers and grantee chapter members who are growing for themselves and for sale through the coop program.

To grow the coop system, through increased demand, the Missouri Rural Crisis Center will develop an outreach campaign targeting rural Missourians that explains the economic, environmental, social, and public health benefits of community-based food systems. To further the public’s appreciation of

local foods and increase or continue interest in coops and local products, they will also provide education and resources pertaining to the preparation and processing of locally raised food and related products (World Hunger Year, 2009; Food Security Learning Center, Community Food Projects Database).

Web site: <http://www.inmotionmagazine.com/rural.html>

Community Gardens

Urban Detroit Agriculture and Education Project received funding of \$150,000 in 2003 for 2 years. The organization funded was Capuchin Soup Kitchen, Detroit, Michigan. The project provides a haven for low-income people to socialize with their neighbors, gives access to affordable produce, and educates people about nutrition and the origins of their food. The project has evolved to focus on four objectives: launching a Garden Resource Program, organizing educational opportunities for community and backyard gardeners, developing the Romanowski Farm Park (a public park centered on a 5-acre farm in Detroit), and increasing access to nutritious food for all Detroiters. The project works with 80 community gardens connected to many grassroots organizations that are critical to the success of the program. This Detroit project is an example of the extraordinary types of collaborations that make community food projects work. The project works with the following collaborators: The Greening of Detroit, Detroit Agriculture Network, Michigan State University Extension, O.W. Holmes Elementary School, American Indian Health and Family Services, City of Detroit Recreation Department, Michigan Association of Community Gardeners, Michigan Department of Agriculture, Gleaners Food Bank, Michigan Department of Community Health, Catherine Ferguson Academy, Detroit 4H Center, Foundation for Agriculture Resources in Michigan and Michigan State University.

The Garden Resource Program encourages communication and collaboration among gardeners working in the same areas (called clusters) of the city. In the program's first year (2004), it offered several incentives to facilitate the efforts of the 300 households working in 33 community gardens and 47 family gardens. The program tilled or plowed gardens; tested soil for nutrients and heavy metals; delivered compost and woodchips to gardeners; distributed coffee bags for use as a weed barrier; provided tools; distributed containers of vegetable, herb, and flower seedlings ready for planting; and organized hundreds of volunteers. At meetings in each of the four participating city clusters, gardeners have chosen a neighborhood leader and a location for a neighborhood resource center. In addition, the Garden Resource Program will use the Soup Kitchen's Earth Works Garden program as a model for future market expansion for its own participants. Last year, Earth Works program gardeners sold produce, honey, black raspberry-currant, and gooseberry jams at four low-income health clinics. They marketed their products at a local farmers' market in the spring and planned to harvest vegetables from the farm in the summer. Through all its efforts, the program improves communication, services, and resources for participants and ultimately increases access to affordable, nutritious food.

The Capuchin Soup Kitchen and its partners have increased food security throughout Detroit by increasing the number of urban gardeners citywide and by seeking new partners. The Urban Detroit Agriculture and Education project grant allowed project partners to form the Detroit Agriculture Network, which will become its own nonprofit organization focused on food security (World Hunger Year, 2009).

Web site: <http://www.cskdetroit.org/>