



Growing a Healthy New York

Innovative Food Projects that
End Hunger and Strengthen Communities



*East New York Farms!
Youth Working to Address Hunger and to Protect and
Restore Their Environment.*



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Introduction

In 1993, five neighbors in the Highbridge community of the south Bronx decided they needed to take action. A large vacant lot in their community was used as an illegal dumping ground and a center for drug activity. Day by day, the group cleared a small section of the lot only to find garbage in that same spot the next day. Eventually, they put up a fence and planted a garden. Today, the vacant lot has evolved into Taqwa Community Farm, where over 90 people are involved in cultivating their garden beds and growing food to feed themselves, their families, and the community. Taqwa is an oasis of green that serves as a true community center offering open green space, a safe haven, a site for social gatherings, and a wealth of food, educational opportunities and inspiration to the adults, seniors, and youth of the neighborhood. Not only does the land provide wholesome food to community residents, Taqwa has started a program to train youth in growing and selling food at the Taqwa farm stand.

Projects such as the Taqwa Community Farm are a source of inspiration as they are fighting hunger while promoting community and economic development at the same time. This manual, *Growing a Healthy New York*, features programs that have all taken a different and innovative approach to ending hunger and promoting food justice in their community through economic development, providing job training to youth while increasing access to fresh food, increasing participation in federal nutrition programs, improving nutrition, and uniting people with local farmers. *Growing a Healthy New York* details 24 different programs from across New York State, including how community leaders and organizations started the programs and how they currently operate. *Growing a Healthy New York* provides many great ideas about projects that can be duplicated in your own community and it also connects you to informational resources to get you started. This manual is perfect for community based groups, faith groups, food programs, and community leaders who are working to end hunger and support their community. It is also helpful for farmers who are interested in developing new markets in different communities, including lower-income areas.

There is a great need in New York to approach hunger in a more holistic way through projects that unite community members, community groups, and farmers. Over the last century, there have been many changes in how our food comes to us. America's food system has transformed from one where 50% of Americans lived on farms or in small rural communities where they fed themselves from locally grown foods to 80% of us living in or adjacent to cities. Food production is increasingly in the hands of large agricultural businesses, centralized and corporate structures, that are disconnected from and rarely responsive to local community needs. Farmers receive only about 11 cents on the dollar that consumers pay in supermarkets. Most of the food dollar is going into marketing, packaging, and distribution - food in the United States travels an average of 1400 miles and changes hands a half a dozen times before it is consumed.

At the same time, there is an epidemic of hunger in the richest nation in the world. In our state overall, a tenth of all New Yorkers are at risk of hunger (USDA) and about 1 in 5 children live in poverty (U.S. Census Bureau). Today, there are nearly 3,000 community based soup kitchens and food pantries (Emergency Food Programs) serving food to over 900,000 people each week. In New York City alone, the number of Emergency Food Programs has grown from about 30 identified in 1980 to over 1,000 today. Too many New Yorkers are forced to choose between food and other basic needs because they lack good jobs, adequate wages, childcare, or quality healthcare. New York has lost more than 300,000 net new jobs since 2001. More than 3 million New Yorkers lack health insurance. It is no wonder that the number of families relying on emergency food resources is increasing. Hunger Action Network's 2003 survey of food programs found a 20% increase in demand for food comparing 2002 and 2003.

While there are many New Yorkers in need, there are already several projects in New York where people are making new connections to address those needs. There are community gardens sprouting up in vacant lots providing local opportunities for youth and seniors to connect with the tradition of growing food, farmers distributing their produce through weekly boxes of fresh food at local churches, farmers' markets that are accepting Food Stamps again, and community dinners that serve locally grown foods and teach people how to cook healthfully. We have the potential to address hunger, support our farmers, our kids, our local economy, and improve our communities' health. This manual features some successful options and will hopefully inspire you to work with us, and each other, to make healthy locally grown food more available in your community.

Navigating the Manual

Growing a Healthy New York is primarily comprised of 24 program descriptions, which are divided into nine sections: Community Food Projects, Community Food Security, Community Supported Agriculture, Community Gardening, Ending Hunger through Economic Development, Hunger Mapping and Community Food Assessments, Improving New Yorkers' Nutrition, Federal Nutrition Program Outreach Campaigns, and Food Recovery. Many programs fit into more than one category, but it is divided this way for the convenience of the reader. Each of the nine sections contains an overview and explanation of the categories for those who may not be familiar with programs such as Community Supported Agriculture or hunger mapping. In addition, we have included a resource section at the end of the manual with nine sections that correspond to the nine program sections. For example, there are many resources available to help folks start community gardens, etc.

We encourage folks to contact programs that interest them to find out more about how they operate. The projects are driven by passionate individuals who have been generous about sharing their experience and expertise with us and others across the state. Groups can also contact Hunger Action Network or SENSES for assistance to start such a project.



Community Food Projects

Overview

In order to address hunger and strengthen communities, many groups have initiated projects that extend beyond the scope of providing people with emergency food through a soup kitchen or a food pantry. Often times, the projects are initiated by Emergency Food Providers, faith groups, or community based groups in an effort to implement a more holistic approach to ending hunger. The Seed and Seedling Distribution Program, for example, provides an opportunity for low-income people to grow their own food through the distribution of seeds and basic plant care instructions. The Grow an Extra Row Campaign taps into the potential of gardeners and citizens and encourages them to grow an extra row of fruits or vegetables for donation to Emergency Food Programs or other community agencies. Food Buying Clubs bring together several people in one community and cut down food costs by cooperatively purchasing food.

We hope you will be inspired to duplicate some of these projects and start growing toward a greater harvest for your community.





Food Bank of Central New York's Food \$EN\$E Project

Program Description

Food \$EN\$E, a project of the Food Bank of Central New York, is a food buying club. Food buying clubs are programs that operate by bringing together several people in one community and cooperatively purchasing food. The large volume of the purchase allows the cooperative to enjoy wholesale prices and the cost savings are passed along to the consumer. The Food \$en\$e program is designed to increase self-sufficiency by helping individuals stretch their food dollars.

The Food Bank organizes this program with 42 sites in a 16 county area providing an average of 1,500 packages each month for families and individuals. In order to be a Food \$en\$e site, you must be affiliated with a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt agency. For example, there are currently Food \$en\$e sites that are located in churches, local fire departments, and community centers.

Monthly Food \$en\$e packages and promotional materials are created by the Food Bank. A newsletter is developed and distributed to each site coordinator. This monthly newsletter provides coordinators with a list of the items included in the current month's Food \$en\$e package, the projected package for the following month, and recipes using food items from the unit. Site coordinators are responsible for taking orders from customers, placing the order with the Food Bank and distributing the packages on a specific date. There are no income restrictions - anyone can participate. The cost of the package is \$15.50 per month; participants pre-pay with cash or an EBT card and pick up their Food \$en\$e packages at the end of the month. A food unit contains 10-12 items, including fresh fruits and vegetables, meats and staple food items. For example, the September 2004 package included: flour tortillas, shredded Jack Cheese, Pinto beans, salsa, ground turkey, apples, fajita vegetable mix, baby carrots, bagged lettuce salad, fresh eggs, hot dogs, and ham steaks.

Low-Income Involvement in the Organization of the Program

The Food \$en\$e Program could not run without the assistance of site coordinators. Site coordinators distribute the packages monthly and collect money to be sent to the Food Bank.

Barriers Encountered and Solutions

Transition to the Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) system was difficult for some site coordinators. Because food stamp coupons were replaced with EBT cards in 2000, Food \$en\$e sites now have to utilize a voucher system to accept food stamps. This is because Food \$en\$e sites do not have the point of sale devices that are needed to process the EBT cards. The voucher system can be difficult to use. To address this problem, the Food Bank of Central New York has provided training and assistance so that coordinators could learn how to use the voucher system accurately and efficiently.

Funding Sources

The cost of the food package paid by participants covers the cost of buying the necessary food items from vendors. It is a self-sustained program. There are no outside funds involved.

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The Food Bank of the Southern Tier's “Plant-a-Row for the Hungry Campaign”



Program Description

"What am I going to do with all this zucchini?" For some vegetable gardeners, this is the million-dollar question come late summer. Others ask the same question in reference to anything from tomatoes to green beans to rhubarb. With nearly 1 million New Yorkers visiting food pantries and soup kitchens each week, we have a simple answer for gardeners with abundance: Bring them to Emergency Food Programs! In fact, we'd like gardeners to grow specifically for their neighbors in need!

In 2003, the Food Bank of the Southern Tier initiated a Plant-a-Row for the Hungry (PAR) Campaign in south-central New York State. Organized PAR campaigns throughout the United States have collected millions of pounds of fresh produce for hungry Americans since their beginnings in the 1990's. PAR in the Southern Tier used free materials produced by the Garden Writers Association of America (GWAA) to help promote the program, including small row markers that were given out to gardeners, donor receipts, and a large sign used to advertise the Food Bank Garden. GWAA also provided the Food Bank with resources on how to engage the local community and media in PAR efforts.

The nutritionist at the Food Bank of the Southern Tier coordinated the PAR campaign with assistance from food pantries in two counties. At two food pantry coalition meetings, the nutritionist presented the PAR idea and asked for pantries to act as produce drop-off sites. Twenty pantries agreed to be part of the program, and the Food Bank designed two PAR brochures (one for each participating county) for distribution to local gardeners. Participating pantries received these brochures to give to neighbors and community members, receipts to provide gardeners interested in a tax credit, and a tally sheet to record the pounds of produce they collected. Brochures were also given to Cornell Cooperative Extension, the Cornell Master Gardeners Program, local nurseries, and farm markets. About 400 total brochures were produced. PAR was also promoted in *The Harvester*, the Food Bank's quarterly donor newsletter. By November 2003, gardeners had donated 4,243 pounds of produce to the Food Bank and pantries. Another 2,000 pounds were harvested from the Food Bank garden, a 5,600 square foot patch tended by local volunteers.

For aspiring PAR campaigns, here are some helpful hints from the Southern Tier:

- ◆ Start your campaign small!
- ◆ Request PAR materials from the Garden Writers Association at 1-877-492-2727.
- ◆ Utilize contacts with the media, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and businesses to get the word out.
- ◆ Publicize PAR throughout the season to remind gardeners.
- ◆ Identify multiple drop-off sites with different hours of operation. Food pantries are good bets.
- ◆ Emphasize the importance of tracking pounds and developing a goal. This will help build your campaign from one year to the next.

Additional Features

A Boy Scout has undertaken an Eagle Scout Project growing fruits and vegetables at his home for distribution by the Food Bank. A local newspaper featured an article on the project and included information for other gardeners to support PAR.

PAR in the Southern Tier has expanded in 2004 to include another county and five more food pantries. The goal is to collect 10,000 pounds of fresh produce.

Low-Income Involvement in the Organization of the Program

Low-income households visiting food pantries and soup kitchens are the recipients of PAR produce.

Barriers Encountered and Solutions

If you plan on collecting information about the amount of food donated to programs, here are two examples of barriers that the Food Bank of the Southern Tier had to overcome:

- ◆ Not all food pantries had scales to weigh donated produce. To address this, the Food Bank asked agencies to make educated guesses or have donors approximate weights.
- ◆ Only 4 of 20 pantries collected produce from gardeners and returned information on the number of pounds donated. For 2004, the Food Bank made the explanation of the program and the paperwork easier to encourage reporting. The Food Bank has also been contacting pantries throughout the growing season to check their progress.

Funding Sources

The Food Bank of the Southern Tier funds staff time and materials for this program. However, funds are usually not needed to coordinate a PAR campaign, and many organizations have done so successfully without any expenditure.

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"Sowing Seeds...Harvesting Hope" A Seed and Seedling Distribution Program

Program Description

Every year truckloads of vegetable seedlings (young vegetable plants) go to waste because commercial greenhouses and home gardeners start to grow more plants than they can use. Hunger Action Network established a seed and seedling distribution program several years ago to enable New Yorkers to grow some of their own nutritious food by connecting them with many of the seedlings that would have gone to waste.

The seedling project was started in conjunction with an Emergency Food Program (EFP) vegetable garden that Hunger Action co-sponsored in Albany at the State Office Campus. The garden yielded up to a ton of fresh produce each year for distribution to local food pantries. Hunger Action approached local greenhouses for a seedling donation for the garden. The response to our request for donations was so overwhelming that we decided to distribute several thousand extra seedlings to the guests of local EFPs so that they could grow their own food.

We were so inspired by the momentum of the project that we decided to help start other seedling projects across the state. In addition to the seedling donations, we garnered donations of seeds, which come in small packages in a variety of different vegetables. We developed a manual, "Sowing Seeds...Harvesting Hope," which details how to run a seed and seedling distribution program. Then, we conducted outreach to various non-profits and food programs throughout the state explaining the program and offering our technical assistance and the guide to help start the project. We distributed the guides to groups who were interested in becoming sponsors of the program and also helped connect groups with free seeds or seedlings. The



guide includes information on the resources and materials needed to start a seedling distribution program, information on how to organize the program, tips for taking care of vegetable plants, sample outreach materials, and various garden resources.

Groups have been very creative in adapting the project to their communities' needs; some groups have linked with youth programs to implement the project and some have set up gardening in a bucket demonstrations to encourage community members to participate. Depending on how you adapt the program for your community, you will need an outreach plan, a coordinator, a list of local nurseries, seeds or seedlings, a method of picking up and distributing the seeds or seedlings, a vehicle, storage space, distribution site, and basic plant care instructions. Your level of time commitment can vary, too. You can run a small program by setting aside one hour a week to pick up and deliver vegetable seeds or plants. You can also distribute a large amount of seedlings and spend an hour or two each day for several weeks to coordinate activities. Groups can contact Hunger Action for the guide or download it online at www.hungeractionnys.org.

Here are the program basics:

1. Contact nurseries, greenhouses and farms. Conduct a mailing or call your local greenhouses, nurseries and farms to request donations of seeds or seedlings in the spring. Many plant outlets are anxious to clear out their inventory in the early summer and have leftover plants that they are glad to donate, rather than seeing them go to waste. You can find a list of plant outlets in your local yellow pages or contact the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets at 518-457-2087 or <http://www.agmkt.state.ny.us/PI/cover.htm>

You may also be able to obtain free seeds if you do not have space for seedlings. The America the Beautiful Fund (ABF) gives away free seeds for vegetables and other plants. The application to request seeds is a simple one-page form. You have to pay for the shipping costs of the seeds. Contact ABF at (202) 638-1649 or <http://www.america-the-beautiful.org>.

2. Outreach and distribution plan. You should develop a method for informing people about your program and the actual distribution of seeds or seedlings. A flyer may be helpful in informing people about planned distributions. You may be able to set up a table for distribution at a street fair. Other good places to distribute vegetable seedlings include food pantries, soup kitchens, urban community gardens, subsidized or supported housing complexes, schools, veteran's homes, and senior housing.

3. Coordinate pick up of seedlings. Make follow-up phone calls in late May or early June to make arrangements for picking up the donations. You will need a vehicle if you are planning to pick up seedlings from a greenhouse. You may need a place to store the seeds or seedlings if you are distributing them over the course of a few days.

4. Provide basic plant care instructions with the seeds or seedlings. Make gardening instructions available for people who may be growing vegetables for the first time. Hunger Action has a flyer on basic plant care instructions that we can provide, and your local Cooperative Extension office should have these materials, too.

5. Send letters thanking contributors. You should send thank you letters to groups that donate seeds or seedlings to your projects. Ask them to keep your program in mind for the future.

Additional Features

Seedling programs have many benefits. Perhaps the most important is the increased level of food security experienced by families who have the opportunity to grow their own vegetables. Families also experience the added benefit of increasing their horticultural skills and developing an increased connection with, and respect for, the environment.

Growing food is also an important part of our cultural heritage, a heritage that many of us have lost touch with. Reclaiming seedlings that would otherwise be disposed of also helps limit our solid waste. The rewards are numerous.

Low-Income Involvement in the Organization of the Program

A seed and seedling distribution program is a simple, effective way to enable low-income people to grow fresh, wholesome food for themselves and their families. Vegetables grown in a container or in a backyard are an additional source of affordable, nutritious food. Low-income New Yorkers that have participated in this program have informed us that they were surprised by how easy it was to grow their own food and by the large amount of food that they were able to grow.

Funding Sources

America the Beautiful Fund (www.freeseeds.org) provided free seeds, though Hunger Action pays for shipping costs, which are roughly \$15 per 100 seed packets. Staff and outreach was supported through various grants including the Community Food and Nutrition Program, through the New York State Community Action Association and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; however, it is possible to coordinate the program with very few staff and modest amounts of funding. NYS greenhouses and nurseries donated various seedlings.

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Community Food Security

Overview

To succeed in overcoming hunger, many groups are becoming involved in a growing national movement known as Community Food Security or Food Justice. Community Food Security is a different approach to ending hunger that not only seeks to provide people with food, but also examines where the food is coming from, if it is healthy, and how it is grown. Community Food Security aims to end hunger by uniting regional economies, communities in need, and locally grown food.

Community Food Security's basic principle is that all people should have access to an adequate amount of nutritious, culturally appropriate food, at all times, through local, non-emergency sources. Advocates, community organizers, farmers, faith groups, concerned citizens, students and others are currently working together to reach this goal and to ensure the basic human right to food in New York State.

New York's food pantries and soup kitchens are an essential front line in fighting hunger, giving food to people in need. Yet, the demand for food continues to increase while the root causes of hunger persist. In response, many groups who work to end hunger are beginning to explore how we might improve access to healthy food within the context of our "food system."

A food system is essentially a web of connections, from production to consumer, through which food makes it to your table. Our typical food system plays an important role in the hunger crisis in our state. In the case of a person or family that is food insecure, linkages within the food system are weak at some point, and as a result adequate food does not reach their table. Examples may include the following: an elderly person living alone may be physically unable to access a farmers' market or nearby supermarket; many lower income people live in neighborhoods with convenience stores that typically do not offer affordable or locally grown produce; families living in outlying regions of a county cannot use WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Coupons at small farm stands near their homes; and many farmers are struggling to find markets alongside community members unable to meet their food needs. These are examples of systemic problems that may involve a range of challenges, such as lack of transportation, limited income, businesses not willing to open shop in inner cities, or inadequate links between local farmers and their communities.

By providing food for people solely through the emergency food system, we focus on treating the symptom of an insufficient food system. In contrast, the community food security movement addresses the root causes of hunger and strives to make a more democratic food system that gives communities greater control in choosing how their food is produced, distributed, and accessed.



East New York Farms!



Program Description

The mission of the East New York Farms! project is to organize youth and adult residents to address hunger and malnutrition in their community and to protect and restore their environment by promoting local and regional sustainable agriculture and community-based development. East New York Farms! is a collaborative project of the United Community Centers, the Local Development Corporation of East New York, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and the Pratt Institute Center for Community and Environmental Development.

The project's goals are to: improve community nutrition and access to sustainable foods; encourage sustainable community development; educate youth and engage them in improving their community; preserve open space in the form of community gardens; and create a public marketplace.

To achieve these goals, the project focuses on five programmatic areas that work together and comprise a sustainable revitalization strategy for the economically and environmentally distressed neighborhood of East New York in Brooklyn. The programmatic areas include: the East New York Farmers' Market, a Youth Internship Program, Gardener Organizing and Technical Assistance, Alternative Food Systems: Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) with a Community Garden Component, and Community Nutrition Education.

East New York Farmers' Market

The market serves as a community space and a catalyst for the development of local economy between micro-entrepreneurs and local consumers needing quality produce and neighborhood retail convenience. The market provides a quality food source for the whole neighborhood, including an outlet for residents to redeem WIC and Senior Center Farmers' Market Nutrition Program coupons, through which 85% of the market sales are made. A total of 20 urban gardeners, 15 local craftspeople, 3 farmers, and youth interns sell at the market each year and market fees help support the project. The three regional farmers who sell at the market are all

family farmers within New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. One of the farmers is a certified transitional farmer, who is making the transition to become an organic farmer. All of the gardeners, in addition to the youth interns, grow using organic methods.

Youth Internship Program

The youth program consists of an integrated curriculum that engages youth in a tangible project for the benefit of the community. Youth are recruited from local middle schools and paid a stipend for their work through an internship in which they grow organic vegetables and sell them at their own stand at the market. Growing vegetables, executing building projects in the garden, and exploring why we grow food using organic methods helps to reinforce ecology, biology, and math concepts the youth learn in school. Hands-on work in urban agriculture also provides an opening for youth to explore social inequalities such as hunger and food access in their community and to discover their own potential to be agents of social change. Issue and skilled-based workshops give youth the opportunity to reflect on their experiences together, to practice social skills, and to think about the social context of their work. Through this process, young people participate in their community's civic and economic development and effect change in their local food system.

Gardener Organizing and Technical Assistance

The project recruits community and backyard gardeners to grow and sell crops at the farmers' market, and provides them with agricultural training, help from the youth program, and basic supplies. Training emphasizes environmentally sustainable gardening methods, including composting, rainwater harvesting, water conservation, and organic pest control. The project also supports gardeners in advocating for preservation for their gardens and educating fellow community members. In addition, gardeners who have been part of the project for several years form a core group, who help advertise for the farmers' market, interview applicants for the youth program, and mentor new gardeners, as well as plan for the project's future.

Alternative Food Systems: Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) with a Community Garden Component

This program provides a way for East New Yorkers to purchase a weekly vegetable "share" at a reduced price from a family farmer who sells at the market, with subsidized shares available for low-income members. Members volunteer their time at distribution and with other CSA tasks throughout the season. This project is in its beginning stages, and the CSA coordinator is in the process of helping members organize a "core group," to take on responsibility for collective decision-making and administrative aspects of the program as it grows. A grant received from Hunger Action Network this year has made it possible to integrate the CSA with our youth garden. The addition of new compost allowed for the expansion of the garden growing area and increased food production. In this expanded area, the youth interns grew some produce that the CSA farmer did not grow, including collard greens and cucumbers, which were then added to the main CSA share.

This connection with the garden also creates additional opportunities for CSA members to learn first-hand about sustainable agriculture through volunteer days in the garden, pick-your-own cherry tomatoes days, and events such as this year's kick-off party where youth gave tours to CSA members highlighting sustainable growing methods.

Community Nutrition Education

The objective of this program is to promote good nutrition and awareness of sustainable food systems for community residents. Through this program, Cornell University Cooperative Extension has conducted comprehensive food demonstrations at the Farmers' Market for the past three years. In 2004, a series of cooking courses in the United Community Centers kitchen in the spring and fall, and cooking demonstrations at local WIC and Senior centers will give community residents a chance to learn hands-on nutrition and cooking skills.

Barriers Encountered and Solutions

As a project committed to long-term grassroots improvements in the community's food system, East New York Farms! is constantly in competition with the mainstream, "convenience" food culture that dominates the neighborhood. Less nutritious food that is not sustainably grown is usually more abundant, more convenient, more recognized, and appears more affordable than the products offered through the farmers' market and CSA program. The solution to this barrier has been education. Workshops with both youth and community gardeners stress sustainable, low-input growing techniques. Outreach to the general public, through local health centers, schools, block associations, tenants' associations, churches, shelters, daycare centers, and more, has also emphasized the health, environmental, and economic benefits of a more local and sustainable food system, as well as the viability of such systems. Education about local food systems has also been necessary to please customers who are not informed about seasonal foods. For example, people who come in November looking for strawberries would be unhappy with the lack of selection since local strawberries would not be in season. This season, East New York Farms! has begun posting a sign at the market entrance each Saturday listing produce availability for each week, and projected availability for the following week.

Also, because small sustainable farmers do not receive any federal subsidies, their produce is often too expensive for very low-income families. For this reason East New York Farms! has chosen to subsidize CSA shares for members who meet income eligibility guidelines. This system has been successful and attracted 25 low-income members this season. Extensive outreach has also been conducted to local WIC and senior centers to improve redemption rates of Farmers' Market Nutrition Program coupons since these vouchers allow low-income residents to access the produce for free.

Additional Features

A unique aspect of the program is the focus on long-term and sustainable changes in the local food system. East New York Farms! takes this approach because lack of access to good quality and nutritious foods, and associated diet-related illnesses like diabetes, high-blood pressure, and heart disease have in recent years become a more pressing issue in the community than "hunger" in the traditional sense.

In addition, the focus on engaging the whole community, and particularly in pairing youth interns with elderly gardeners in need of assistance, provides an opportunity for positive intergenerational exchange that is not otherwise abundant.

Low-Income Involvement in the Organization of the Program

East New York is largely a low-income community, and community members are integrated into all levels of the planning and execution of the project. Gardeners and craftspeople who have been part of the project for several years form a core group, who help advertise for the farmers' market, interview applicants for the youth program, and mentor new gardeners, as well as plan for the project's future. In the Community Supported Agriculture Program, where all members are invited to participate in planning, low-income members comprise over 85% of the membership and 100% of the core group. The core group meets monthly to make collective decisions and handle administrative aspects of the program. Even in the youth gardening internship, youth spend their first day at the program setting and agreeing on shared rules and expectations that will govern their program. Second year interns take on increased responsibility for leading other interns and helping to plan and execute lessons and other activities.

Public Policy Component

Youth interns have continually been involved in political action to preserve their project. During the past season, interns collected signatures on petitions: one to save their garden from being slated for development, and another to save the market site from being slated for development. Also, this spring East New York Farms! hosted a food and nutrition conference attended by 60 community members, all of whom were encouraged at registration and throughout the day to sign postcards to oppose proposed funding cuts to the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program in 2005. The postcards were collected by youth interns and sent to state and federal representatives.

In addition, East New York Farms! staff continually works to inform gardeners, farmers' market customers, and CSA members about relevant food policy issues. They are currently in the process of forming the East New York Food Policy Council, initiated at the conference in March, that will create a venue for more consistent, coordinated, and extensive community action on public policy.

Funding Sources

The East New York Farms! Project receives funding from: U.S.D.A. Community Food Projects, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, The Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies, Heifer International, Independence Community Foundation, the Indirect Vitamins Purchasers Antitrust Litigation Settlement administered by the NYS Attorney General and by the Hunger Action Network of NYS, Just Food, and Little Red School House/Elizabeth Irwin Roundtable.

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GardenShare's "Eight Hands at Your Table" Campaign

Program Description

GardenShare is a nonprofit network of gardeners and others working to end hunger and build community food security in northern New York State. Each spring since 1996, GardenShare has recruited North Country gardeners to share their garden harvests with their neighbors by donating homegrown fruits and vegetables to 30 participating food pantries in St. Lawrence County. Over the years, some 200 households have volunteered in this way.

With such an abundance of food growing in our backyards, it makes sense to share in this way. But, of course, charity alone won't end hunger. So in recent years, GardenShare has begun focusing on efforts to build community food security in the region.

To do this effectively, GardenShare wanted to develop a conceptual framework upon which to organize their efforts. They also wanted to come up with a way that the public could visualize what community food security means—to draw a picture in people's minds. The result was the "Eight Hands at Your Table" campaign, which introduces the concept of community food security by inviting people to make room for eight hands around their dinner table: the farmer's hands, the cook's hands, their neighbor's hands, and their own hands.

The campaign was kicked off by distributing 2,000 Eight Hands table tents to supporters and social service agencies, at public events, and to restaurants, which displayed them on their tables around Hunger Awareness Day, which takes place annually on the third Thursday of March. The colorful table tent reads, "Each time you sit down for a meal, make room for these eight hands at your table." The text introduces the meaning of each set of hands and then goes on to suggest practical ways to make room for these hands at every meal:

The Farmer's Hands > *Support Local Farms*

Shop at farmers' markets • Ask your supermarket to sell locally grown food • Join a food co-op where your voice will be heard on food issues • Grow fruits and vegetables in your own backyard or in a community garden • Buy shares in a Community Supported Agriculture program, which links consumers directly with local growers

The Cook's Hands > *Celebrate Local Foods*

Learn to prepare regional cuisine • Eat fresh foods from a local farm, not processed foods from a box • Vary your diet according to what fruits and vegetables are in season • Support restaurants that offer locally grown food on their menus • Encourage schools and colleges to serve locally grown food in their cafeterias

Your Neighbor's Hands > *Cultivate Community & Generosity*

Invite friends over for a "slow food" meal • Share your garden harvest with your neighbors at a food pantry • Eat meals with your family • Lobby legislators for public policies that benefit people living on a low-income • Talk with your friends, your family, and your coworkers about food and hunger issues

Your Own Hands > *Eat Mindfully, with Gratitude*

Educate yourself about our local food system • Join an anti-hunger organization • Celebrate the beauty of food by bringing a simple artistry to your table • Be aware of how your food choices matter • Commit yourself to buy, prepare, and eat food responsibly • Cultivate a grateful heart for the food you receive

This public education campaign has been backed up by the following yearlong projects aimed at addressing hunger and building community food security in the North Country:

- ◆ A collaboration with Cornell Cooperative Extension to create three home gardens for low income households;
- ◆ An expansion of GardenShare's support for two existing community gardens, including hiring a summer garden advisor for one of these gardens, which serves some 150 people;
- ◆ An expansion of the collaborative Farm-to-School Support Project, to include two more schools and to increase the number of participating growers;
- ◆ The creation of a hunger/food educational component for the Farm-to-School project;
- ◆ An increase in the frequency of GardenShare's newsletter and an upgrade of the website;
- ◆ The inclusion of legislative action suggestions in the newsletter and website; and
- ◆ The initiation of an annual "Growing Community Award," presented to an individual or group in recognition of their efforts to create community food security in the region.

In future years, GardenShare's specific projects will no doubt change. But the "Eight Hands at Your Table" concept will continue to provide a guiding vision for GardenShare's work to build community food security in the North Country.

Low-Income Involvement in the Organization of the Program

The GardenShare board member taking the lead on creating home gardens for low-income households is a former food stamp recipient. Low-income community members are a part of "Your Neighbor's Hands" helping to improve public policies. Low-income households visiting food pantries are the recipients of donated harvest produce.

Public Policy Component

The legislation action suggestions we make are drawn from legislative alerts received from Hunger Action Network, the Community Food Security Coalition, Bread for the World, and elsewhere.

Funding Sources

Funding for the non-legislative components of the Eight Hands campaign was provided by the Indirect Vitamins Purchasers Antitrust Litigation Settlement administered by the NYS Attorney General and by Hunger Action Network of NYS. Additional funding came from GardenShare's own local supporters.

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Hannibal Central School's Farm-to-School Pilot Project



Program Description

New York State school meal programs serve nearly two million meals everyday, with total spending estimated at \$500 million annually. This represents a huge potential market for New York farm products. Yet aside from milk, only a small percentage of the food currently being served in our schools is coming from local farms.

The Farm-to-School program helps facilitate and promote the purchase of New York State farm products by schools, universities and other educational institutions. New York State is a leader in a variety of farm products, ranking first in cabbage and cottage cheese, second in apples and sweet corn, and third in grapes, snap beans and milk. By purchasing New York farm products, local school districts not only help farmers increase their profits and improve farm economic viability, but they also provide all children, regardless of economic background, with nutritious and healthy foods. This program is a win-win for both our schools and our agricultural community, benefiting the health of New York State's children and local economies.

Hannibal Central Schools coordinates a Farm-to-School Project in the Central New York region. The program began as a participant in Farm-to-School Pilot Projects coordinated through the Cornell Cooperative Extension Farm-to-School Program.

The school food supplier, Dave Johnson of C's Farms, is a key player in the coordination of this project. He has helped contact numerous farmers and has gone to the farmers to pick up the food. New items were introduced into the school menu including fresh pears, plums, baked potatoes, salt potatoes, and red diced potatoes. Most of these products are available all school yearlong and the students have accepted these items. Working with the food supplier ensured that the school would have transportation for the project.

Before setting up the project, it was necessary to identify which locally grown products would be most in demand amongst students. In spring of 2003, with the help of the Oswego County Farm Bureau, the Cornell Cooperative Extension office of Oswego County and the Cornell University pilot manager, the groups united their efforts and held a "New York Harvest Health Fair" for all students (grades 3 through 6), their parents and staff. This event was held during the day. Students had the opportunity to choose which types of produce they were most interested in. The students test tasted several items such as milk, cheese, apples and cider. They also learned about corn and squash and were able to milk a man-made cow named Clover! The Food Bank of the Southern Tier prepared and served a bean chili for students to taste. Three varieties of apples were taste tested and students voted for their favorite apple. Empire Apples won!

In fall of 2004, the "New York Harvest Health Fair" for students in grades 5 through 8 was held in the evening so that more parents could attend the event. New taste testing dishes were provided. An apple crisp was featured along with scallop potatoes and coleslaw. We used varieties of apples, potatoes and onions to show how different varieties give different tastes and textures. We also had several displays, ranging from herb growers to a Christmas tree grower.

Additional Features

It is important to provide education about the importance of eating locally grown food to teach students and their parents about where their food comes from and its nutritious value through events such as the "New York Harvest Health Fair." The school also participates in the Fruit and Vegetable of the Month campaign produced through Cornell University and highlight recipes throughout the month. Nutrition information and recipes are included in school menus and posted in the school website and informative bulletins are sent home with students to share with their families.

Low-Income Involvement in the Organization of the Program

Food Service staff operates the Farm-to-School project at Hannibal Central Schools in collaboration with local farmers and the school food service supplier. The school ensures that all school children have access to fresh local fruits and vegetables as part of school meals that are either regular, free or reduced price.

Barriers Encountered and Solutions

How does it TASTE! Taste-testing events are held at the school so that students could try locally grown food and indicate which items they would eat regularly. Taste testing events ensure that there is indeed demand for the local products incorporated into the cafeteria menu, which in turn helps guarantee long-term markets.

Transportation: Transportation of produce is an issue. To get around this barrier, Hannibal Central School uses its regular food service supplier to obtain local produce.

School Food Suppliers: Sometimes, purchasing and transporting directly from a local farmer creates complications, one being that it may force regular food suppliers to eliminate certain products from their deliveries to the school. To circumvent this problem, the school chose to purchase locally grown food through its supplier rather than purchase it directly.

Unfortunately, school food suppliers often purchase the lowest priced food available, which means that they may end up purchasing items from far away. One way around this problem is to request NYS types of produce, such as McIntosh Apples, potatoes or cabbage if you plan to purchase locally grown produce through your supplier. Other types of veggies typically grown in NYS are grapes, snap beans and sweet corn.

Important tips: Before implementing a Farm-to-School project, it is important to have the approval and support of the school Superintendent and the Board of Education. At Hannibal Central School, a meeting was scheduled with the Superintendent and Board, during which the Farm-to-School Project was proposed and approved. It is also important to start your project by taking small steps. For instance, the food service staff began by meeting with the Student Decision Making Committee who collaborated with them on coordinating taste-testing events. Staff also gained the support of others in the community in order to obtain volunteers for the events.

Public Policy Component

Governor George Pataki signed legislation to amend the Farm-to-School program. This program promotes the purchase of New York State farm products in NYS schools. The two primary changes are expanding the allowance for purchasing from associations of more than ten farmers and a clearer definition of purchasing from farmers at "market value." Previous regulations held that purchases could only be made from individual farmers or associations with no more than ten members. "Market value" definitions are made to assure that the cost of items purchased from local farmers must be comparable to prices offered to school food service directors by alternative food suppliers.

School Food Service Directors planning to purchase locally grown food need to fill out a "Notice of Intent to Purchase Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Locally" and send it to the NYS Education Department. You can request the form via mail or contact Debra Vercurysse at the NYS Education Department, State Education Building, Child Nutrition Program Administration, Room 55, Albany, NY 12234, 518-473-1525.

Funding Sources

There is no budget for this project other than the regular revenue the school receives from reimbursed meals and students' payment. The taste-testing events were volunteer run and utilized donated locally grown food.

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Northside Neighborhood Association's "After Market" Market



Program Description

This project was initiated in 2003 by Northside Neighborhood Association community members and was brought to fruition by Meg Meixner and Joanna Green, members of the neighborhood who took leadership for the project development. They contacted Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) of Tompkins County to lend organizational overhead to the project.

Project Components in 2003

"AFTER MARKET" MARKET

The Ithaca Farmers' Market is held on Saturdays across a highway that makes it geographically inaccessible to Northside Neighborhood members. Additionally, neighborhood residents reported that the produce sold at the Ithaca Farmers' Market was highly priced and they viewed it as an upscale market that presented socioeconomic barriers to the residents in the Northside.

In order to overcome these barriers, the project brought the market to the neighborhood! An "After Market" Market (also known as "Second Sale" or "Satellite" Market) was established. The program worked as follows: farmers were contacted and asked to provide produce on a consignment basis (left over) at the end of the market with the understanding that farmers would get paid for what was sold. For farmers this was a good opportunity because otherwise they might have just composted the produce that was not sold. Produce was then collected from the farmers and a farm stand consisting of a tent and table was set up in the Northside Neighborhood. This "After Market" Market was located on the grounds of a low-income housing apartment complex. An active community member, Meg Meixner, worked with other volunteers and youth from the neighborhood to set up the stand and sell the produce on a weekly basis on Saturday afternoons from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. The consumers benefited because the produce was sold at a much-reduced price and they had access to fresh produce. The customer traffic included neighborhood folks and a few passersby. Some regular clientele were established by the end of the season.

Approximately 30 people in the Northside Neighborhood purchased food from the "After Market" Market each week. Farmers benefited from the additional sales and even though prices were lower than what they might get at the Ithaca Farmers' Market, it was connecting them to an additional source of income that they wouldn't otherwise receive. In addition, the farmers did not have to spend the time involved in selling the produce.

COMMUNITY MEALS

Meg Meixner and other community members arranged at least one dinner for area residents featuring locally grown food. The meals were held early in the summer at a church in the neighborhood. The goal was to build community and appreciation for local foods. About 60 people attended.

WE PICK DAYS

"We Pick Days" were arranged in cooperation with Cooperative Extension's Nutrition Program. Residents from the neighborhood were invited to go to a farm and pick berries for preserving. After picking, the participants came together at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County and processed their products. About 8 people participated on 3 different occasions. Most of these people had never visited a farm before.

Recruitment and promotion efforts for the "After Market" Market, Community Meals and We Pick Days included articles in the Northside Neighborhood Association newsletter, flyers that were left at community homes, and neighbor-to-neighbor networking.

At the end of the program, Northside Neighborhood Association evaluated the efforts and considered efforts to pursue in 2004. All of the initiatives were successful on some level but involved having all the key pieces in place to enable them to continue.

Project Components in 2004

In 2004, the "After Market" Market was continued and moved from Saturday afternoon to Monday evenings from 5 p.m.-7 p.m. An interested group of community members, a VISTA volunteer, and another farmer were new partners in the project. The farmer agreed to be present at the market on a weekly basis and bring products for sale at a lower price. In addition, volunteers picked up produce from other farmers at the Sunday Ithaca Farmers' Market. Cornell Cooperative Extension continued to provide space for produce storage until Monday and the tent for the market. In addition, Cornell Cooperative Extension employed Meg Meixner to be the steward of the project. She brought her experience from the prior season to the new volunteers involved. The goal this season was to have a volunteer-run market. It worked for the most part, but at the end of the season the "After Market" Market stopped early because the volunteer staff had other commitments and the farmer had to drop out due to labor problems. Northside Neighborhood Association has not yet met to evaluate the success of the project in 2004 in terms of consumers and farmers; however, project coordinators feel that once again, the "After Market" Market established a regular customer base and farmers felt that they benefited from the sales. Plans have yet to be made for 2005 and the future of the program.

"We Pick Days" were held again and continue to be a popular activity.

Low-Income Involvement in the Organization of the Program

Involvement was limited. However, this program was indeed started because of Northside Neighborhood Association interest and the evolution of the project was driven by neighborhood input. Planning meetings were held that included Cooperative Extension staff.

Barriers Encountered and Solutions

The Northside Neighborhood is a very mixed neighborhood that includes African Americans, Asians and Caucasians. The groups tend to remain segregated. In addition, some residents have lived in the neighborhood a long time while others have moved to the area because housing costs are reasonable. Both these factors act as barriers to participation and to effective leadership within the project.

To ensure that the program continues, Northside Neighborhood Association is currently exploring ways to ensure that community members have a greater sense of ownership over this project. Thus far, members of the community have been supportive as customers. However, more residents from diverse backgrounds are needed to actually lead the program to ensure its longevity. The challenge is to make the market better fit people's lives by providing a convenient and appropriate time of day for people to shop at the market and by making sure to offer produce that people want and know how to use. Northside Neighborhood Association hopes to continue to work on this through the Cornell Cooperative Extension Nutrition Program, which already has established community networks.

The youth program in the neighborhood was not funded so that was a missing link for pulling youth into the program.

Because this project requires a lot of work and support from the community, it is necessary to ensure that there will be a coordinator for the project in order to keep it going.

Funding Sources

Funding for the part-time coordinator for the "After Market" Market as well as the Community Meals and We Pick Days was provided by the Indirect Vitamins Purchasers Antitrust Litigation Settlement administered by the NYS Attorney General and by Hunger Action Network of NYS. Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County made additional staff contributions and provided materials support.

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Community Supported Agriculture

Overview

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) allows New Yorkers to buy affordable nutritious food and support local farmers at the same time. A CSA farmer sells shares of his/her crop to CSA members in the winter and spring. Members typically pay a lump sum to the farmer, ranging from \$200 to \$400 depending on the CSA. The produce is harvested and distributed to the CSA members about once a week at the farm or neighborhood site throughout the summer and fall.

Canticle Farms shares with us the interesting and unique history of CSAs. CSA is a form of agriculture that began in Japan in the 1960's. A group of women became concerned about the increasing pesticide use, the over-processing of foods, the long distances that their food traveled, and the decreasing number of farmers in rural areas. They decided to support a local farmer by pre-paying for all of the produce they would receive from him during the growing season. The farmer then worked for several families with the assurance that all of the produce he planned to grow was already sold at a fair price. The women, in turn, agreed to share the risks and rewards of farming since they were not guaranteed a certain quantity of a particular vegetable. If there was a surplus, they got more; if it was a bad year for a particular crop, they got less. This arrangement was positive for all parties involved and the CSA concept went global, coming to the United States in the 1980's. The first CSA opened in Massachusetts in 1986.

There are now more than 1,000 CSAs in the United States and their popularity is growing rapidly. They offer Americans fresh, delicious food that is produced in an environmentally sound way, is healthful to the body, and supports the local economy. CSAs also afford consumers a direct relationship with the means of production and the producers of their food. Families with children especially enjoy the opportunities the farms afford their children to pick beans or play in open spaces.

CSAs benefit both the members and farmers since members receive farm fresh local produce, which is often cheaper than in their local grocery store, and farmers receive income during the winter months. Paying a lump sum can make it difficult for people of certain income levels to join a CSA. However, new methods of organizing CSAs are making it easier for low-income people to participate. Some CSAs accept Food Stamps, operate on a sliding scale, or provide stipends for their low-income members.

Buying affordable locally grown food not only benefits low-income New Yorkers, but it also supports small-scale farms and strengthens the local food supply. CSAs strengthen not only neighborhoods, but also entire regions, by reuniting people with the farmers who grow their food and the land on which it is grown.

If you are interested in creating a CSA, your first task is to do some research. Contact local farmers to find available CSA programs and also be sure to determine whether there is sufficient interest in CSA membership in your community. There are several resources listed in the last section of the manual that can help you in this endeavor.



Canticle Farm

Program Description

Canticle Farm is a non-profit Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm located in Allegany, New York and was founded by the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany. Canticle Farm has been providing many services to the community for the past four years.

Canticle Farm grows over 33 different fruits and vegetables organically for distribution to its shareholders. Shareholders pay in advance for a share of the farm's produce and then come to the farm weekly throughout the 20-week growing season to pick up that week's harvest of fruits and vegetables. The vegetables are harvested in the morning and arranged by vegetable in bushel baskets. The shareholders come in the afternoon to pick up a specified amount of each vegetable. Every full shareholder gets the same amount of produce and a half shareholder gets half of that amount. Shares are available to anyone in the community and can be purchased either as a full-share (\$425), which serves four to six people, or a half-share (\$240), which serves one to three people.

Additionally, two new programs have been added to make Canticle Farm available to a greater number of people in the community. Individuals who qualify as low-income can participate in a Payment Plan and in the Working Share Program. To qualify, individuals must meet one of the following five criteria: earn less than \$25,000 a year regardless of family size, utilize Medicaid, utilize SSI, utilize Food Stamps or live in public housing. Qualifying individuals may pay for the cost of a share over several months through our Revolving Loan Fund. Regular shareholders are asked to pay the full cost of the share before the season begins; the Revolving Loan Fund allows qualifying individuals to make payments over the course of the season (June to October). The second program that has been added is a Working Share Program. Qualifying low-income individuals may work on the farm in exchange for a reduced rate. For every hour they work, \$6.00 is subtracted from the cost of their share. Individuals are not able to work off the entire cost of the share; there are a certain number of hours that are available through the Working Share Program and these are divided up between participants.

This is the first year initiating these two programs and there are eleven unique participants. The participants do a variety of work: maintenance field work, harvesting, transplanting, planting, hosting the distribution tent, writing newsletter articles, helping with fundraisers, and helping with marketing. The Working Share participants, along with regular volunteers, participated in a one-hour volunteer orientation at the beginning of the season. They are responsible for writing down their volunteer hours in the volunteer book that is kept on the farm; this allows us to keep track of the number of volunteer hours that are contributed and to recognize volunteers at the end of the season at the Thanksgiving Celebration. Several Working Share participants have already completed their hours, but continue to volunteer because they enjoy the work and value the community they have formed at the farm. Canticle Farm is committed to increasing the well-being and livability of the community as a whole and recognizes that often those who need the fresh, healthy produce the most have difficulty reaching it.

These two programs have been made possible by a grant from the Indirect Vitamins Purchasers Antitrust Litigation Settlement administered by the NYS Attorney General and by Hunger Action Network of NYS. The programs have been very successful and have helped reach a large number of people, more than just the eleven who chose to participate. Many more individuals have been educated as to the benefits of Canticle Farm due to publicity in soup kitchens, food pantries, public housing facilities, group homes, service agencies and public assistance offices. Countless people were at least introduced to the concept of health-giving, local, sustainable foods from a community farm.



Farmer Mark with his trusty companion, Jasmine

Additional Features

The commitment to care for the local community takes on many different forms at Canticle Farm. The most obvious form is the availability of fresh fruits and vegetables that are grown without synthetic herbicides or pesticides. The natural means of production helps keep people healthy, protects the environmental quality of the area, and increases the productivity of the land for future generations. The farm also offers educational programs and social gatherings to the whole community. Last season's events included a composting workshop, a tomato canning workshop, an Earth Day Celebration, a Summer Solstice Celebration, a Corn Roast, a Harvest Festival and a Thanksgiving Celebration. This year, an educational cookbook is being developed. Canticle Farm connects shareholders not only to the land, their food and their farmer, but also to one another.

In addition to providing fresh produce, educational and social events, Canticle Farm also commits itself to providing at least 20% of its harvest to service organizations and low-income families in the Cattaraugus County area. This season Canticle Farm donated fresh produce to eight local service organizations and five individual families. This is made possible by donations and grants that are solicited from national and local foundations, local businesses and individuals. The organizations and families receiving the donations are required to pick the produce up at the farm during regular distribution hours. This program has been highly successful and has provided much needed fresh foods to many in the community.

Barriers Encountered and Solutions

One of the biggest barriers encountered in the implementation of this program was transportation. Allegany is in a relatively rural area. There is one bus line, but it is unreliable and has a very short loop. There is a lot of poverty in this area and, thus, many people do not have their own cars or access to one. Many more individuals would have liked to participate, but had no way to get to the farm on a regular basis. Canticle Farm is in the process of brainstorming solutions to this problem. They currently have one drop off site, but even this is too much for their limited staff and it still does not allow the people to participate in the farm community and the Working Share Program. They have discussed setting up a way to reimburse volunteers for their mileage when they drop off shares to people. This is very feasible, however it does not accomplish the goal of getting people to the farm. The farm is a unique environment and they want all their shareholders to have the opportunity to be on the farm. Canticle Farm is looking for another service agency that would perhaps like to work with them in transporting people to the farm. However, since people's schedules are so varied, this would be difficult. They continue to research viable solutions to this issue.

Low-Income Involvement in the Organization of the Program

There is currently no low-income involvement in organization and administration of the program, though Canticle Farm hopes to develop this as the program grows. They envision creating a volunteer position to ensure that there are enough volunteers for distribution and harvesting activities. This person would set a schedule and remind people of their commitments if needed. They would also like to see a program participant involved in the publicity of the two low-income programs.

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Transplant Frame

Chelsea CSA

Program Description

The Chelsea CSA is a partnership between Chelsea residents, Stoneledge Farm, and Hudson Guild, a non-profit settlement house serving the Chelsea community. The Chelsea CSA is committed to making its membership accessible to people of all income levels.

The Chelsea CSA was founded in the Spring of 2000, one of more than two dozen New York City groups created with the help of Just Food, a not-for-profit organization linking city residents with regional farmers. Just Food linked the CSA with Stoneledge Farm, a NOFA certified organic family farm that is operated by Deb and Pete Kavakos, located 2½ hours north of New York City in South Cairo, New York. To help support the farmers, CSA members pay a lump sum for their shares of produce in advance of the growing season. This pre-season income covers start-up expenses such as seeds, supplies and maintenance of farm equipment so that farmers do not have to take out high-interest loans in the winter.

In 2004, Chelsea CSA members collect their shares of freshly picked produce every Tuesday from 4-7 p.m., mid-June to mid-November, at the Hudson Guild in Manhattan's Chelsea neighborhood. Weekly shares of produce vary and typically include 8-12 vegetable varieties, enough to feed a family of 2 or 3 people depending on how much of your diet consists of vegetables. Uncollected shares and leftover produce are donated to the Children's Center at Hudson Guild and to Holy Apostles Soup Kitchen in Chelsea, which feeds over 1,100 people each day.

Over 74 households benefit from the CSA produce. During the 2004 season, the Chelsea CSA provided a total of 63 vegetable shares, with 17 vegetable shares going to low-income households. We also provided 39 fruit shares, with 11 going to low-income households.

Hudson Guild and the Chelsea CSA are committed to running a mixed-income CSA. Chelsea CSA has a goal of making 30% of its shares available to low-income members, at a price that is affordable and with a payment plan that is feasible. There are four main methods to achieve this goal:

Revolving Loan Fund: In 2003, the CSA received a small grant and established a revolving loan fund. The fund was needed to address a dilemma that the CSA faced: the farmers needed payment from CSA shares up-front, so that they could pay for seeds, pay their salaries and have a guaranteed budget for the season; but several low-income members were unable to pay a lump sum at one time. The fund (approximately \$4,000) is used to pay the farmer upfront on behalf of the low-income CSA members. The members can then pay back into the fund every two weeks throughout the course of the season in smaller, more manageable payments. The first year of the fund was very successful and the CSA was able to provide 18 low-income shares through the fund. Through member repayments in installments, the fund was replenished and has been used again in 2004 to provide 17 low-income shares to Chelsea neighborhood residents.

Food Stamps: CSA members also have the option of making payments with food stamps. New York State specifies that food stamps can only be used to pay in bi-weekly installments for a CSA, not a lump sum. Therefore, the revolving loan fund is necessary to allow for the initial lump sum payment to the farmer, and then bi-weekly food stamp payments replenish the fund. In 2004, three CSA members used food stamps to pay for their share. The food stamps are accepted through a voucher system: the food stamp recipient fills out a short form bi-weekly and then Hudson Guild staff call in the voucher information to the Food Stamp Program payment center.

Sliding Scale: While the revolving loan fund allows people to make payments through the course of the season, the share price can still be too high for some people. Therefore, a two-tiered membership rate exists so that higher-income members subsidize the share price of lower-income members. This year, the farmer was paid \$375 per share; higher-income members pay \$425 per share and low-income members pay \$275 per share. The farmer offers a discount of \$25 for members who sign up and pay a deposit by the end of December. For standard members who take advantage of this early bird special, the total cost is \$375. Discounted shares and payment plans are available for those with family incomes under \$25,000, people who receive food stamps, live in public housing or have other extenuating circumstances.

Low-Income Subsidy Funds: For members who cannot afford the \$275 share price, Chelsea CSA is able to further subsidize their share price through a grant from Just Food and the New York Community Trust. The combination of a sliding scale fee, the revolving loan fund, and the subsidies enables low-income members to participate.

Additional Features

CSA members play an active role in running the CSA. A CSA Core Group of active volunteers handles recruitment, deals with the farmers, and manages distribution. The CSA Core Group continues to take on increased responsibility of running the CSA to minimize Hudson Guild staff time and resources. In addition, all members pitch in: most serve their required six-hour volunteer commitment by covering three two-hour shifts at the distribution site. People often volunteer additional hours by helping with activities including cooking demos, potluck dinners or a farm visit.

The Chelsea CSA also established a relationship with Fountain House, a home and resource center for people with mental disabilities. Fountain House purchases several "institutional shares" for their members. Many CSAs are looking into institutional shares as another way to increase membership and build community relations.

Low-Income Involvement in the Organization of the Program

The CSA holds open meetings to engage our members and receive feedback from them. It also conducts a survey at the end of the season to gain feedback from all of our members.

Barriers Encountered and Solutions

Recruiting low-income members and working out different payment plans appropriate for each member can be time-intensive. Just Food placed VISTA volunteers with the Chelsea CSA for the 2001-2002 season and the 2002-2003 season to help reach out to more low-income people, establish a Core Group, and improve the operation of the CSA. The VISTA's have been an excellent resource for the CSA and have successfully recruited low-income people and worked out appropriate payment plans. However, since the goal is to minimize Hudson Guild staff time and since VISTA's or interns are not always available, Chelsea CSA is actively working to encourage the participation of more CSA members to assist with this type of function.

Funding Sources

The CSA shares are primarily purchased through the CSA members. The CSA has also received grants from Just Food, New York Community Trust, and the Indirect Vitamins Purchasers Antitrust Litigation Settlement administered by the NYS Attorney General and by Hunger Action Network of NYS to facilitate low-income membership. The CSA also receives in-kind donations from Hudson Guild.

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Future Farms Solidarity Food Network

Program Description

Future Farm, a local organic farm, and the Tompkins County Living Wage Coalition, with support from the Hunger Action Network of NYS, teamed up to create the Solidarity Food Network (SFN). The goal of the partnership is to distribute fresh organic produce to low-income families in the area at an affordable price. Individuals and families with annual incomes below \$20,000 living in Chemung, Tioga, and Tompkins counties are eligible to participate, subject to availability.

Part of a growing social movement surrounding Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), the partnership provides a weekly portion of the farms' harvest throughout the growing season to members enrolled in the SFN through the Tompkins County Living Wage Coalition.

Stressing the responsibility of making healthy, locally produced, organic food accessible to everyone, one of the key goals of Future Farm and the Solidarity Food Network is to supply low cost, organic food to local working families in the community. To keep the cost at an affordable price for low-income consumers, Future Farm plants in ways that reduce the amount of work needed. They also utilize a compost-heated greenhouse and cold frames so that they can grow food during the winter and sell the produce to local restaurants. Selling food year-round to these restaurants helps to offset the discount cost of sale to low-income individuals and families.

In addition to supplying a previously underserved market, Future Farms also emphasizes the importance of community building through public outreach and the need to integrate environmentally sound technologies and practices, particularly through the use of alternative energy systems. Future Farms operations are run by solar electric power generated on-site. In addition, participating families work two days per season at the farm to help with construction projects (i.e. building cold frames).

Currently, the Tompkins County Living Wage Coalition, which is responsible for outreach for SFN participants, has increased the numbers of low-income families who are members of the CSA from 15 to 35 in the past year.

Additional Features

Future Farms developed and installed the first farm-based solar energy system in Chemung County with a grant from the U.S. Department of Energy. The farm has also trained unemployed persons in horticulture/farming and donates food to the community.

Staff at Future Farms relies on part-time employment, such as teaching, in addition to the profits made from the farm. Other support comes from local volunteers who contribute to labor on the farm.

Low-Income Involvement in the Organization of the Program

Future Farm hopes over the next year to establish a board of advisors from the low-income community to help guide them in terms of what crops to grow and how to improve delivery of produce to the community.

Barriers Encountered and Solutions

Last year, the Living Wage Coalition had a hard time getting low-income people to join because it was difficult to find ways to contact them. They have found that word of mouth in the working class community is key to successful outreach. Though it is a slow process, low-income members encouraging their neighbor(s) to join seems to be a more convincing and effective form of outreach.

Tips on How to Outreach:

Ask low-income members to spread the word!

Show low-income communities the finished product of your farming by sampling your food at a community center or farmers' market in a lower income area; this will build interest and connections! Contact Hunger Action for assistance if necessary.

In addition, the culture of cooking has largely been displaced by fast food and ready to eat/microwave meals. As a result additional outreach needs to be done to explain to folks how to best use the produce that the farm is delivering to them.

Lastly, it has been difficult to get people to work on the farm to assist in reducing the amount of work needed to produce food and keep costs down. However, cold frame farming and the compost-heated greenhouse offset this barrier and keep prices down for low-income consumers.

Public Policy Component

It is necessary to do away with farm subsidies since they only help the giant farms and make it harder for the small farmers to compete fairly.

Funding Sources

This project is made possible with funds from the occasional grant and the amount of money made by the farm.

Past funding streams for Future Farms have included a grant of \$48,000 from the New York State Office of Recycled Market Development (NYS ORMD) for the design, construction and operation of the compost heated greenhouse that allows the farm to produce food year-round.

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Website in Progress



Community Garden

Overview

Food providers, community organizations, schools and faith communities can develop a community garden to grow fresh fruits and veggies right in their own neighborhood! Community gardens provide a wonderful opportunity for people to come together in a communal atmosphere to increase the availability of fresh wholesome produce. In addition to providing fresh produce, gardens help unify communities, are therapeutic, and help beautify neighborhoods. Many community leaders have turned abandoned rubble-strewn lots into a source of rejuvenation and community development. Community members also experience the added benefit of increasing their horticultural skills and developing an increased connection with, and respect for, the environment. Growing food is also an important part of our cultural heritage that many of us have lost touch with. Many people have a relative or know someone who was connected to a farm or small garden, and gardens provide one means to reconnect with the earth and each other.

Community gardens can be initiated on the land at community based agencies or faith sites, rooftops, abandoned lots, backyards or through land that the local Department of Parks has to offer. Produce can be harvested by and for local community citizens. Some community gardeners donate some or much of their harvest to local food pantries and soup kitchens where canned items are often standard fare. Developing even a small plot of land takes time and dedication and community participation is key to the continuation of gardens. Working on a garden certainly gives us an insight into the skill it takes our New York farmers to grow our food. Fortunately, there are many resources available to help folks get started, many of which are highlighted in the resource section.



Capital District Community Gardens



Program Description

Capital District Community Gardens (CDCG) operates 40 cooperative neighborhood food gardens where the region's low-income residents are able to move toward self-sufficiency by growing their own healthy food while at the same time helping to beautify their neighborhoods. For almost thirty years, CDCG has been addressing hunger, increasing food security and fostering good health through their community gardening program in the Capital Region's low-income, minority neighborhoods.

The gardens cover more than 15 acres in and around the region's cities and provide living green spaces that beautify and purify the neighborhoods. The gardens provide producing use for vacant lots that may otherwise remain garbage-strewn parcels of asphalt or weeds.

CDCG's sites currently include 650 plots that serve 2,275 people. The demand for gardening space and for services steadily increases. In 2004, CDCG plans to add four new community garden locations that will accommodate 210 additional people.

CDCG provides gardening space to those who do not have access to land, thereby empowering them to provide fresh nutritious produce for their families, friends and neighbors. Families participating in the community gardens are given access to 300-600 square food garden plots which can produce more than \$1,000 worth of fresh organic produce per growing season. For people living on fixed incomes or relying on Food Stamps or WIC, this assistance can be significant. Growing one's own produce lowers food costs and provides gardeners the opportunity to supplement their diet with fresh fruits and veggies and significantly improve their family's nutritional intake.

CDCG provides the land, free seeds and seedlings, tools, information resources, staff support, gardening and nutrition educational opportunities, as well as management for participating families to be as successful as possible in their gardens.

Low-Income Involvement in the Organization of the Program

Approximately 70% of the community gardeners are in the low to moderate-income bracket, with many of them living below the poverty line.

Barriers Encountered and Solutions

The community gardening programs face five major difficulties in developing and sustaining their programs:

1. Lack of funding
2. Lack of land ownership
3. Lack of water and fencing
4. Lack of ongoing management
5. The inconsistency of gardeners from year to year

Depending on the size of a site, it can cost from \$10 to \$30,000 to develop a new community garden. Fortunately, there are more opportunities for funding the development of a new garden than there are for the ongoing upkeep and management of the gardens.

Ownership of the land is crucial for the future of any garden site. Ownership can be achieved through land donation, land auctions or outright purchase. In the past, Neighborhood Associations have purchased land via Community Land Trusts or Loan Funds in order to purchase land for a community garden.

Fencing and water are two critical elements of any successful community garden. Adequate fencing protects the garden from theft or vandalism.

Many gardening programs fail over time because they lack consistent, hands on management. Ongoing site coordination and management is needed to ensure the gardens are fully functioning. To ensure garden management, consider obtaining funds via grants or fundraising to hire a part-time staff or intern. Organizations can also find volunteers through AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers In Service To America), which places individuals with community-based agencies to help find long-term solutions to the problems caused by urban and rural poverty.

The most successful garden sites are those that have a consistent group of gardeners from year to year who ultimately take responsibility for the garden's upkeep.

Funding Sources

Funds are obtained through various individual donors, as well as private and government grants. CDCG also make money by offering service programs, including gardening classes. Classes cost \$10 for the general public and are free for community gardeners. There is also an annual donation from gardeners ranging from \$10 to \$50, depending on the size of the garden and other circumstances.

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Chautauqua County Rural Ministry

Program Description

The Chautauqua County Rural Ministry (CCRM) is a grassroots advocacy agency with a distinguished history of meeting the needs of the homeless, working poor and disenfranchised in Chautauqua County. Organized in the 1950's by a group of enlightened individuals concerned with the welfare of the very poor and migrant workers in the area, the group worked to establish better housing and labor standards for families and their children. Today, the Rural Ministry is an interfaith, non-denominational human service agency based on the belief that every person is deserving of adequate food, shelter, clothing and the opportunity to work to acquire the basic necessities. The Rural Ministry encourages self-determination and development, empowering clients to become contributing members of the community.

Chautauqua County is a rural agricultural community in western New York. Located on Lake Erie, the area was once a successful industrial and agricultural area. The past two decades reveal a decline in economic growth. Industry left the area forcing many working middle income families to relocate to more suitable geographic areas, or to accept lower paying jobs. Unemployment rates continue to indicate that little has changed in twenty years to stimulate economic growth in the county. Many families subsist on low paying service related jobs, with little or no future for career advancement or increased income.



To address the needs of the community, Rural Ministry created the county's first hotline for battered women, two clothing shops, a housing preservation company, the first rape counseling service, summer youth camp projects, a food pantry, the Hispanic Outreach Project, the Friendly Kitchen community kitchen, the Homeless Project, the Coburn Block Apartments, community gardening initiatives, the Gleaning Project, and the Chautauqua County Food Bank, among many other projects.

Rural Ministry created the Chautauqua County Food Bank in 1988, in response to the need to organize food relief efforts throughout the county. Since its inception, the Food Bank has delivered over 1.5 million pounds of food to local emergency food pantries, community kitchens, elderly nutrition sites, day care and children and youth programs. As one of the major providers of food based and emergency programs to families in need, the Friendly Kitchen served 35,600 meals in 2003.

In 1999, Rural Ministry received seed money to create its most recent endeavor, the Gleaning Project. The Gleaning Project is a countywide program that re-harvests and distributes fresh produce that would ordinarily be left in farmers' fields to waste. Sixty different sites located throughout Chautauqua County receive fresh seasonal produce. The gleaned product is a vital nutritional supplement to families who are unable to purchase fresh produce or vegetables.

The Gleaning Project has also introduced families to community gardening, and processing and storage of fresh fruit and vegetables for consumption during the winter months. Since the Gleaning Project's inception, Hunger Action has supported the project by offering funds to support family gardens and community gardens. Each year the program gains more community interest. CCRM has sponsored such programs as the family backyard garden - in which each family was given a flat of assorted vegetables to plant in their own backyard or in containers for their own use. Families usually received a variety of peppers, tomatoes, eggplant, beans, onions, etc. In addition to growing food for themselves, some families grow food for donation to CCRM programs. Retirees have been the greatest source of support the past couple of years. Several men and women in surrounding communities either request plants from the agency or purchase their own, cultivate, plant and tend their garden all summer, then donate the produce to CCRM. CCRM staff usually makes arrangements or has a system of dropping off by 'making rounds' when there is fresh produce to pick up. One retired gentleman produced over 1,500 pounds of vegetables from his less than half-acre garden. That averages to about 4,500 servings of fresh produce to needy families. He has been involved in the program for two years now. Another gentleman in Mayville planted carrots, beans, and squash, yielding over 500 pounds!

Collaborative efforts were also formed with two different church youth groups. One group grew a small garden right behind their church on the lawn. They planted a couple rows of corn, peppers, carrots, tomatoes, squash and beans, broccoli and cauliflower. Everything they grew and donated was served at the Friendly Kitchen.

The City of Dunkirk has joined in the search for abandoned city property to plant community gardens. This spring, a collaborative effort between the United Way of Northern Chautauque County and Rural Ministry Gleaning Project sought to create several community gardens within the city. United Way spearheaded this initiative.

Although Rural Ministry has little useable space on its property in the city to grow a garden, they have been able to plant one! For the past two years, they have grown an herb garden for the Friendly Kitchen, and an eggplant, tomato and pepper garden along the security fence. They grew over 100 pounds of eggplant, cherry tomatoes, hot peppers and onions this year.

Members of the Hispanic Community who frequent the community kitchen also benefited through the gleaning project, by receiving and planting a variety of hot peppers. This was very inspiring because growers would bring in bags of peppers to share with other guests at the kitchen.

In addition, one local nursing home planted a garden for Rural Ministry and donated the produce. A local lady planted a lot of parsley that she donated, which Rural Ministry dehydrated and used in the kitchen. They've also been working with the local Job Corps to have a garden on their property.

Their program keeps inching along, growing a little each year. We're seeing the bounty of a community working together.

Barriers Encountered and Solutions

An initial barrier to the 'Grow a Garden for the Rural Ministry' was picking up harvested produce from the growers. Because this program is countywide, arranging pickups could get complicated. Several growers and a staff member volunteered their time to develop a system: if the growers lived near a major highway, the staff person would volunteer her time to drive by in the morning. If there was a flag hanging on the mailbox, it meant there was produce to be picked up. This may not be the most efficient method of picking up produce, but they have no available vehicle or a volunteer or dedicated staff member to make rounds. This is a large county geographically, and many donors live miles from Dunkirk, Rural Ministry's central

location. Another method of picking up produce was to incorporate the pick up into food bank deliveries to pantries around the county. Their driver would be given a list of places to pick up produce, and then he would re-distribute it to the pantries he visited that day.

Time is a second barrier: the staff was chiefly responsible for the gleaning project, and as it grows and the demographics of the donors change, it becomes very time consuming. Volunteers are the answer and Rural Ministry is currently working on a plan to incorporate volunteers into this part of the system. They are also considering developing a different method of distributing the produce.

A constant need for baskets, bags, and disposables is always evident. It becomes too expensive to continue to purchase produce boxes, bags, netting, etc., so they try to recycle and be as creative as they can be with the resources available.

Donors and volunteer farmers need to be in frequent contact with the agency - it's 'neighborly'. This is a very pleasant part of their job, but also time consuming and driving intensive.

Low-Income Involvement in the Organization of the Program

Rural Ministry is fortunate to have many individuals who are guests at the kitchen or our programs that will assist. Kitchen guests have been known to glean pears, clean fish, snap beans, etc. People are slowly coming together. Volunteers in the homeless units frequently assist in gleaning or preparation of food for the pantry or meals.

Funding Sources

NYS Department of Health, United Way, Episcopal Community Services, grants through private foundations, the Presbytery of Western NY, local churches, community donations, and civic organizations.

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Ending Hunger through Economic Development

Overview

Many groups are initiating innovative food projects that not only end hunger by providing people with food, but also help strengthen low-income communities by supporting community and economic development. These projects examine hunger from a holistic perspective and address the reasons why people are hungry or living in poverty. In New York, hunger is most often a result of economic inequality. Many people using Emergency Food Programs report that they need food because they lost their jobs, or their wages are too low, they need training or education, safe and appropriate childcare is unavailable, or their public benefits are too low. This section features projects that not only improve access to wholesome food, but also help create jobs, provide job training, promote a more democratic distribution of food, and encourage economic development.



Added Value and Herban Solutions, Inc.

Program Description

Added Value's mission is to promote the sustainable development of Red Hook by nurturing a new generation of young leaders. They work towards this goal by creating opportunities for the youth of South Brooklyn to expand their knowledge base, develop new skills and positively engage with their community through the operation of a socially responsible urban farming enterprise.

To date, Added Value has trained more than 45 neighborhood teenagers between the ages of 14 and 19. Each member begins his/her participation in Added Value by attending 60 hours of training. Working together, participants expand their communication skills, develop a strong sense of community, gain a detailed understanding of the food system, and acquire the skills necessary to grow food from seed to sales. Upon completion of this initial training, participants are invited to join the Added Value community for 10 months of after-school and weekend programming.

Youth Initiatives

During the month of June, participants' energy is focused on establishing their farm and opening the Red Hook Farmers' Market. Following the opening of the market, participants select from one of the following three areas of concentration:

DIGITAL HORIZONS: Their Media Literacy, desktop publishing and multimedia lab trains participants to document their work and about the broader Food Justice Movement;

HERBAN SOLUTIONS: A food systems based entrepreneurial training in which participants develop new businesses that can improve the social, economic, and environmental health of their community; or

PROJECT REAL IMPROVEMENT: Community education and mobilization projects where participants share their experience and knowledge with the community in an effort to create a more socially aware, civically engaged culture in Red Hook.

Equipped with new knowledge, new skills and a new perspective on the possibilities of life, participants attend conferences where they are both students and teachers. In the past 24 months, Added Value youth have presented at conferences in Cleveland, OH; Gainesville, FL; Boston, MA; Milwaukee, WI; and Costa Rica. As emissaries, Added Value participants are shaping a new, more positive image of their community. Upon their return to South Brooklyn, the youth educate their peers and neighbors about the world of possibilities that exist beyond the neighborhood. For their efforts, participants receive a monthly stipend of \$250-350, which they use to buy school materials, to help out with household bills, for clothes and for future savings.

The Red Hook Farmers' Market, Food for All

Founded as a social venture, the Market was designed to provide neighborhood teens with real-life job training while increasing low-income residents' access to healthy, safe, and affordable food. Since opening in the summer of 2001, the Market has remained the only source of fresh, healthy, and affordable food in Red Hook. The 2003 Market featured five fruit and vegetable vendors, pasture raised poultry and eggs and Red Hook's first Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program. A partnership between Just Food, The United Way and Added Value, the CSA helped 10 families buy shares in the harvest of the New York-based Rigowski Farm. Unlike other Farmers' Markets, a team of Added Value's youth participants, who are supervised by staff and volunteers, runs each farm-stand and the CSA. By working in the Market, participants are attending to a critical need in the community while honing the transferable skills acquired during training that they will use for the rest of their lives.

Since its inception in June 2001, the Farmers' Market has accomplished the following:

- ◆ Effectively advocated for the participation of the Red Hook Senior Center in the New York States Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP), leveraging more than \$20,000 in benefits;
- ◆ Enabled 1,000 low-income, new and expecting mothers to receive similar vouchers through the local WIC office, resulting in \$60,000 of food benefits for the community;
- ◆ Sold \$80,000 in products and produce and linked Red Hook to a more sustainable, regional economy;
- ◆ Donated an additional \$15,000 worth of vegetables to individuals in need;
- ◆ Piloted the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets cellular Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) program, which allows people to use their Food Stamp benefits at the market;
- ◆ Helped found the Friends of Coffey Park and revitalized this community asset;
- ◆ Provided meaningful work for Red Hook teenagers.

The New Urban Landscape: Home For the Whole Community

Added Value is working in conjunction with Partnership for Parks, the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, and numerous local institutions to transform Todd Memorial Park from an underutilized recreational space into a vibrant community resource where young and old can work, study, and grow together as they sow, nurture, and harvest plants in a two-acre urban farm.

Since taking site control in September 2003, this once empty ball field has become a center of urban agricultural activity, functioning as an intergenerational community space, providing meaningful work for neighborhood teens, serving as an experiential classroom for local schools, and providing sustenance to residents.

In just nine months of operation the farm has accomplished the following:

- ◆ Conducted educational workshops for 500 local elementary and middle school students;
- ◆ Facilitated community based trainings for more than 150 adults;
- ◆ Hosted 10 community workdays, involving a total of 230 volunteers who contributed 1300 hours of service to the community;
- ◆ Held a two-day plenary meeting on the local food system, which was attended by city-wide community-based organizations, social service providers, representatives from the local schools, the Chancellor's office, the Mayor and Congresswomen Velazquez's office;
- ◆ Held informational sessions for visitors from as far away as Hong Kong, West Africa, Mexico and Ecuador to speak with the youth and learn how urban farming can contribute to economic development, improve community health and expand opportunities for young adults;
- ◆ Implemented a community composting initiative and collected over 20 tons of waste establishing Added Value as one of New York City's largest composting projects; and
- ◆ Erected a 1,000 square foot greenhouse.

Low-Income Involvement in the Organization of the Program

In addition to the roles and responsibilities that the youth leadership team and Board Members fulfill, Added Value has a broad based Community Advisory Council (CAC). The CAC sub committees guide program development and implementation. Additionally, they have a 28 member CSA with a developing Core Group, comprised in part of low-income individuals.

Barriers Encountered and Solutions

One of the largest barriers Added Value has encountered is a noticeable lack of inter-institutional planning. Given the size and strength and momentum of the growing food justice / food security community, there should be an incremental expansion of collaborative fundraising and programming. To address this issue, Added Value believes a non-funded volunteer food policy council comprised of the broadest set of institutional players possible should begin meeting as soon as possible.

Public Policy Component

Added Value is currently working to effect policy change through collaboration with partner organizations and through constituent education and mobilization. Added Value's Digital Horizon's team has developed "The Horizon" which is a newsletter about their work and the work of other food justice / food security organizations which will be used by Project REAL Improvement as an initial outreach tool in their community.

Funding Sources

Heifer International, EchoingGreen Foundation, Calaban Foundation, United States Department of Agriculture, State Department of Parks and Recreation, Independence Community Foundation, and private family foundations.

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Bullthistle Bounty

Program Description

Agriculture is the backbone of Chenango County, yet there has long been a need for stronger connections between local folks and locally grown foods. County producers of fruits and vegetables drive long distances to sell in farmers' markets in cities. Local supermarkets sell produce grown far away. In addition, those who feed the hungry report that fresh produce is not usually available to them. Food insecurity is severe in Chenango, where the Catholic Charities food pantry, Roots and Wings, has alone served about 20% of all households in Chenango County since opening in April of 2001.

In an effort to promote a stronger connection between this primarily rural County's abundant sources of local foods and all community residents, a group of local businesses, human service and agricultural organizations formed the Chenango County Food System Network. In the spring of 2003 they created "Bullthistle Bounty," a local food cooperative program that is open to all consumers and county producers of food products.

The Bullthistle Bounty program began linking folks with the local harvest in the summer of 2003. Participants can now buy local food "shares" in the form of coupon booklets at various community sites and local businesses, including banks (Chenango NBT Banks, The Place, Catholic Charities, Black Bear Farm Winery, Made in Chenango Art Gallery, and the Norwich Farmers' Market). The share books are sold for a reduced rate of \$22 for a \$25 booklet of shares (a 12% savings). People can then use the coupon booklets to purchase from 26 local producers, including farmers' markets, farm stands, and some area stores. The participating local farmers and stores will accept the coupons just like cash for any food made or grown in Chenango County.

The program has found a lot of support in the politically conservative Chenango County, where its message of community self-reliance and strengthening local farms has great appeal. A model of neighbor helping neighbor, the community subsidizes shares for low-income participants through harvest festival fundraisers and local donations. As a result of this support, low-income community members can purchase a \$25 booklet of local food shares at the community-subsidized price of \$8. In its first year, the program sold 150 share books to low-income members, and raised funds for 70 more. The regularly priced shares, \$22, have been used by tourists, middle-income consumers, and even a local soup kitchen serving over one hundred people a week.

The program has maintained continuous participation from a diversity of Chenango County residents in need, including the elderly, those who have serious health problems such as diabetes, and families who have young children. In addition to saving money, lower-income participants are able to incorporate quality food into their diets. Everything from eggs and milk to sweet corn and peas in the pod are available from participating producers in nearly every town and village in the county.

Additional Features

The central idea behind the creation of the Food System Network and the implementation of Bullthistle Bounty is to create a food system that would meet the needs of Chenango County. By connecting the consumers with local producers, the program not only strengthens the local economy, but also addresses the need to educate the public about hunger and nutrition. Since introducing the program in August of 2003, the program has generated close to \$6,000 in agricultural sales. Many low-income members have become monthly participants in the program, and have provided testimonials to the high regard that they have for the shares and the nutritious food they are able to buy.

In addition, local food is key to this project because of a variety of reasons: it helps support family farms and maintain the rich agricultural tradition; consumers will know where their food came from; it helps to keep consumer spending in the local community; food quality is higher when food doesn't have to travel as far; local food helps the environment by reducing the amount of fossil fuel needed for shipping; and, of course, local food is fresh! According to Tufts University, the average mouthful of food has traveled 1300 miles before it is finally eaten.

Low-Income Involvement in the Organization of the Program

Chenango County is one of the poorest counties in New York State. Their Emergency Services and Self-Help Center, Roots & Wings, combats hunger and supports local agriculture by selling the share books at a substantial discount to low-income families - many of whom would not experience such fresh, locally grown food without this program.

Barriers Encountered and Solutions

Barriers encountered included encouraging local producers that this program would work and marketing the program. Both were overcome through the persistence and patience of their AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers who helped to develop this program.

Public Policy Component

It is necessary to support family farms, maintain their rich agricultural tradition, and keep consumer spending local, all while combating hunger in our poverty-stricken county.

Funding Sources

Primarily grants.

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Taqwa Community Farm

Program Description

The Taqwa Community Farm's Youth Program recruits local Bronx youth to learn about food production and marketing by working in a community garden and managing a youth run farm stand. The youth gain a sense of personal and professional responsibility and entrepreneurial skills.

Young people from the local neighborhood are interviewed and hired for the summer. During the early part of the season, the youth participate in garden care and maintenance, planting and upkeep of the hydroponics system, and market training and outreach. The young people work 6 hours a week in June and 10 hours a week during the market season. In 2004, seven young people are working with the program with two supervisors.

The program partners with Just Food to receive market training for the youth and workshops about growing practices and food security. During this training, the youth members participate in various roles to help them prepare for the market season: approaching customers, customer service, dealing with difficult customers, how to work effectively as a group, sales, making proper change and accepting Farmers' Market Nutrition Program coupons. Youth members also distribute flyers to local stores and residents announcing the Taqwa Farm-stand start date in early July.

In the market season, the youth are also responsible for managing the weekly farm stand. Market season is an exciting time of year for the garden, the community and the youth program. On their first market day, youth members observe and participate in market sales and weighing produce. They also arrive at the garden at 8:30am ready to work. Youth participants share responsibilities and have the opportunity to work at different posts: record-keeping, weighing, talking with customers, and market set-up and breakdown. During the week youth participants continue to learn about food production through garden maintenance. On Wednesdays, youth participants evaluate the market from the week before and make suggestions about how to do things differently the following week.

Because the community garden does not produce enough food for the stand, the program also receives weekly drop offs from an upstate farmer.

Low-Income Involvement in the Organization of the Program

Highbridge, the neighborhood served by both the community garden and the farm stand, is one of the lower income neighborhoods in New York City, bordering on the South Bronx with almost 40% of the population living below the poverty level. The youth in the program are from the local community. Also, the farm stand serves the local community and provides fresh, healthy and affordable food. The availability of this produce to the people who need it the most is enhanced by the ability of the farm stand to accept Farmers' Market Nutrition Program coupons. Before this market, the coupon recipients had no farm stand in the area to use the coupons

Additional Features

A vacant lot in 1993, Taqwa Community Farm was started by five neighbors who wanted to rid the community of a dumping ground and a center for drug activity. The group began clearing the lot and planted a garden. Now over 90 people are involved in cultivating their garden beds and growing food to feed themselves, their families and the community. In addition to the youth program, the plots for individual families, and the farm stand, Taqwa also maintains garden plots that are designed to grow food for donation to neighbors through the "Grow and Give" program.

Since its inception, Taqwa has served as a true community center offering green open-space, a safe haven, a site for social gatherings, as well as a wealth of food, educational opportunities and inspiration to the adults, seniors, and youth of the South Bronx neighborhood. For these citizens, Taqwa Community Farm is an oasis of green in the middle of the south Bronx that represents a life-style and peace with which residents are familiar. Many community members grew up on a farm or with a small garden in their yard or with family members who had gardens. Food produced and sold at Taqwa includes ingredients found in cultural dishes, and are grown with methods that are comparable to practices learned from families and various cultures. Activities and events at the garden are often focused around cultural traditions and economic sensitivity.

Funding Sources

Market sales, the Indirect Vitamins Purchasers Antitrust Litigation Settlement administered by the NYS Attorney General and by Hunger Action Network of NYS, & Mental Insight Foundation.

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Urban Delights



Program Description

Urban Delights provides youth from high-risk environments with an educational experience that includes entrepreneurship, youth development and leadership opportunities. The project is designed to contribute to inner-city neighborhoods by enhancing connections to local food systems and promoting urban agriculture, local economic development and the active participation of youth in their communities. The first aim of the project is to provide a high quality, results-oriented youth development program that broadens participants' perspectives and competencies to be better equipped to continue with their education, successfully enter the workforce and/or create their own jobs. Secondly, the project seeks to enhance community economic development by contributing to the revitalization of inner-city areas by inspiring and supporting youth to create positive change in their communities. The third project aim is to address the need for healthy food and a viable, local food system by extending inner-city residents' access to fresh produce.

Urban Delights is a collaborative initiative of local non-profit community organizations, as well as community minded funders, and urban youth. Jubilee Homes of Syracuse, Inc. is the program's lead agency and provides strong administrative guidance. The project is managed by a steering committee that meets regularly throughout the year. Youth also play an active role in the development of projects. This includes providing critical input to the future directions for Urban Delights, designing promotional materials, advocating for the project at City Council committee meetings, and co-writing funding proposals. Likewise, the project has attracted community volunteers and the financial support of a number of foundations, banks, and local businesses.



Youth Farmstand Project

Urban Delights is an innovative project that combines personal development, business skills and first hand experience growing and selling fresh produce. The project gives 14-17 year olds from the inner city a chance to learn what it takes to run a small business while promoting good citizenship and positive environmental practices. In the process, youth gain job-readiness education and are linked with personal support services. During the summer months, participants operate farm stands at 8-10 sites throughout the inner city. They provide locally-grown produce in urban neighborhoods where fresh fruits and vegetables are often difficult to find. Project youth also get their hands in soil, cultivating and harvesting herbs and vegetables at their own community garden sites and at organic farms in the country.

Throughout the summer, participants receive hands-on training in entrepreneurship, team building leadership and other key life skills. They gain an understanding of the importance of local food systems and sustainable growing practices. They also meet with small-business owners, investigate value-added products they can make, and lend a hand with community service activities.

The first youth-run farmstands were opened in 1999. Since then, the number of farmstand sites has expanded from one to eight, profits have soared, and more agencies have become active participants in the collaboration. Currently the program employs 21 youth.

Senior Delivery Project

Throughout 2004, Urban Delights has been piloting a senior center fresh fruit and vegetable delivery service to provide low-income seniors with improved access to nutritious and affordable produce. Fresh produce accessibility issues in low-income neighborhoods are exacerbated for many seniors. Transportation issues, as well as physical limitations are a fundamental concern of many seniors seeking to obtain fresh produce. Urban Delights has been working with the Onondaga Department for the Aging and Youth to target seniors who could benefit from the delivery service through existing participation in 18 Seniors Dining sites in the City of Syracuse. Urban Delights youth operate a pre-order and delivery service on a weekly basis. The produce for the project is obtained through local farmers and through Urban Delights community gardens.

Project youth also work with Cornell Cooperative Extension to provide weekly nutrition outreach information and recipe options specific to seasonal offerings. Youth also interact directly with seniors during delivery periods. This project not only improves the health and well-being of participating seniors, but it also provides the youth an opportunity to gain business skills, including sales, marketing, distribution, customer service, and local food system and nutrition knowledge.

Additional Features

Our accomplishments include but are not limited to:

- ◆ Training and supporting over 100 youth to operate a micro-enterprise;
- ◆ Ensuring youth assume major roles in running the project (including graphic design work, acting as project spokespeople, fundraising);
- ◆ Inspiring project youth to pursue higher education;
- ◆ Being a successful collaborative initiative involving community agencies;
- ◆ Developing a comprehensive project monitoring system that includes clear objective and measurable outcomes; and
- ◆ Receiving the Award of Excellence, "New York State Community Eat Well Play Hard Practices."

Barriers Encountered and Solutions

One problem that the program has encountered is staff development. Ideally, summer staff should be provided with a planned orientation program, including a component on supporting youth development. However, for the past three years this has been hampered by staff funding being approved shortly before the program begins, resulting in positions being filled after youth have started. Fortunately, the project's staff is a group of self-motivated and dedicated individuals who seem to possess a passion for working with youth, and have a natural way of connecting with our youth.

Another problem that the project continues to experience is programming and budgets cuts, resulting from a sluggish economy. This summer, for example, the program did not have the adequate number of staff members ideally needed to run the program. Again, because of the sincerity of those persons currently employed and the enthusiasm of community volunteers, the program got off to another great start. For example, the youth have had several guest speakers and leadership training sessions free of charge.

Funding Sources

Carousoul Center/DestiNY USA, Central NY Community Foundation, Central NY Works, City of Syracuse Community Development Block Grant Program, Dinosaur Bar-B-Q (Syracuse, NY), the Indirect Vitamins Purchasers Antitrust Litigation Settlement administered by the NYS Attorney General and by Hunger Action Network of NYS, Kienzle Foundation, and M&T Bank.

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Hunger Mapping & Community Food Assessments

Overview

Groups across New York State are being creative in how they approach hunger, by working to identify gaps in the local food system through assessment and mapping strategies. There are many different ways to map hunger and conduct community food assessments. Groups conducting such research studies may collect and analyze data from a wide spectrum of sources, including government data such as poverty rates, location of food programs, amount of money spent on local food consumption, the location of supermarkets, the amount of food produced by local farmers and food retailers, transportation routes to food sources, etc. The goal is to examine trends in food and hunger issues via research and data analysis and use this data to develop viable solutions to these problems.

According to the Syracuse Hunger Project, "Mapping projects pay attention to the geography of hunger. Looking at hunger this way provides new ways of seeing the problem and new ways of addressing these issues. For the first time, with the development of Geographic Information Systems and other mapping technologies, groups can *really* begin to map hunger - and its amelioration - in all its complexity. Engaging in a *community* mapping of hunger allows localities to collectively appreciate not only the scope and complexity of the problem, but also all that they have done right - and wrong - to address it."

Following are 3 different examples of current projects that utilize Community Food Assessment and Hunger Mapping strategies.



The Center for Popular Research, Education and Policy

Program Description

C-PREP works with people to achieve community self-reliance through participatory action research, training and technical assistance, policy development and demonstration projects. C-PREP provides management services for the New York Sustainable Agriculture Working Group (NYSAWG).

C-PREP partners with the Hunger Action Network of New York State (HANNYS), NYSAWG and other programs to achieve common goals. HANNYS, NYSAWG and C-PREP conduct the "Traveling Chautauqua" series of listening sessions in NYS to learn about the needs of regional food system stakeholders and to inform public policy. Regional food system stakeholders include low-income community members and small farmers.

C-PREP conducts research and prepares regional food system analysis for the "Traveling Chautauquas". This analysis estimates the economic development potential of regional food systems resulting from the gap between regional consumer food expenditures and regional food production.

The analysis begins with information about the production capacity of the regional food system. The Bureau of Economic Analysis provides information by county on farm revenues and production costs.¹ The Economic Census provides county-level data on the value of shipments by food manufacturers.² These sources provide the data for a calculation of regional production capacity. The Bureau of Labor Statistics provides information on consumer expenditures for food by region of the country.³ The data for the Northeastern United States provides an estimate of the amount of money people spend in any region of New York State for food.

The difference between the amount of money that regional consumers spend on food and the amount of money that regional food producers generate in revenue is the gap that an increase in production could provide the regional economy. The gap is substantial - in New York State the gap exceeds \$35 billion.⁴ New Yorkers spend that much money to import food. New York food producers could actually produce and sell enough food to meet anywhere from 10% to 50% of that gap. Even a 10% expansion of NYS food production and selling to NYS food consumers would generate over \$16 billion in total income and over 17,000 jobs.

¹ www.bea.doc.gov/beat/regional/reis/

² Economic Census, Manufacturing, Geographic Area Series, New York 1997

³ www.bls.gov/cex/home/

⁴ Herrera, H. 2004. New York State Food System Fact Sheet: The Economic Potential of Regional Food Systems. Rochester, NY: The Center for Popular Research, Education and Policy and NYSAWG

Upon request, C-PREP will provide people interested in this analysis with the paper describing the methodology and the findings for two regions of NYS, the Capital District and the Genesee Finger Lakes region,⁵ and the fact sheet for New York State.

Low-Income Involvement in the Organization of the Program

The project seeks to actively engage low-income families in assessing and developing solutions to problems in their local food systems. In addition, the founder and chief executive for C-PREP is a Latino from a low-income background who earned a medical degree and obtained training in public health.

Barriers Encountered and Solutions

C-PREP focuses on marginalized communities struggling with isolation and exclusion from mainstream social and economic opportunity as well as internalized oppression. For instance, many smaller farmers in New York State face multiple challenges in competing with highly concentrated, large agribusinesses. At the same time, low-income New Yorkers have difficulty accessing enough affordable, locally grown nutritious food.

C-PREP addresses these challenges by working with people directly at the grassroots level, to recognize and respect their indigenous knowledge, to build solutions using this knowledge and to bring this knowledge to the policy arena at local, state and federal levels.

Public Policy Component

C-PREP has strong public policy programs, with current activity focused on regional food system development that support local farms and benefit low-income people.

Funding Sources

C-PREP receives grants, contracts and consulting fees to support its work.

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⁵ Herrera, H., Barnes, A., Smith, J. 2004. The Economic Development Potential of Regional Food System Capacity to Meet Consumer Demand in Two Regions of New York State. Rochester, NY: The Center for Popular Research, Education and Policy and NYSAWG.



Food For Growth: A Community Food System Plan for Buffalo's West Side

Program Description

The "Food for Growth" project was comprised of a semester-long planning process undertaken by eleven students within the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at the State University at Buffalo in the fall of 2003. Under the guidance of Dr. Samina Raja, students in this project coordinated a community food assessment and prepared a food system plan for a neighborhood on Buffalo's West Side.

The community food assessment resulted in the publication of a report and several public presentations. The report, titled "Food For Growth: A Community Food System Plan for Buffalo's West Side" provides guidelines for how the West Side may organize its land use, transportation, and economic development to ensure residents' access to affordable and quality food. The report also outlines specific recommendations designed to correspond to particular organizations within the area.

The project was completed on behalf of the Massachusetts Avenue Project (MAP), a non-profit organization working in the West Side of Buffalo. Coordinators from the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at SUNY Buffalo collaborated with MAP staff to ensure a participatory process type of research on food systems. MAP's staff, other organizational representatives, community residents, and the SUNY team concluded that baseline information about food insecurity was necessary in order to identify areas of need and develop effective community based solutions.

In collaboration with the MAP staff, the SUNY Buffalo team developed a schedule for data collection and analysis:

September 2003: In the first month of the assessment coordination, students collected empirical data on food production, processing, marketing and disposal systems in Buffalo, from sources such as the Census of Agriculture and County Business Patterns. This information was used to develop a resource guide for the entire City of Buffalo.

October 2003: In the second month, the SUNY team shifted its focus from the citywide conditions to the West Side. This phase began with community outreach; the purpose of community outreach was to allow the community members to both influence the direction of the research and to provide information regarding food accessibility in their neighborhood. Qualitative data was collected through personal interviews and six separate focus groups with church/faith communities, small food related businesses, senior citizens, immigrants and children. The interview tools used during these focus groups varied and were developed according to each group's composition type (i.e. faith groups, businesses, seniors, children, etc). For instance, the business focus group was asked about their role in the community, the hiring of local residents and the challenges they face upon selling food in the neighborhood; the immigrant focus group was asked about food assortment, cultural and ethnic produce, etc.

Each focus group identified both the strengths and weaknesses of the food system in their neighborhood, and identified strategies they viewed as potential solutions. Traditional strategic planning analysis, i.e., SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis was utilized as a guide.

The assessment of food insecurity, i.e. chronic inaccessibility to nutritious, safe, and affordable food, on Buffalo's West Side was based on qualitative results from the interviews and focus groups as well as quantitative data collected from the US census. Data from the census, which displayed aggregate patterns of food insecurity due to changes in the population demographics, businesses, employment, income, vehicle ownership on the West Side, were juxtaposed with narratives of individual community members. This phase also included a field survey of food stores conducted by the students to compare the affordability and availability of food in the West Side with that in the rest of the city and surrounding suburbs.

November to December 2003: During the last two months of the community food assessment, students analyzed the empirical data collected from the census in September and the qualitative data from the six focus groups in October. The purpose of this analysis was to identify and construct four main "strategies" for strengthening the West Side food system. The four strategies identified were: 1) promote sustainable land use planning; 2) promote food-based economic development; 3) increase transportation access to food; and 4) promote food based youth educational development.

The students then outlined the following recommendations for how MAP and many other agencies can implement these strategies:

Land Use Analysis: Research indicated the need to increase food production within the neighborhood and surrounding areas through more community gardens and greenhouses.

Work Force Analysis: Students explored the skills of community residents as identified by census data. They compared these skills with what neighborhood businesses identified as desirable skills amongst prospective employees. They also compared community resident skills with the types of businesses available in the West Side neighborhood and the surrounding area. Based on their findings, the SUNY team recommended solutions including but not limited to job training and workforce program development within the West Side neighborhood.

Transportation Chain Analysis: Students explored existing transportation networks; they calculated distance to markets of choice that offered adequate food products. Research indicated that there were no markets of choice located within the West Side neighborhood and that it was necessary for community residents to travel over an hour to markets by bus. Research also showed vehicle ownership of less than 30% in the West Side neighborhood. Recommendations promoted the development of more adequate local transportation networks to and from adequate food resources by local authorities.

Youth Development Analysis: Research indicated that youth was the fastest growing segment of the population in the West Side of Buffalo. In addition, focus group interviews with the youth of the West Side revealed great interest in youth oriented project development. Based on these findings, the SUNY team recommended that neighborhood organizations and leaders combine youth development with community food project development. The team recommended duplication of model projects throughout the United States that incorporate youth development into community food security programs.

For more information about the "Food For Growth" assessment and the recommendations made, contact the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at SUNY Buffalo to obtain a copy of the report.

Low-Income Involvement in the Organization of the Program

An effective assessment ensures participation of community residents in the process of identifying local strengths, needs, problems and solutions. Community participation yields true identification of issues and the development of pertinent, effective solutions. The "Food For Growth" focus groups involved the input and feedback of West Side community residents, namely immigrants, children and senior citizens. Each focus group had a facilitator and co-facilitator as well as a note-taker.

To ensure that community residents would sign up for focus groups, assessment coordinators held public meetings to increase awareness about the "Food For Growth" project. These public meetings, which sometimes were attended by 40 to 50 people, were advertised in local media sources, flyers and various community mailing lists. The project was advertised as an "open house" initiative. Assessment coordinators also attended city council meetings, neighborhood association meetings, and organizational meetings to announce the project and solicit participation in focus groups.

Barriers Encountered and Solutions

Focus groups with local food businesses proved not to be feasible due to time constraints. To resolve this problem, the students coordinating the "Food For Growth" assessment traveled to the local businesses and conducted interviews on site. When necessary, they also left surveys for completion and return to the SUNY Buffalo team.

It proved very difficult to connect with low-income residents for focus group purposes. To resolve this problem, interviews with residents (particularly immigrants) were conducted in coordination with faith-based groups and on site at church locations. The SUNY team learned that faith based groups were an extremely useful and important resource upon coordinating the overall assessment.

Due to transportation issues and illness amongst senior citizens, it was necessary to travel to senior centers to coordinate senior focus groups.

Coordinating community participation is not easy and it requires a lot of patience. It is necessary to ensure that assessment coordinators are able to commit a great deal of time and resources.

Additional Features

MAP used the research and recommendations presented in the "Food For Growth" report to apply for a USDA community food projects grant. MAP has since received over a quarter of million dollars from USDA to continue its work on the West Side.

Public Policy Component

Coordinators of the "Food for Growth" assessment recommended the creation of a Food Policy Council within the city of Buffalo. A Food Policy Council would be able to ensure the implementation of programs that correspond to the series of recommendations outlined in the "Food For Growth" report. MAP has taken a leadership role in bringing together several groups around the city to form a coalition of interested groups. In the future, this coalition may function as a pseudo policy council by pushing for policy changes to ensure food justice for city residents.

Funding Sources

The Department of Urban and Regional Planning provided personnel and in-kind support for funding the community food assessment project.

The local Weed and Seed program, made possible via the Federal Department of Justice, provided funds for the printing of the "Food For Growth" report.

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Syracuse Hunger Project

Program Description

The Syracuse Hunger Project began in the fall of 2003 as an initiative of the Samaritan Center, a hot meal program serving the hungry at the center of Syracuse's downtown. The Samaritan Center and its Board had tried for some time and without notable success to try to describe the changing needs for emergency food services and the resources available to fight hunger in the city. At best, people working in the hunger field had a clear idea only of what was happening on their own blocks and in their own programs. There was little that had been done on a collaborative, community-wide basis to collect this information.

Last fall, the Board of the Samaritan Center, with funding from the Fred J. Harder Foundation, authorized the initiation of the Syracuse Hunger Project. Tim Glisson, having had wide-ranging experience in the local not-for-profit, government and media sectors, was hired as the program director. The Project began with an expectation that all of the various entities involved in the local fight against hunger could learn much more by collecting and sharing information and data in a single local database. It was also expected that the active participation of Syracuse University's Geography Department in the Project would add both technological sophistication and professional expertise to the process of collecting, analyzing and ultimately mapping all of the information collected. From the beginning, there were a number of things that we tried to do. Among them were to:

- ◆ Collect as much available data as possible and then map it;
- ◆ Gather around one table the important players in the hunger field, from the not-for profit sector, the government agencies, and the local academic institutions;
- ◆ Begin a series of thoughtful community-wide discussions about Syracuse hunger;
- ◆ Reach a consensus on some basic understandings about improving the provision of services in the hunger field;
- ◆ Make recommendations for initiatives in the future using the resources currently available;
- ◆ Develop a community of interest among the participants for longer range efforts; and
- ◆ Provide maps and map-making expertise as a continuing community resource.

The Project is a work in progress. The primary result thus far is a set of maps (that will be both updated and added to) that provide a revealing picture of hunger in Syracuse. The maps begin to accurately depict the uneven topography of hunger in Syracuse. They show neighborhoods where the spectrum of acute and chronic hunger lurks, neighborhoods that are well served by the existing social service agencies and churches, and neighborhoods that are not. They show where kids are at risk, where the elderly are in danger. They show those areas where all the hundreds of dedicated volunteers and the quiet workers of the government agencies are doing an amazing job of meeting the needs of vulnerable people in our city, and they show where they are not.

The mapping project collected a range of different kinds of data, from the location of food pantries (and their hours of operation) to census data about income, race, and housing quality, to information about who has access to support for utility bills in the winter, to WIC eligibility and use, to the location of stores selling fresh fruit and vegetables. By bringing together this range of data and by creatively combining the data to reveal patterns perhaps not easily seen by the unaided eye, the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) maps of the Syracuse Hunger Project give a new view of the landscape of hunger in Syracuse. They also, and very importantly, raise new questions about hunger in the city, including:

- ◆ Where the location of food pantries is adequate and where it is not, and how that might change in the future;
- ◆ How the differential access to food stamps, WIC, and the like in the city (and county) might contribute to pockets of vulnerability - and what might be done to address that difference in access;
- ◆ Who becomes more vulnerable to hunger when neighborhood schools and school-based summer programs are closed or cut back for budgetary reasons; and
- ◆ What sort of structural forces - the continuing suburbanization of the region, the changing nature of the labor market, the restructuring of welfare provisions at the city, county, state and federal levels - determine the nature of food insecurity for children, families and the elderly...and where.

The first report of the Syracuse Hunger Project was issued in April 2004. It contained a total of ten recommendations that are now being acted upon. For more information on the details of these recommendations, please see the full report. The recommendations are as follows:

1. Increase outreach efforts for WIC enrollment.
2. Examine the feasibility of forming a cooperative of existing agencies to better serve the needs of children.
3. Address the increasing incidence of childhood obesity and the hunger/obesity paradox in all efforts on children's hunger issues.
4. Expand the use of the existing pantry system to increase outreach for food stamps, WIC, and the earned income tax credit.
5. Increase Senior Citizen outreach in ways that are responsive to the unique challenges faced by that population.
6. Formalize the local emergency hunger network.
7. Convene local faith community leaders on hunger issues.
8. Invite a community-wide conversation concerning the interplay between theology and efficiency in the provision of hunger assistance.
9. Make explicit the relationship between public sector and not-for-profit hunger assistance programs.
10. Use an on-going mapping project to inform and direct community siting, program and operations decisions in hunger-related efforts.

Additional Features

The Syracuse Hunger Project intends that hunger mapping can be used as a means of better addressing the issue of hunger. The techniques and methods employed should be transferable to other communities. The Syracuse Hunger Project will be happy to share the results of their experience in pulling together this type of community-wide project. Similarly, both the Department of Geography at Syracuse University and the People's Geography Project (see below) welcome inquiries from other groups about the geographical and GIS-related resources that can be mobilized for this type of initiative.

Barriers Encountered and Solutions

Between all of the locally based pantries and food programs, the various governmental social service offices, and the wide array of human service agencies and programs, the Hunger Project found that they were dealing with a highly fragmented spectrum of programs and entities that had never been examined (and had never been intended to be considered) as a coherent and integrated system for addressing the local emergency food needs of a highly diverse population. It was also apparent that unless all of these various parts could be assembled and analyzed simultaneously, they would not be able to get a clear picture of all the interrelated issues and problems that are manifested. Attempting to bring all of this information and expertise together was therefore no small task.

Governance of the Project came from a steering committee, a voluntary group of interested parties from the not-for-profit, government and academic worlds. Meetings were ordinarily held every two weeks, generally arranged with the generous hospitality of the Salvation Army. In the periods between meetings, Tim Glisson was in charge of communicating with all the various players, locating new collaborative partners and collecting and assembling data. He also was charged with coordinating the delivery of data to the Geography Department at Syracuse University and with working with Professors Don Mitchell and Jane Read on the production of maps.

Since the understanding was that all participants were equal partners, and all represented agencies were participating voluntarily in the expectation of the potential benefits that this kind of collaboration could provide to them, there was surprisingly little friction. Agencies provided data and information (and leads to other sources of data) as they had the ability, and the Project went forward largely on the momentum of a generous spirit of sharing. Since neither the Syracuse Hunger Project nor the Samaritan Center had any real (or even imaginary) authority, the Project depends both on high levels of trust and on a shared sense of curiosity and possibility about the kinds of findings this kind of initiative might produce.

Public Policy Component

The Project is currently working on Phase II projects to determine the topics and strategies for public policy initiatives to pursue in the future.

Funding Sources

1. The Fred Harder Foundation, a private foundation in Syracuse, has provided operating expenses, including funding for the costs of the Project Manager.
2. The Department of Geography at Syracuse University has provided computer and GIS capacity and faculty expertise, as well as hundreds of hours of student involvement in the mapping project.
3. The People's Geography Project (directed by Professor Don Mitchell and headquartered at Syracuse University) has provided us with funding for a graduate assistant for the GIS aspects of the project, with academic leadership and with assistance in connecting the Syracuse Hunger Project with other similar projects throughout the U.S. and the world. The People's Geography Project can be reached at: www.peoplesgeography.org
4. The Samaritan Center has made the Syracuse Hunger Project a core part of the agency's mission and has underwritten the costs of all staff and facilities used for the Project.

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E-mail: edsamcen@hotmail.com
<http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/geo>
www.thesamaritancenter.com

Information on the geographical aspects of the Project should be obtained from:

Don Mitchell
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Improving New Yorkers' Nutrition

Overview

Poor nutrition is a serious problem affecting many New Yorkers, including low-income populations. This is especially important in New York State where the level of nutrition-related disease is significant: over half a million New Yorkers are diabetic; heart attacks are the leading cause of death among New York women; more than 2 million adults suffer from, or are at risk of, osteoporosis (NYS Assembly Task Force on Food, Farm, and Nutrition Policy). The problem of obesity has been steadily increasing: the percentage of American children who are obese has doubled since the mid 1980s. Currently 20% of New York school children are overweight, higher than the national average. African American and Latino children have even higher percentages of obesity and are at greater risk of obesity-related diseases as a result (NYS Assembly Task Force on Food, Farm, and Nutrition Policy).

However, improving New Yorkers nutrition is not merely about providing people with fresh produce, but it is also about improving food justice. For example, while nutrition-related disease and obesity are increasing, the availability of affordable fresh produce is dismal in many areas. Research shows that there are fewer supermarkets located in low-income areas than in wealthier communities. As a result, many people rely on neighborhood markets, which often offer fewer food choices at higher prices than supermarkets. This in turn means less access to healthy foods for lower-income Americans.

Many studies are exploring more in depth the relationship between hunger and obesity. A joint analysis released by the Center on Hunger and Poverty at Brandeis University and the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) shows how hunger and obesity not only pose separate and distinct health risks, but also can co-exist in the same household.

For this reason, many groups are implementing programs that increase access to wholesome food, provide education on how to prepare different foods, and inform communities on the health benefits of fresh produce and how to make it a part of their diets.



FamilyCook Productions' "Look Who's Cooking"

Program Description

"Look Who's Cooking" is a food and nutrition education curriculum and training program designed to address childhood obesity. Through this program, FamilyCook Productions helps train staff at schools and community-based organizations to conduct stimulating cooking and nutrition workshops for their community. FamilyCook Productions (FCP) provides the training (for a fee) and curriculum (for free) and the school or organization provides the basic cooking equipment, staff for training, and then delivers the program to the children in the community. The program curriculum can be adapted to the needs of each community (e.g. recipes, cultures covered and time frame of classes). In its present design, it is best suited to a weekly 2 hour after school experience.

"Look Who's Cooking" is designed for the most basic learning environment to acquaint children with the empowering skill of cooking and to teach families that mealtime can be fun if they cook together more often. No fancy kitchen necessary! Through the preparation of simple and delicious recipe concepts from around the globe, children develop:

- ◆ Basic cooking skills;
- ◆ Nutrition fundamentals that are fun and easy to understand;
- ◆ An adventurous nature about trying new foods, particularly fresh fruits and vegetables;
- ◆ Interest in enjoying meals shared at the table with family and friends; and
- ◆ Cultural awareness and tolerance.

FamilyCook Productions' field-tested techniques guarantee safety, success and children's acceptance. These techniques have been in development for ten years. Their proprietary techniques are subtle, but create a reliable structure for group recipe preparation. They produce a non-chaotic, learning experience for students that results each week in a delicious new dish that the children prepare themselves as a group. This collaborative approach offers the benefits of teaching important life skills such as cooperation and the ability to following directions, while giving children an opportunity to explore their own strengths and weaknesses, as well as likes and dislikes.



The program reflects a growing legion of professionals in the public health community who recognize that it requires skills-building to empower the next generation about food and healthful eating. Given this goal, parental involvement is essential. No matter what children learn or how their attitudes about food change, their parents are the ones who provide the food at home and plan the menus. Thus, parental involvement is a significant component to the program. The very first experience in the program is a "Family Day" or "Family Evening" at a school or a community-based organization. This parent night is followed by two other such 'family cooking' events over the course of the 12 week program. This serves to introduce the program and its goals to the whole family. The curriculum also includes a weekly "homework" assignment to prepare the recipe they learned in school at home! In this way, parents can follow what their children are learning about food and can begin improving their mealtime at home with new recipes.

FamilyCook Productions Certified Food Educator Training

FCP typically trains individuals working for community-based groups or schools so that they can initiate the cooking classes in their community. FCP's multi-disciplinary training program enables participants without prior cooking experience or a college education to develop basic culinary skills. Participants will learn to prepare and present multi-cultural recipes that emphasize fruits and vegetables and offer seasonal versatility. Participants also gain thorough knowledge of food hygiene, food safety, and fundamental nutrition knowledge so that they can teach the FCP curriculum. The final half of the last day of the training program assesses participants' competency in these disciplines. Participants will go through an assessment process (including cooking a recipe as a group with children) and, upon passing, will be given a Certificate that certifies their skills as a Certified Food Educator by FCP. Ideally, the Certificate will be endorsed by the local Department of Health.

Trainees who do not pass are given additional home-based practice assignments and a subsequent assessment opportunity to gain certification. Spanish Language interpretation and accommodation is available.

FCP requires a minimum of two individuals per site, who will work together as a team, to be trained in the curriculum. They additionally recommend that at least one supervisory person from each program site also be trained, as supervisors must understand the program to manage it properly.

Additional Features

Partnering with a local Department of Health raises the credibility of the program within the community. It also strengthens the capacity for success on many levels, including obtaining funding support in the initial stages for training and equipment. Once the community-based organization or school has been able to cover the cost of staff training and the simple cooking equipment, they are then capable of conducting the program for years for no more than the cost of the food.

The FCP experience enables community-based organizations to help families learn to enjoy and experience more power over their food choices. Families are physically healthier and also enjoy increased well-being through daily bonding over a home-cooked meal.

FCP is in the process of adding even more on sustainable food systems to the curriculum and hope to get a grant to develop a garden piece.

Low-Income Involvement in the Organization of the Program

The after school educators who provide FCP's services to children and their families each week are empowered by the training. The training creates a transformation in the educators' own relationship with food by giving them the skills to cook the kind of meal that tastes good and is good for them. They experience how cooking collaboratively in a group is a celebratory, joyous experience and they are eager to share their knowledge with the children and, when appropriate, with the parents.

Barriers Encountered and Solutions

Most community-based organizations or schools have access to children and families, but they do not have the funds needed to provide the initial training and equipment. They also do not generally have the capacity to conduct the evaluation of the program. For this reason, FCP functions best when coordinated by several community partners who can pool their resources. An example of an effective community partnership around FCP is located in Rochester, New York. Preferred Care, an HMO, underwrites the cost while the YMCA sites focus on program delivery. In New York City, FCP is now developing a similar partnership. The After School Corporation is providing training funds for FCP while YMCA sites are providing equipment, supplies and program delivery. The New York City Department of Health is providing additional funding support and coordinating the program evaluation.

Contact Information:

"Look Who's Cooking," FamilyCook Productions
Lynn Fredericks, Founder
330 East 43rd St., Ste. 704
New York, NY 10017

Telephone: 212-867-3929
E-mail: Lynn@FamilyCookProductions.com
www.FamilyCookProductions.com



Federal Nutrition Program Outreach Campaigns

Overview

Many groups have initiated campaigns to weave a stronger network of public information and outreach assistance to ensure that eligible children, seniors, homeless, working poor families, minorities, displaced workers and migrant farm workers are aware of, apply for and participate in Federal Nutrition Programs. The Federal Nutrition Programs are government funded food programs designed to improve the nutrition, well-being, and food security of low-income Americans. This includes the Food Stamp Program, National School Lunch Program, Summer Food Service Program, Farmers' Market Nutrition Assistance Program, and WIC, to name a few.

Currently in NYS, over 36% of potentially eligible households do not participate in the Food Stamp Program and more than 78% of children eligible for the Summer Food Service Program do not participate. The goal of this type of campaign is to get the word out about these vital nutrition assistance programs and to overcome the many myths that keep eligible individuals from applying for benefits. Many non-profits also work with government agencies to advocate for improvements to the programs.

Fortunately, there are many resources available to help groups who are interested in promoting and increasing participation in the Federal Nutrition Programs in their community. Groups can contact SENSES or Hunger Action for promotional materials to distribute in their communities or for ideas about how to implement outreach campaigns.





Community Service Society's RSVP/ACES Project

Program Description

The Community Service Society's Retired and Senior Volunteer Program/Advocacy, Counseling and Entitlement Services project (RSVP/ACES) recruits and trains older adults (age 55+) in the major public benefits programs. This includes Medicare, Medicaid, Child Health Plus, Family Health Plus, the Food Stamp Program, Public Assistance, SSI, Social Security Retirement, Survivors and Disability Insurance, HEAP and EPIC, among others. The trained volunteers are then placed at various community sites to help connect low-income people with the appropriate public benefits.

All potential volunteers are interviewed by a member of the ACES' staff. This is an opportunity to explain the program in depth, to learn more about the individual, and to determine whether the program is a good fit for both parties.

Training Process: All volunteers attend an intense 13-session training course, which requires that volunteers do reading and homework in between sessions. Volunteers use the Community Service Society's Public Benefits Resource Center (PBRC) Manual, containing information on benefits and services specific to New York City. Each volunteer has a manual during the training, as well as at the site at which they serve upon completion of the training. Volunteers must pass a take-home exam at the conclusion of the training.

Volunteer Placement and Services Provided: ACES volunteers who successfully complete the training commit to serving a minimum of 6 hours a week for 6 months. Volunteers serve at hospitals, senior centers and other social service agencies throughout the five boroughs of New York City, where they assist clients at the agencies by providing information on public benefits, conducting public benefits screenings, assisting with completing applications, and advocating for clients should they encounter challenges within the benefits system.

Keeping Updates on Benefits: It is vital for volunteers to keep up-to-date on changes to benefits: the PBRC Manual is updated quarterly; a quarterly ACES newsletter is distributed to all volunteers and sites; current volunteers can attend trainings for new volunteers which are held twice a year; ACES hosts periodic continuing education sessions; and ACES staff provides technical assistance to volunteers.

Site Supervision: There is a supervisor at every ACES site. This individual is the volunteer's and ACES program staff's primary contact at the agency. The site supervisor, who is usually situated within the social work department (though this varies depending on agency structure), handles all logistical matters related to the volunteer, as well as benefits counseling questions, when possible. ACES program staff contact the site supervisor as needed, as well as to schedule annual site visits, though staff will visit more often if necessary.

Benefits to Being an RSVP Volunteer: RSVP provides accident insurance coverage to all volunteers. In addition, RSVP offers partial transportation reimbursement to volunteers who would not otherwise be able to volunteer due to the cost of transportation.

Results: Approximately 120 ACES volunteers serve at 55 sites throughout New York City. In 2003, volunteers assisted over 6,200 clients with information on 9,183 benefits. Clients reported receiving over 1,000 benefits as a result of the volunteer's assistance.

Additional Features

15 ACES volunteers participate in the Speakers Bureau program. Speakers Bureau volunteers present hour-long workshops on-site to clients at agencies in NYC. Volunteers present on Medicaid, SSI, the Food Stamp Program, Transitional Benefits, EPIC, Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE), HEAP, Access-A-Ride and the Medicare discount drug card program.

Low-Income Involvement in the Organization of the Program

Some RSVP/ACES volunteers are low-income and receive means-tested benefits, such as Food Stamps, Medicaid and SSI. Others participate in the public benefits system through Social Security or Medicare.

Barriers Encountered and Solutions

Working with an older population often lends itself to illness, either of the volunteer or a family member. There are times when volunteers are not able to complete the training, or must leave the program, due to illness. In these cases, we keep in touch with the volunteer to offer support. In these situations, volunteers may themselves need public benefits or other community resources; ACES program staff assists volunteers as needed.

With the downturn in the economy, several volunteers have had to leave the program to return to work. Program staff is supportive of these volunteers, and volunteers often keep in touch and refer friends to the program.

Public Policy Component

At some special events, members from the Community Service Society's policy department share research findings and engage in discussions with ACES volunteers on what they see "on the front lines."

Funding Sources

Government and private funding.

Contact Information:

Community Service Society
RSVP/ACES
Michelle Newman Berney
105 East 22nd St., Rm. 401
New York, NY 10010

Telephone: 212-614-5482

Fax: 212-598-4782

E-mail: mberney@cssny.org

<http://rsvp.cssny.org/rsvp/opportunities.html#community>

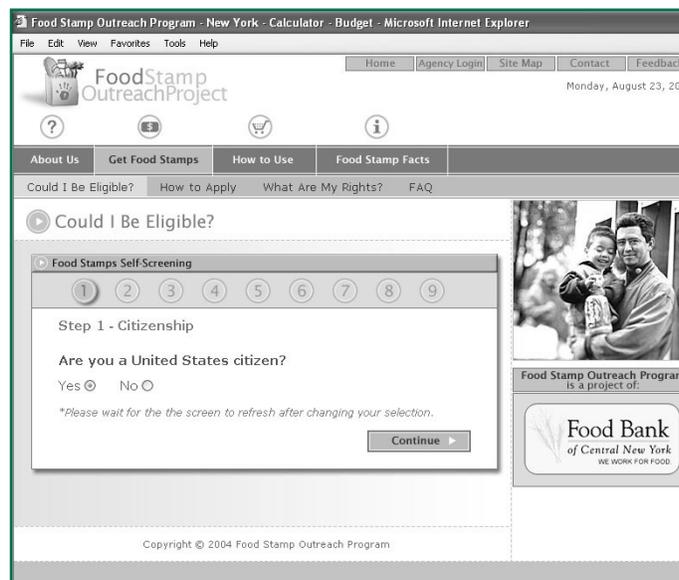
Food Bank of Central New York's Food Stamp Outreach Project

Program Description

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA, the government office that administers the Food Stamp Program) wants to identify and address possible barriers that may prevent eligible persons from applying for and/or receiving food stamps. To do this, USDA awarded 19 research grants across the country to study the accessibility of the Food Stamp Program. USDA is particularly interested in strategies that involve partnerships with community-based agencies that serve low-income persons and new technologies.

The Food Bank of Central New York was awarded one of these grants to improve Food Stamp Program access by informing potential participants of food stamp benefits and requirements, while facilitating applications through technology and community partnerships. Two outreach models are currently being used with a variety of community-based organizations. These models are being tested in collaboration with the county Departments of Social Services, and community-based organizations in Cayuga, Cortland, and Oswego counties.

The first model is being used to identify and train staff and volunteers from community-based organizations to pre-screen persons for food stamp eligibility. This is being done through a pre-screening tool that has been provided to all partners. A CD is being provided that contains a series of questions which prompts the user to input basic financial information. Calculations are completed and inform the user whether the applicant may be eligible to receive food stamps. When appropriate, further assistance will be provided such as making copies of documentation, submitting the application, or answering general questions.



Food Stamp Online Outreach Project

The second model involved developing a website, www.foodstampshelp.org, which enables families to self-screen for food stamp benefits. The availability of the site will be promoted in the counties mentioned above with a media campaign, but the site is set up to be used by people across NYS.

This web based pre-screening tool offers anyone in NYS, with internet access, the opportunity to self-screen. The web page includes basic food stamp information, the benefits of the Food Stamp Program as a nutrition program, rights and responsibilities, how to apply, list of required documentation, a listing of Food Stamp Offices for every county in the state, and a printable blank New York State Food Stamp Program application. In addition, there is contact information for Nutrition Outreach and Education Program (NOEP) Coordinators, who can assist eligible individuals and households in applying for food stamps.

In both of the models being tested, information is collected about the participants who are helped. The Food Bank will use this information to compare how effective each method is in helping eligible persons receive food stamps for which they are eligible. The website currently averages 73,231 hits per month. To date 5,213 households that completed a prescreening appeared eligible for food stamp benefits.

Low-Income Involvement in the Organization of the Program

The program was developed as part of an RFP process based on years of food stamp outreach experience with low-income populations. The operation of the program involves volunteers, many of whom are low-income.

Barriers Encountered and Solutions

A great deal of time and money are required to keep both the CD prescreening tool and the website current with updated information about income eligibility guidelines. Our solution was to create a CD and website that could be manually updated with current USDA income guidelines and deductions when necessary. This makes it easier for agencies to use the CD and website even after Food Bank supervision of the project has terminated.

Funding Sources

This research project has been funded with federal funds from the Food and Nutrition Service, U.S Department of Agriculture, under Grant Agreement NO. 59-3198-2-063.

Contact Information:

Food Bank of Central NY
Food Stamp Outreach Project
Amalia Swan
6970 Schuyler Road
East Syracuse, NY 13057

Telephone: 315-437-1899, x. 245
Fax: 315-434-9629
E-mail: aswan@foodbankny.org
www.foodstampshelp.org



Food Recovery: Saving Food, Feeding the Hungry

Overview

Did you ever think about how much food goes to waste? Approximately 96 billion pounds of food, or 27% of the 356 billion pounds of food available for our consumption, are lost at the retail, consumer, and food service levels each year (United States Department of Agriculture, 1997). This does not even include food that is lost at the pre-harvest, on the farm, farm-to-retail, or wholesale level. In order to save some of this food and help end hunger, many groups have initiated two types of food recovery projects: food rescue and gleaning.

Food rescue programs save perishable and prepared food from restaurants, corporate cafeterias, caterers, hotels, or schools so that it does not go to waste. The excess food is distributed to Emergency Food Programs, shelters, and human service agencies. While not all excess food is edible, wholesome, or appropriate for human consumption, much of it is. If just 5% of the food waste were recovered, 4 million additional Americans could be fed each day (USDA).

Gleaning is the additional collection of crops that have already been mechanically harvested. The mechanical harvesting of fields does not gather all of the edible food in the field, but farmers may not have the time or resources for a second harvest. In some instances, farmers may choose not to collect a certain crop if it is not economically profitable to harvest. Gleaning programs, initiated by non-profits, the government, businesses, or farmers save food and distribute it to Emergency Food Programs and the hungry across our country.



Island Harvest



Program Description

Island Harvest's mission is to end hunger and reduce food waste on Long Island. Since 1992, Island Harvest has been serving as the bridge between those who have excess food and those who need it. A trained corps of dedicated volunteers rescues surplus food from commercial donors and collects canned and packaged foods from collection campaigns. This food is donated to hundreds of community-based non-profit member organizations, which results in a reduction of their food expenses. It is also a morale booster to the employees and patrons of 500+ commercial food establishments who donate their excess foods. This project prevents nutritious food from becoming waste, which has a very tangible benefit to the environment. Most importantly, these food rescue efforts help to feed tens of thousands of men, women and children right here on Long Island.

Island Harvest delivers the rescued food in two ways. The first is through direct delivery, where an Island Harvest volunteer or staffed truck will bring the donated items directly to the member agency. The second, an Island Harvest innovation, is delivered through centralized food distributions. This is where approximately 20 to 40 member agencies meet an Island Harvest truck at a central location once a week and the food products on the truck are distributed equally among the agencies present. This is an extremely effective and efficient method to maximize the food distribution process.

Island Harvest currently has approximately 1000 registered volunteers to support their various programs. In addition, they work with over 500 commercial food donors and have approximately 430 community-based member agencies that are recipients of the surplus food products. Some of their key partners include Long Island corporations, schools, community service organizations, key media contacts and representatives from local government.



Additional Features

Island Harvest recently developed an educational component to their program. Throughout the year, they provide seminars and printed material to assist and inform their member agencies and food donors in the areas of food safety, nutrition, and other services available to their clients and customers.

Barriers Encountered and Solutions

One of Island Harvest's main objectives is to educate Long Islanders about the issue of hunger in the community and how, by working together, they can help end hunger and reduce food waste. Therefore, they have developed various educational programs, such as their hunger awareness/ Coin Harvest campaign in the schools, to help the community better understand that hunger exists and what they can do to help make a difference.

In addition, education is also a key focus for Island Harvest's commercial food donor efforts. Not only must they help them to understand that the need exists, they also share with them information about how supporting Island Harvest is beneficial to their business. In addition, Island Harvest provides information about the Good Samaritan Laws, legislation that provides uniform national protection to citizens, businesses, and nonprofit organizations that act in good faith to donate, recover, and distribute excess food.

Funding Sources

Island Harvest receives funding from corporate grants and foundations, along with contributions from the general public. In addition, they host several fundraising events throughout the year that are strongly supported with sponsorship dollars from the local corporate community.

Contact Information:

Island Harvest
Lorraine Whiffen, Director of Program Services
199 Second Street
Mineola, NY 11501

Telephone: 516-294-8528, x. 18
Fax: 516-747-6843
E-mail: lorraine@islandharvest.org
www.islandharvest.org



Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York's Gleaning Project

Program Description

The Regional Food Bank, which serves Emergency Food Programs in 23 counties of eastern New York, coordinates a gleaning program in coalition with farmers, several volunteers, and a staff member who provides assistance on a partial basis. The food bank rescues excess food from a farm in Altamont operated by Ms. Pauline Williman and an apple orchard in Germantown. Pauline Williman is a great resource for this project, as she created the Patroon Foundation, which operates out of her farm and exists to donate gleaned produce.

Farmers plant and manage the crops. The food bank uses private donations to purchase seed for the farmers. Greenhouses and nurseries also make in kind donations.

Volunteers are a key component to the operation of the gleaning program. The food bank recruits volunteers from local and regional social service organizations to harvest the crops. Assistance in obtaining volunteers has been provided by the Albany County USDA Farm Service Agency. Farmers have also recruited volunteers.

The Regional Food Bank provides transportation of food to and from the farm. The food bank also stores the gleaned produce in its warehouse and delivers it to various programs with its refrigerated trucks. The produce is free to all food programs. Certain food pantries and soup kitchens pick up the produce if they have their own refrigerated transportation. In 2003, the food bank delivered 10,000 pounds of gleaned produce and in 2004 it delivered 40,000 pounds of produce.

It is essential to have many partners in coordinating a gleaning program. Potential collaborators include farm bureaus, farmers, food banks, schools/colleges, and community-based organizations that can provide full or part time staff, interns, transportation or volunteers.

Once volunteers, transportation and collaboration are all in place, gleaning is an extremely effective way to increase food supplies at food programs. It can yield a tremendous amount of produce in a short amount of time, whereas food drives and fundraisers take longer and can yield a smaller amount of food.

Additional Features

The food bank relies on its own liability insurance should, in a rare instance, a volunteer who gleans on a farm become injured. Though injury is not an issue that the food bank is concerned with, it is helpful to have this insurance.

Upon donating food, individuals, farmers and organizations need not be concerned about liability regarding the condition of the food they harvest and donate. The food simply needs to be apparently healthy and ready for consumption upon donation. In 1980, the NYS legislature passed the Agriculture and Markets Law, which states that a food donor of canned or fresh produce apparently fit for consumption shall not be subject to criminal or civil damages arising from the condition of food as long as the donor reasonably inspects it and finds it fit for human consumption.

Low-Income Involvement in the Organization of the Program

Sometimes guests at food pantries volunteer and get involved in the actual gleaning process. However, in the food bank's experience, this is happenstance rather than a structural part of the program.

Barriers Encountered and Solutions

Pests and bad weather had a serious impact on the gleaning project in 2003. Beyond these barriers inherent in farming, finding volunteers in the summer is difficult since many people go away on vacation and school is not in session. In addition, it is often necessary to locate volunteers on short notice since farmers cannot predict exactly when crops can be harvested. Volunteering on such short notice can be difficult. To some extent, shifting to mostly fall crop gleaning has solved these problems. Fall crops have a longer shelf life and more volunteers from schools and colleges are available. People have also returned from vacation by this time, as well.

Transportation, which is rare or nonexistent in rural areas, makes it difficult for community members to volunteer. Lack of transportation makes it difficult for recipients of the gleaned produce to volunteer, as well.

Funding Sources

This type of operation is expensive in terms of transportation and labor. The Regional Food Bank's funds are used to recruit a large number of volunteers and drivers to transport the food from the field. The food bank also provides funds to transport the produce to recipient agencies; recipient agencies that pick up the produce at the food bank are able to use their own funds for transportation. Much of the farming costs have been met through private donations.

Contact Information:

Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York
Norah Pattison
965 Troy Schenectady Road
Albany, NY 12110

Telephone: 518-786-3691
Fax: 518-786-3004
E-mail: norahp@regionalfoodbank.net
www.regionalfoodbank.net



Resource Section

COMMUNITY FOOD PROJECT RESOURCES

America the Beautiful Fund

725 15th St., NW, Suite 605 • Washington, DC 20005

Tel: 202-638-1649 • www.freeseeds.org

America the Beautiful Fund (ABF) provides free seeds when groups prepare a short letter describing their project. There is a relatively low shipping fee.

E. F. Schumacher Society

140 Jug End Road • Great Barrington, MA 01230

Tel: 413-528-1737 • efssociety@smallisbeautiful.org • www.schumachersociety.org

Schumacher helps develop model micro-lending, local currency, and community land trust projects designed to improve local economies. They also assist small local businesses via micro-lending, offer technical assistance for projects, and have a library of instructional books and pamphlets.

Garden Writers Association Foundation, Plant a Row for the Hungry

10210 Leatherleaf Court • Manassas, VA 20111

Tel: 1-877-492-2727 • E-mail: PAR@gardenwriters.org • www.gardenwriters.org

You can request Plant a Row materials to help coordinate a campaign in your area.

Hunger Action Network of NYS (HANNYS)

NYC Office: 260 W. 36th Street, Rm. 504 • NY, NY 10018

Tel: 212-741-8192 • Fax: 212-741-7236

Albany office: 275 State Street • Albany, NY 12210

Tel: 518- 434-7371 • Fax: 518- 434-7390

E-mail: info@hungeractionnys.org • www.hungeractionnys.org

Hunger Action coordinates both Grow an Extra Row and Seed and Seedling Distribution on a statewide basis. We provide guides, flyers, free seeds, lists of local greenhouses, and technical assistance to assist you in coordinating these projects.

COMMUNITY FOOD SECURITY RESOURCES

Center on Hunger, Poverty and Nutrition Policy (CHPNP)

School of Nutrition Science and Policy • Tufts University • Medford, MA 02155

Tel: 617-0627-3956 • Fax: 617-627-3020 • E-mail: hunger@infonet.tufts.edu

<http://nutrition.tufts.edu/consumer/hunger/foodsec.html>

CHPNP focuses on: 1) food security, hunger and poverty in the United States; 2) US food policy as it affects the safety, integrity, nutritional quality, and accessibility of the nation's food supply, and the nutritional guidance given to the American population, and 3) health and nutrition communication to provide accurate information for consumers and organizations. CHPNP offers education and training, conferences, and advocacy.





Community Food Security Coalition (CFSC)

P.O. Box 209 • Venice, CA 90294

Tel: 310-822-5410 • Fax: 310-822-1440 • www.foodsecurity.org

CFSC is a North American organization that promotes networking and information exchange on food security strategies, develops federal agriculture and food policy, and provides technical assistance to groups on community food security projects. Their e-mail list serve is an excellent way to learn more about food security.

Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) Farm-to-School Program

Jennifer Wilkins, Senior Extension Associate Director • Cornell Farm to School Program

Division of Nutrition Science • 305 Martha Van Rensselaer Hall

Cornell University • Ithaca, NY 14853

Tel: 607-255-2730 • Fax: 607-255-0178 • E-mail: jlw15@cornell.edu or mlg22@cornell.edu

www.cce.cornell.edu/farmtoschool/

To locate farms interested in selling their produce to schools, contact your local CCE office, available in each county. For more information or for technical assistance, contact CCE's Farm-to-School Program or visit the website listed above, which features Common Issues and Strategies, Guidelines for Organizing Farm-to-School Meetings and NY Farm-to-School News.

Heifer International

88 Atlantic Avenue, #8 • Brooklyn, NY 11201

Tel: 718-875-0887 • Toll Free: 1-800-395-9609 • Fax: 718- 875-2221

E-mail: heatherblackburn@heifer.org • www.heifer.org

Heifer's mission is to work with communities to end hunger and poverty and to care for the earth. Heifer's North America Program reconnects people to land in practical ways that lead to the production of good quality food, well-tended animals, health soils and more vital communities. Key initiatives are small farm preservation, local food systems, family and youth, indigenous cultures and urban agriculture. Heifer provides grants for agricultural related projects that support its mission. Heifer's NYS Projects include East NY Farms (featured in this manual) and:

New Farmer Development Project

Maria Alvarez, Director • c/o Greenmarket, Council on the Environment

51 Chambers Street, Suite 1231 • New York, NY 10007

Tel: 212-341-2255 • E-mail: malvarez@greenmarket.cc

This program supports agriculturally experienced Latino immigrants in the NYC area to establish economically and ecologically sound farming operations. The project strengthens farmers' markets and helps to meet NYC's need for fresh farm produce.

Northeast Pastured Poultry Association (NEPPA)

Judith Kleinberg, Project Leader • 272 Moe Rd. • Clifton Park, NY 12065

E-mail: moefarm@usadatanet.net

NEPPA came together in 1997 with six families who had common interests in preserving local agriculture, raising pastured poultry, and promoting the growth and expansion of pastured poultry in their area. NEPPA has now expanded their membership to over 30 families, many of whom are full-time farmers of diversified farms.





The City Farms Project, c/o Just Food

307 7th Avenue, Suite 1201 • New York, NY 10001

Tel: 212-645-9880 x13 • E-mail: Kathleen@justfood.org • www.justfood.org

This network of organizations and urban food producers is helping urban gardeners to contribute to their community's food security. The project is transforming urban gardens into urban micro-farms, helping these urban farmers grow more food in their gardens, distribute and market it within their neighborhoods, as well as train others to do so.

The Devon Cattle Project

C/o The Farmer's Museum • PO Box 30, Lake Road • Cooperstown, NY 13326

Tel: 607-547-1450 • E-mail: farmersmus@aol.com

The Devon Cattle project seeks to reintroduce this rare heritage breed of cattle to the farming landscape in NY and educate the public about the Devon cattle's utility as a high-performance, multi-use family cow.

New York Farm Bureau, Inc.

159 Wolf Road o PO Box 5330 • Albany, NY 12205

Tel: 800-342-4143 • Fax: 518-431-5656

The New York Farm Bureau can assist in identifying farmers interested in selling produce to schools. Regional Farm Bureau offices are located at:

Finger Lakes Office
12 N. Park St.
Seneca Falls, NY 13148
Tel: 315-568-2658
Fax: 315-568-2752
nymjames@fb.org

WesternNew York
Resource Center
41 Liberty Street
Batavia, NY 14020
Tel: 877-383-7663
or 585-343-3489
Fax: 585-343-8179
nywny@fb.com

Long Island Office
104 Edwards Avenue
Calverton, NY 11933
Tel: 631-727-3777
Fax: 631-727-3721
nyjgergela@fb.org

New York Farm-to-School List Serve

Join the New York Farm-to-School List Serve to share experiences, ideas for programs and activities, Vegetable of the Month recipes, sources for NYS products and more. To subscribe to NY Farm-to-School-L, send an e-mail to Aleta Coggin at afc23@cornell.edu and write "NY FTS List serve" in the subject line. Write "SUBSCRIBE" followed by your e-mail address, first name and last name in the body of the message.

New York Sustainable Agricultural Working Group (NYSAWG)

Hank Herrera, Executive Director • 11 North Goodman Street • Rochester, NY 14607

Tel: 585-271-0490 • Fax: 585-271-0194 • E-mail: hank@c-prep.org

NYSAWG is a statewide network of organizations and individuals working together toward a more sustainable and secure food system. NYSAWG's agenda reflects a "systems approach" to addressing the root causes and full spectrum of farm and food system problems. NYSAWG works to develop federal and state policies that benefit small-scale and sustainable farmers and low-income individuals.





New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets

1 Winners Circle • Albany, NY 12205 • Tel: 518-457-3880
E-mail: William.Jordan@agmkt.state.ny.us • www.agmkt.state.ny.us.

For a list of local farmers' markets:

www.agmkt.state.ny.us/AP/CommunityFarmersMarkets.asp.

If a school is interested in purchasing locally grown food, the Department of Agriculture and Markets established a Product Search for Institutional Purchases to find products and farmers who sell them at: www.agmkt.state.ny.us/AP/PONYsearch.asp.

New York State Education Department (NYSED)

Frances O'Donnell, Child Nutrition Coordinator • Child Nutrition Program Administration
Rm. 55 • Albany, NY 12234

Tel: 518-473-8781 • www.nysed.gov

Public school districts must follow general municipal law when purchasing locally grown food. Contact NYSED for more information or for updated guidelines for schools wanting to purchase directly from a farmer. To locate a school that is interested in purchasing locally grown food, NYSED lists school districts by county at:

<http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/repcrd2002/>

Northeast Food System Partnership (NFSP)

<http://northeastfood.tufts.edu>

The NFSP Directory provides a unique electronic network that serves as an information provider that covers all aspects of the food system. The website has served thousands of users accessing nearly 250 food and farm organizations in the Northeast. This list serve allows people to attract support, provide information, and recruit members and collaborators. To join, go to <http://northeastfood.tufts.edu>. Click on the members' page, then type in the password: northeast. Add your contact information.

Northeast Organic Farming Association (NOFA) - NY Chapter

Mayra Richter • PO Box 880 • Cobleskill, NY 12043-0880

Tel: 518-734-5495 • Fax: 518-734-4641

E-mail: office@nofany.org • <http://nofany.org> • <http://www.nofa.org> (national)

NOFA-NY is an organization of consumers, gardeners and farmers creating a sustainable regional food system, which is ecologically sound and economically viable. NOFA-NY is an affiliation of seven state chapters, each of which provide educational conferences, workshops, farm tours and printed materials to educate farmers, gardeners, consumers and land care professionals.

Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Working Group (NESAWG)

P.O. Box 608 • Belchertown, MA 01007

Tel: 413-323-4531 • Fax: 413-323-9595

E-mail: nesfi@igc.apc.org • www.smallfarm.org/nesawg/index.php

NESAWG's mission is to build a sustainable food and agriculture system, one that is environmentally sound, economically viable, socially just and produces safe, nutritious food. Through countless partnerships, NESAWG has fostered many projects that have contributed toward a more sustainable regional food and farming system.





Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP)

100 Witherspoon Street • Louisville, KY 40202

Tel: 1-888-728-7228, x. 5819 • Fax: 502-569-8963

E-mail: php@pcusa.org • www.pcusa.org/pcusa/wmd/hunger/food

PHP addresses hunger and its underlying causes such as poverty through direct service, support for community economic development, education of fellow Presbyterians about the issues and related lifestyle connections, and by advocating for public policies that promote just social and economic systems. PHP provides grants to programs addressing hunger and its causes in the U.S. and around the world in five program areas: Direct Hunger Relief, Development Assistance, Public Policy Advocacy, Lifestyle Integrity and Hunger Education.

Regional Farm & Food Project

Tracy Frisch, Executive Director • 298 Eighth Street • Troy, NY 12180

Tel: 518-271-0744 • Fax: 518-271-0745 • www.farmandfood.org

The Regional Farm & Food Project fosters new opportunities for family-scale farming which sustain the land and community and connect farmers, consumers, and communities within the Capital Region of NYS. They help build networks and coalitions, offer workshops and farm tours, facilitate the development of innovative food projects and raise public awareness about sustainable agriculture issues.

Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE)

Northeast Office • Fred Magdoff, Coordinator

University of Vermont Hills Building • Burlington, VT 05405-0082

Tel: 802-656-0472/802-656-0554 • Fax: 802-656-4656

E-mail: fmagdoff@uvm.edu • <http://www.sare.org/>

Or

Northeast Professional Development Program • NYS Coordinator, Anusuya Rangarajan

Cornell University • 121 Plant Science Bldg • Ithaca, NY 14853

Tel: 607-255-1780 • Fax: 607-255-0599 • E-mail: ar47@cornell.edu

SARE helps advance farming systems that are profitable, environmentally sound and good for communities through a nationwide research and education grants program. The program, which is part of USDA's Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, funds projects and conducts outreach designed to improve agricultural systems. Grants are available for farmers/producers, educators and researchers.

Troy Waterfront Farmers' Market

Hedley Park Place and Marina • 411 River Street • Troy, NY 12180

Tel: 518-475-2909 • www.troymarket.org

The Troy Market is a not-for-profit producers-only market and community-gathering place. It was initiated and is governed by local farmers and area residents and is sponsored by the Regional Farm & Food Project. The market features organic fruit and vegetables, natural meats and eggs, herbs and plants, crafts and baked goods, all handmade or grown by local farmers and artists. An average of 35-40 farmers, bakers, and artists will sell a variety of unique local organic and conventionally grown products.





USDA Community Food Projects

Elizabeth Tuckermanty • Competitive Programs • CSREES, USDA
1400 Independence Ave., SW., Stop 2240 • Washington, DC 20250-2240
Tel: 202-401-1761 • Fax: 202-401-1782

http://www.csrees.usda.gov/nea/food/in_focus/hunger_if_competitive.html

This website provides information on USDA's Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program (CFPCGP). CFPCGP has existed since 1996 as a program to fight food insecurity through developing community food projects that help promote the self-sufficiency of low-income communities.

USDA Community Food Security Initiative

<http://www.csrees.usda.gov/ProgView.cfm?prnum=2280>

CSREES addresses food security through research, education, and extension work within the Land-Grant University System partnership; through federally funded nutrition education programs in the states; through a grant program that funds private nonprofits to address community food security issues; and through partnerships across USDA.

COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE (CSA) RESOURCES

Alternative Farming Systems Information Center

E-mail: afsic@nal.usda.gov • <http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/csa/>

This CSA information resource is an effort between the Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service and the National Agricultural Library of the USDA. It contains a database of CSAs, resources and links for farmers, recipes, sustainable agriculture organizations, and education and training resources.

Community Food Security Coalition

See "Community Food Security Resources" for contact information and description.

CSA Farm Network Publications

Steve Gilman • 130 Ruckytucks Road • Stillwater, NY 12170
Tel: 518-583-4613 • E-mail: sgilman@netheaven.com

Hunger Action Network of NYS

See "Community Food Project Resources" for contact information.

Hunger Action provides assistance to groups interested in starting a CSA or increasing low-income membership in CSAs outside of New York City. You can also request a copy of our new Model CSA Profiles Guide that includes more detailed information on CSAs.

Just Food

307 7th Ave., Suite 1201 • New York, NY 10001

Tel: 212.645.9880 • E-mail: info@justfood.org • www.justfood.org

Just Food provides technical assistance to groups starting and implementing CSAs in New York City. Just Food's City Farms program works to increase food production, marketing and distribution via community gardens throughout NYC.





Northeast Organic Farming Association (NOFA)

See "Community Food Security Resources" for contact information and description.

Robyn Van En Center for CSA Resources

Fulton Center for Sustainable Living • Wilson College • 1015 Philadelphia Ave
Chambersburg, PA 17201 • Tel: 717-264-4141, x. 3352 • Fax: 717-264-1578

E-mail: info@csacenter.org • <http://www.csacenter.org>

The Center offers a variety of services to existing and new CSA farmers and shareholders nationally, including a national CSA farm directory, referrals and links to funding and educational resources, publications and reports, as well as technical assistance.

World Hunger Year

505 Eighth Ave., Suite 2100 • New York, NY 10018-6582

Tel: 212-629-8850 • Fax: 212-465-9274

E-mail: WHY@worldhungeryear.org • www.worldhungeryear.org

Food Security Learning Center (CSA section):

http://www.worldhungeryear.org/fslc/faqs/ria_041.asp?section=2&click=1

WHY advances long-term solutions to hunger and poverty by supporting community groups that empower individuals, i.e., through offering job training, education and after school programs; increasing access to housing and healthcare; providing microcredit and entrepreneurial opportunities; teaching people to grow their own food; and assisting small farmers. WHY connects these organizations to funders, media and legislators. WHY has helped raise more than \$6 million for thousands of organizations.

COMMUNITY GARDEN RESOURCE LIST

American Community Garden Association (ACGA)

C/O Council on the Environment of New York City

51 Chambers Street, Suite 228 • New York, NY 10007

Tel: 877-ASK-ACGA or 212-275-2242 • www.communitygarden.org

ACGA offers leadership training and mentoring opportunities for new and existing community gardening organizations including how to start a garden, how to locate gardens near you, how to make your garden accessible, as well as many other topics.

American Horticultural Therapy Association

909 York Street • Denver, CO 80206

Tel (toll-free): 1-800-634-1603 • Fax: 303-331-5776 • www.ahta.org

Offers grants and ideas for low-cost raised beds, tools, and accessible garden layouts. Grant recipients must connect elderly, children and disabled people with gardens.

Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE)

Cornell University • 365 Roberts Hall • Ithaca, NY 14853-5905

Tel: 607- 255-2237 • <http://www.cce.cornell.edu/Topic/Nutrition/index.php>

CCE offices provide a wide array of information and assistance on gardens including vegetable growing guides, assistance and instruction through Garden Experts, soil testing kits, etc. CCE operates in all 57 New York State Counties, plus NYC. To locate your local office, go to: www.cce.cornell.edu or www.cce.cornell.edu/local_offices.cfm. For more information on gardening from CCE, go to "Gardening How to's from Cornell" at <http://www.gardening.cornell.edu/>.





Green Guerillas

214 W. 29th St., 5th Floor • New York, NY 10001

Tel: 212-402-1121 • info@nycgreen.org • www.greenguerillas.org

Through a unique mix of outreach, organizing and advocacy, Green Guerillas provides services to more than 300 grassroots groups each year. They engage more than 100 youth and adult volunteers in support of community gardening in New York City. They provide ongoing support to community gardeners citywide, preserve community gardens for future generations, help garden leaders form strong neighborhood coalitions, nurture the next generation of community garden leaders, grow food to feed people, and create healthy neighborhoods.

GreenThumb

49 Chambers Street, Room 1020 • New York, New York 10007

Tel: 212-788-8070 • Fax: 212-788-8052

admin@greenthumbnyc.org • www.greenthumbnyc.org

Greenthumb, a program of the NYC Parks Department, is designed to support community gardens in New York City. They provide support to help strengthen gardens, strengthen gardener skills, and strengthen communities. GreenThumb's services take the form of materials, grants, and technical assistance, including educational workshops.

La Familia Verde

2158 Mapes Avenue • Bronx, NY 10460 • www.lafamiliaverde.org

La Familia Verde is a coalition of community gardens in the Crotona, East Tremont, and West Farms neighborhoods in the Bronx. Their mission is to sustain the environment and culture of our neighborhood through education, community service, and horticulture. The gardens and community organizations help foster community pride, partnership, and activism.

National Gardening Association

1100 Dorset Street • South Burlington, VT 05403

Tel: 802-863-5251 • Fax: 802-864-6889 • www.garden.org

NGA offers online teaching courses, food garden guides, how to projects, recipes, a pest control library and more. They also offer two community garden-related grants: 1) Youth Garden Grants with an annual application deadline of November 1, 2004, and 2) The "Room to Grow" Juliana Greenhouse Grant. Applicants must involve at least 15 youngsters between the ages of 3 and 18 in gardening in 2005. Prizes range from a large Professional Horticultural Greenhouse to NGA's Guide to School Greenhouses. For more information, contact NGA or go to www.kidsgardening.com.

ENDING HUNGER THROUGH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Cornell University

Agriculture Innovation Center, Northeast Center for Food Entrepreneurship

Bob Weybright • 7 Brenner Ridge Road • Pleasant Valley, NY 12569

Tel: 845- 483-9588 • Fax: 845- 483-9588

E-mail: rw74@cornell.edu • www.nysaes.cornell.edu/necfe

The Center provides identification of and direction to appropriate resources to assist businesses in their growth and development activities. The level of direct involvement is dependent on the company's needs, abilities, and program classification. Small to mid-sized companies involved in specialty and food production as well as value added horticulture based projects in rural areas may apply for assistance.





Count Me In

Nell Merlino • 240 Central Park South, Suite 7H • New York, NY 10019

Tel: 212- 245-1245 • Fax: 212- 245-1236

E-mail: info@count-me-in.org • www.count-me-in.org

Count Me In fosters women's economic independence by providing access to business loans, consultation, and education. The first online micro lender, Count Me In uses unique women-friendly credit scoring systems to make loans of \$500-\$10,000 available to women across the US who have nowhere to turn for that important first business loan. Count Me In provides access to networks that expands contacts, markets, skills and confidence.

E. F. Schumacher Society

See "Community Food Project Resources" for contact information and description.

National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE)

Steve Mariotti • 120 Wall St, 29th Floor • New York, NY 10005

Tel: 212-232-3333, x. 320 • Fax: 212-232-2244

E-mail: stevem@nfte.com • www.nfte.com

NFTE's mission is to teach entrepreneurship to low-income young people, ages 11 through 18, so they can improve their academic, business, technology and life skills. Organizations working with youth aged 11-17 may apply for assistance.

The New York State Small Business Development Center

Christina Cashin • Mercy College • 555 Broadway • Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522

Tel: 914-674-7485 • Fax: 914-693-4996

E-mail: sbusiness@mercy.edu • www.nyssbdc.org

The Development Center offers free one-on-one counseling for start-up and existing businesses. Anyone in New York State may apply for assistance.

Rural Opportunities Enterprise Center, Inc.

John Bell • 400 East Avenue • Rochester, NY 14607

Tel: 585-340-3377 • Fax: 585-340-3329 • E-mail: jbelle@ruralinc.org • www.ruralinc.org

Rural Opportunities provides technical assistance and lending services. All those who are in the low to moderate-income bracket in NYS may apply for assistance.

SENSES/MicroBizNY

Emily Siegel • 275 State Street • Albany, NY 12210

Tel: 518-463-5576 • Fax: 518-432-9073

E-mail: sensesemily@aol.com • www.microbizny.org

SENSES has a microenterprise directory that lists all microenterprise groups in NYS, including regional and county-based programs.

Trickle Up Program

Jonah Gensler • 104 West 27th Street, 12th Floor • New York, NY 10001

Tel: 212-255-9880, x. 212 • Toll Free: 866-246-9980 • Fax: 212-255-9974

E-mail: jonahg@trickleup.org • www.trickleup.org

Trickle Up is an international development organization based in NYC that provides conditional seed capital, business training, and relevant support services essential to the launch or expansion of a microenterprise. Trickle Up works only with entrepreneurs whose income is less than 175 % of federal poverty guidelines. Trickle Up also targets entrepreneurs who meet one or more of the following criteria: women, especially single





mothers; public assistance recipients; members of minority groups, refugees and recent immigrants. Half of their U.S. funding activity supports NY micro enterprises through over 25 New York Coordinating Partner Agencies.

HUNGER MAPPING & COMMUNITY FOOD ASSESSMENTS

Community Food Security Coalition (CFSC)

See "Community Food Security Resources" section for contact information. CFSC provides information on community food assessments through technical assistance and their website: http://www.foodsecurity.org/cfa_california.html. *What's Cooking in Your Food System? A Guide to Community Food Assessment* can be located at: <http://www.foodsecurity.org/CFAguide-whatscookin.pdf>

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Margaret Andrews / Linda Scott Kantor • Economic Research Service • Food Assistance and Nutrition Research Program • 1800 M Street, NW Washington, DC 20036
Tel: 202-694-5110 • 1-800-999-6779 to order the Community Food Assessment toolkit
<http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/efan02013/>

The Economic Research Service (ERS) is the main source of economic information and research from the USDA. The ERS offers the Food Assistance and Nutrition Research Program, which provides a toolkit of standardized measurement tools for assessing various aspects of community food security. It includes a general guide to community assessment and focused materials for examining six basic assessment components related to community food security. The toolkit is designed for use by community-based nonprofit organizations and business groups, local government officials, private citizens, and community planners.

World Hunger Year's Food Security Learning Center

See "Community Supported Agriculture Resources" for contact information and description.
www.worldhungeryear.org/fslc/

IMPROVING NEW YORKERS' NUTRITION

B-Healthy!

NY, NY • Tel: 917-312-7184 • E-mail: b-healthy@b-healthy.org • www.b-healthy.org
B-healthy! educates low-income youth and youth workers about healthy cooking, nutrition, and affordable alternatives to low-quality school lunches, commercially processed junk food and fast food. B-healthy! also helps young people connect their personal health with the social and economic health of their communities. Improving individual and community health and well-being is a necessary part of building broader movements for social justice, as unhealthy communities cannot engage in long-term struggle for social change. B-healthy! is training a new generation of social justice/food activists and contributing to the amazing work being done around the globe to build a more just and sustainable food system.

Center on Hunger, Poverty and Nutrition Policy (CHPNP)

See "Community Food Security Resources" for contact information and description.
<http://nutrition.tufts.edu/consumer/hunger/foodsec.html>





Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE)

Lauri Whatley • MVR Hall • Cornell University • Ithaca, NY 14853

Tel: 607-255-2247 • Email: lhw6@cornell.edu

<http://www.cce.cornell.edu/Topic/Nutrition/index.php>

CCE is an educational system that enables people to improve their lives and communities through partnerships that put experience and research knowledge to work. CCE offices have Nutrition Educators. CCE operates in all 57 NYS Counties, plus NYC. To locate your local office, go to: www.cce.cornell.edu/local_offices.cfm.

Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)

Food and Nutrition Education in Communities • Cornell University

3M14, Martha Van Rensselaer Hall • Ithaca, New York 14853-4401

Tel: 607-255-7715 • Fax: 607-255-0027 • <http://www.fnec.cornell.edu/EFNEP.cfm>

This is the Food and Nutrition Education in Communities web site, which describes EFNEP, and Cornell's nutrition related efforts. EFNEP provides education about healthful eating and shopping practices for low-income families. To find out more, contact your local CCE office: <http://www.cce.cornell.edu/about/inyourcommunity.php>

Food Stamp and Nutrition Education Program (FSNEP)

Sandra Borrelli, NYS FSNEP Coordinator

40 North Pearl Street, 9C • Albany, NY 12243

Tel: 518-473-0401 • E-mail: AV1820@dfa.state.ny.us

http://www.otda.state.ny.us/otda/fs/FSNEP/FSNEP_default.htm

FSNEP aims to increase food security and reduce hunger in partnership with cooperating organizations by providing children and low-income people access to food, a healthful diet, and nutrition education. Their website includes recipes, shopping tips, and FSNEP County contacts.

Food Research and Action Center (FRAC)

1875 Connecticut Ave., NW Suite 540 • Washington, DC 20009

Tel: 202-986-2200 • Fax: 202- 986-2525 • E-mail: webmaster@frac.org • www.frac.org

FRAC is a leading national organization working to improve public policies to eradicate hunger and under-nutrition in the United States. The Paradox of Hunger and Obesity in America is a joint analysis released by the Center on Hunger and Poverty at Brandeis University and FRAC showing how hunger and obesity not only pose separate and distinct health risks, but also can co-exist in the same household. Visit the FRAC website to download this report at <http://www.frac.org/pdf/hungerandobesity.pdf>.

Hunger Action Network of NYS (HANNYS)

See "Community Food Project Resources" for contact information.

Hunger Action's Nutrition Education coordinator distributes nutrition education information for distribution to the guests at the 3,000 Emergency Food Programs throughout NYS through the Community Food News newsletter and monthly faxed flyers.

Just Say Yes to Fruits and Vegetables

See "Food Stamp Nutrition and Education Program (FSNEP)" for contact information.

http://www.otda.state.ny.us/otda/fs/FSNEP/FSNEP_default.htm

The "Just Say Yes to Fruits and Vegetables" Project (JSY), in partnership with organizations that serve the food insecure, is dedicated to improving the health and nutritional status of





food stamp eligible populations in NYS. The Project accomplishes this by providing comprehensive nutrition education programs for food pantry operators and food stamp eligible populations accessing these food pantries. Nutrition classes, which are free, are also held at area cooperative extensions or at individual homes or on-site agencies like senior centers or head start locations.

FEDERAL NUTRITION PROGRAM OUTREACH

Food Research and Action Center (FRAC)

See "Improving New Yorkers' Nutrition" section for contact information.

FRAC provides coordination and support to a nationwide anti-hunger network of advocates, food banks, program administrators and participants, policy makers and others. FRAC works closely with groups across the country to expand programs that help children grow and learn. Their website provides a wealth of information that includes numerous resources on the Food Stamp Program.

Greater Upstate Law Project (GULP)

119 Washington Avenue • Albany, New York 12210

Tel: 518-462-6831 • Fax: 518-462-6687 • www.gulpny.org

GULP is a non-profit legal resource center providing technical assistance to local legal services programs and other community groups in New York State. GULP engages in policy analysis and legislative and administrative advocacy and undertakes impact litigation as necessary to protect, defend and enforce the rights of poor and low-income New Yorkers. GULP works on a broad range of legal matters, including public benefits issues such as child-care, cash assistance and immigrant access to public benefits.

Hunger Action Network of NYS (HANNYS)

See "Community Food Project Resources" for contact information.

Hunger Action Network provides education and training on Federal Nutrition Programs as well as outreach materials.

NYS Office for Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA)

40 North Pearl Street • Albany, New York 12243

Food Stamps / HEAP Toll free # 1-800-342-3009

E-mail: nyspio@dfa.state.ny.us • www.otda.state.ny.us

OTDA is the agency in NYS that administers many social services programs including the EBT system, Food Stamp Program, Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program, Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), Homeless Services and Temporary Assistance, to name a few. Their website provides food stamp outreach materials, food stamp applications, information on using your EBT card and the Food Stamp Source Book. It also provides policy directives, data and research and other useful information for advocates working on public benefit programs.

Nutrition Consortium of NYS

235 Lark Street • Albany, NY 12210

Tel: 518-436-8757 • Fax: 518-427-7992 • www.hungernys.org

Nutrition Consortium's mission is to alleviate hunger for poor and near poor residents of New York State, by expanding the availability of, access to, and use of governmental





nutrition assistance programs. In pursuit of this mission, the Nutrition Consortium engages in the many activities including outreach and education, program development, policy work, coalition building, and research.

Public Benefits Resource Center (PBRC)

Community Service Society of New York • 105 East 22nd St. • New York, NY 10010

Tel: 212-254-8900 • E-mail: info@cssny.org

www.cssny.org or www.cssny.org/pbrc/index.html

PBRC insures that advocates have the necessary tools to effectively meet the needs of their constituents. They educate those who aid families and individuals in navigating the complexity of the government benefit system. This is accomplished through their trainings, publications and one-on-one consultation services.

Statewide Emergency Network for Social and Economic Security (SENSES)

275 State Street • Albany, NY 12210

Tel: 518-463-5576 • Fax: 518-432-9073 • info@sensesny.org • www.sensesny.org

SENSES provides education and training on Federal Nutrition Programs as well as outreach materials.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Gilda Torres, Officer in Charge, Metro 1 • New York City Field Office • Food and Nutrition Service, USDA • 201 Varick Street, Room 609 • New York, NY 10014

Tel: 212-620-6686 • Fax: 212-620-6948

Or

Claudia Ortiz, Officer in Charge • Upstate New York: Rochester/Albany • Food and Nutrition Service, USDA • O'Brien Federal Bldg., Room 752 • Clinton Ave. & N. Pearl Street • Albany, NY 12207

Tel: 518-431-4274 • Fax: 518-431-4271

For free copies of USDA food stamp outreach posters and flyers call: 1-800-221-5689 or go to www.fns.usda.gov/fsp. USDA is the federal agency responsible for administration of the federal nutrition programs, including the Food Stamp Program. They issue program regulations and policies and monitor state agency performance. Their website provides information and resources for food stamp applicants and recipients, retailers, government agencies and advocates. USDA's Food & Nutrition Service (FNS) provides an online pre-screening tool to help you find out if you or others might be eligible to receive food stamps. To access the prescreening tool, go to: www.foodstamps-step1.usda.gov.

Western New York Law Center

Ellicott Square Building • 295 Main Street, Suite 454 • Buffalo, New York, 14203

Tel: 716-855-0203 • www.wnylc.net

WNYLC provides advocacy and information regarding client rights and acquisition of Federal Nutrition Program benefits.





FOOD RECOVERY

City Harvest

575 8th Avenue, 4th Floor • New York, NY 10018

Tel: 917-351-8700 • Fax: 917.351.8720

E-mail: pbarrick@cityharvest.org • www.cityharvest.org

City Harvest is a New York City food recovery group that picks up excess food from places such as restaurants, grocers, manufacturers and wholesalers, and greenmarkets, and delivers the food to soup kitchens, food pantries, day care and senior citizen centers, homeless shelters and other places that serve those in need.

ComLinks Administrative Offices

343 West Main Street • Malone, NY 12953

Tel: 518-483-1261 • Fax: 518-483-8599 • <http://www.comlinkscaa.org>

ComLinks is a community action agency that runs a large cooperative gleaning program that delivers fresh produce to over 70 food programs in nine upstate New York counties. They have developed a gleaning how-to guide that explains the basics of gleaning for other interested groups.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Tel: 518-765-2326 • <http://www.usda.gov/news/pubs/gleaning/content.htm>

A Citizen's Guide to Food Recovery: This publication by the USDA is a resource guide on food recovery programs for businesses, community-based profit or non-profit organizations, private citizens, and public officials.

OTHER RESOURCES ON HUNGER

AmeriCorps VISTA program

Leo O'Brien Federal Bldg. • 1 Clinton Square, Suite 900 • Albany, NY 12207

Tel: 518-431-4150 • Fax: 518/431-4154

E-mail: NY@cns.gov • <http://www.americorps.org/vista/index.html>

AmeriCorps VISTA helps bring communities and individuals out of poverty. Today, nearly 6,000 AmeriCorps VISTA members serve in hundreds of nonprofit organizations and public agencies throughout the country working to fight illiteracy, improve health services, create businesses, increase housing opportunities, and bridge the digital divide. Contact AmeriCorps to find out about placing a VISTA volunteer with your agency.

Bread for the World (BFW)

Jim Stipe, Northeast Regional Office

475 Riverside Dr, Rm 1960 • New York, NY 10115

Tel: 212-870-2329 • Fax: 212-870-2328 • Email: jlstipe@bread.org • www.bread.org

BFW is a Christian organization active nationwide that seeks justice for the world's hungry people by lobbying our nation's decision makers. Each year, their member congregations participate in the Offering of Letters, a letter writing campaign on a specific issue, alternating between an international and a domestic issue every other year.





Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP)

820 1st Street, NE, #510 • Washington, DC 20002

Tel: 202-408-1080 • Fax: 202-408-1056 • Email: center@cbpp.org • www.cbpp.org

CBPP is a national policy organization working at the federal and state levels on fiscal policy and public programs that affect low- and moderate-income families and individuals. They conduct research and analysis to inform public debates over proposed budget and tax policies and to help ensure that the needs of low-income families and individuals are considered in these debates.

Center on Hunger and Poverty

Bryan Hall, Heller School for Social Policy and Management • Brandeis University

Mailstop 077 • Waltham, MA 02454

Tel: 781-736-8680 • Fax: 781-736-3925

E-mail: bhall@brandeis.edu • <http://www.centeronhunger.org>

The Center has played a leadership role in determining the extent of food deprivation and hunger in the U.S. In order to promote and assist state and sub-state applications of the new food security survey methodology, the Center established the Food Security Institute (FSI) in 1999. FSI now serves as a national clearinghouse for hunger and food insecurity studies conducted across the country, and produces strategic analyses and reports on hunger and food insecurity in the U.S.

Children's Defense Fund (CDF)

Main Office: 420 Lexington Avenue, Suite 655 • New York, NY 10170

Tel: 212-697-2323 • Fax: 212-697-0566 • E-mail: messages@cdfny.org

Albany Office: 119 Washington Avenue, 3rd Floor • Albany, NY 12210

Tel: 518-449-2830 • Fax: 518-449-2846 • Email: jpost@cdfny.org • www.cdfny.org

CDF provides a strong, effective voice for all the children of America who cannot vote, lobby, or speak for themselves, with particular attention to the needs of poor and minority children and those with disabilities. CDF educates the nation about the needs of children and encourages preventative investments before they get sick, into trouble, drop out of school, or suffer family breakdown.

Community Nutrition Institute (CNI)

419 West Broad Street, #204 • Falls Church, VA 22046

Tel: 703-532-0030 • Fax: 703-532-5780

E-mail: sf@communitynutrition.org • www.communitynutrition.org

CNI is a national non-profit organization, which provides information, education, and training on domestic and international food and nutrition concerns. CNI provides training and technical assistance to Community Food and Nutrition Program (CFNP) grantees on a nationwide and regional basis.

