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CONTRACT/GRANT/AGREEMENT NO: 2009-49400-05945 **PROPOSAL NO:** 2009-03845

START DATE: 01 SEP 2009 **TERM:** 31 AUG 2012

GRANT AMT: \$600,000 **GRANT YR:** 2009

WARD TOTAL: \$600,000

INITIAL AWARD YEAR: 2009

INVESTIGATOR: Lapine, C.

PERFORMING INSTITUTION:

CULTIVATING COMMUNITY

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PORTLAND, MAINE 04101

CULTIVATING NEW AMERICAN FARMERS AND YOUTH ENTREPRENEURS IN MAINE AND NH

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY: Cultivating Community (CC), a non-profit organization located in Portland Maine, will implement a BFRDP project entitled "Cultivating New American Farmers and Youth Entrepreneurs in Maine and NH." CC will collaborate with a number of organizations, including the Fresh Start Farms refugee and immigrant farmer collective. The stakeholders are Latino, Sudanese, and Somali Bantu farmers, market gardeners, and youth entrepreneurs from Manchester, NH and Portland and Lewiston Maine, and their communities. Income opportunities that honor the skills and business experiences that immigrants and the refugees bring are vital for their economic integration. While many refugees are excellent farmers, there are many obstacles to a smooth transition for them into U.S. agriculture. The environment is dramatically different in its climate and ethnic make-up from their native lands. Most NASAP farmers are preliterate, limited English proficient, and have very little experience learning in the classroom environment. Additional supports and interventions for refugees are needed. It is requiring an intense focus to get these farmers prepared to be successful at their farm enterprises. Despite these challenges this community shows great potential and commitment to begin farming. They have the skills and ambition to be successful farmers and enhance agricultural production in the region. An important characteristic of the NASAP is its collaboration with other service providers; this gives the project additional capacity to provide training to farmers while also creating opportunities for those agencies to extend their services to this historically underserved population. NASAP provides simultaneous interpretation that facilitates farmers' participation in existing events. NASAP shares information on and coordinates attendance at a variety of programs and conferences. Integrating refugee farmers into these mainstream events helps them to become more aware of agri"culture" in the northeast. Another important characteristic of these NASAP is ability to identify farmers' interests and then develop and deliver specialized trainings and workshops that meet their needs. NASAP developed many innovations in program delivery. NASAP uses pictures, plain language, pictorial curriculum, and review exercises where possible and works with farmers each year to identify their training needs and interests for future trainings. The project is designed to increase participant's self sufficiency by providing job training and/or relevant marketing, financial, and business planning information. Long term impacts include: -increased income for farmers and youth interns -increased food security among refugees, low income families, and others the community -improved quality of life for stakeholders -access to fresh nutritional foods for refugees, low income families, and others the community

OBJECTIVES: The project is designed to increase participant's self sufficiency by providing job training and/or relevant marketing, financial, and business planning information. Cultivating Community will collaborate with a number of organizations over the three year period to achieve the following five objectives. Objective 1: Create agricultural opportunities for refugees living in Manchester, NH by delivering outreach and orientation programs in collaboration with the Somali Bantu Association of NH (SBA). Estimated # of beginning farmers served: 8-12 farmers and market gardeners

annually Outputs: -Develop and sign two annual subcontract agreements with SBA -Conduct outreach to refugee community -Deliver 8 orientation workshops for new participants -Deliver financial literacy skills workshops, including agricultural ESL classes. -Deliver and/or coordinate participation in production and market workshops. -Provide ongoing technical assistance to an average of 10 farmers per year -Document subcontract activities and report to program managers Objective 2: Provide opportunities for stakeholders to grow food by operating training farm sites in Lisbon, Portland, and Cape Elizabeth, ME. Estimated # of beginning farmers served: 50 farmers and market gardeners annually Outputs: -Revise and/or extend leases on farms and garden sites as needed -Write management plans for training farm sites, including 1 acre of vegetable production by staff and youth interns. -Manage farm activities, including use of equipment and supplies and supervision of youth interns -Enroll participants in "farmer" and "market gardener" programs Coordinate land use for farmers, market gardeners, and other growers. Objective 3: Increase the profitability and sustainability of refugee farmers in Maine by coordinating business planning teams Estimated # of beginning farmers served: 8-12 refugee farmers each year Outputs: -Contract with consultant to mentor CC staff on Farms for the Future's team model -Hire part time Farm Teams Coordinator -Establish and manage 6 teams for 2010 Establish and manage 6-8 teams in 2011 -Establish and manage 6-8 teams in 2012 -Evaluate teams via interviews and annual program reviews Objective 4: Provide internship opportunities to youth in Maine by coordinating a food production and distribution internship program. Estimated # of beginning farmers served: 50 youth interns annually Outputs: -Coordinate youth grower program -Recruit, interview, and select 50 youth grower interns each year -Produce food on 1-2 acres at farm sites and distribute to low income communities in greater Portland and Lewiston, ME. Objective 5: Share resources and best practices for beginning farmer training by attending conferences and coordinating with regional and national organizations. Estimated # of beginning farmers served: networking with 20 organizations that serve beginning farmers annually Outputs: -Attend annual PD meeting -Coordinate with NIFI and other national programs to share resources -Coordinate with MOFGA, Extension, and other service providers to register farmers for regional and national conferences -workshops

APPROACH: Cultivating Community's collective model of farm-based business development with new Americans and youth empowerment with youth in low-income neighborhoods directly increases food access, community development and sustainable agriculture among underserved and marginalized populations. By building skills and fostering an ethic of stewardship among youth and using agriculture to move families toward self sufficiency, we are addressing root causes and offering systemic solutions. It will take more than the two year of the project period to evaluate its full impact; however, CC will measure the following milestones. At the end of the three year grant we expect that one hundred and fifty refugee farmers and market gardeners will have improved production and marketing skills via Cultivating Community's educational farms sites and twenty of those refugee farmers will have had a business development team. In addition, one hundred and fifty youth entrepreneurs will have participated in agricultural internships. Quantitative measures of the project's success will include: -Number of refugee farmers participating in programs -Number of farmers and youth entrepreneurs attending training workshops and receiving technical assistance. -Number of individuals that have made a significant contribution to their family's income and food security through their food production -Amount of food produced at CC's training farm sites and community gardens -Amounts of fresh produce sold to and consumed by local low income communities (especially via Senior Farm Share, WIC, EBT programs) -Amount of and change in gross and net income generated by each farmer as determined by the sales and tax records. NASAP will measure effectiveness of training via surveys (sample workshop survey in appendix). Survey results will be tallied and reported. Qualitative evaluation measurements include refugees families' increased quality of life documented via farmer testimonials. Since the immigrant cultures are primarily oral, face-to-face feedback is often the most effective evaluation strategy. For this reason project staff will conduct periodic in person evaluations with each farmer, focusing on client satisfaction and the long-term effectiveness of assistance received. The project will directly solicit farmers' suggestions for improvement of programs.

PROGRESS: 2011/09 TO 2012/08

OUTPUTS: Outreach materials (objectives 1,2): 100 outreach brochures;3 presentations to refugee/immigrant groups-est.75 attendees;1000+ brochures and 250+ posters printed for CSA;12 Farmer bios written;new Fresh Start Farms logo;216 welcome packets mailed to customers;3 presentations for CSA-est.50 attendees;2 presentations to community groups-est.70 attendees

2a. Workshops and training programs (objectives 2,3):Farm Production & Marketing,Lewiston,advanced program participants-15 farmers,24 classes,288 hours;Orientation,new participants-16 farmers,8 classes,67 hours.Farm-and-market ESL,all program levels-20 farmers, 34 classes, 490 hours.Financial literacy, all levels-18 farmers, 10 classes, 120 hours.On-Farm Training-46 workshops at farm site-30 farmers, 161 hours. Additional training materials:Created new farmer skills self-assessments matrix with focus on production, marketing, and business readiness; completed by 23 farmers.Developed farm management tools designed for limited-literacy audiences, including:revised recordkeeping booklets;invoice booklets; revised farmer year-end P&L form.Developed production planning tools for limited literacy audiences, including picture based/plain language versions of:revised production calendar;CSA crops tutorial; pest identification cards;crop plan template;crop production quiz sheet; crop production quick reference sheet-18 crops.

2b. Additional Activities and events (objectives 2,3) Farm field visit day-4 farmers.Attendance at Farmer to Farmer conference-17 farmers.Attendance at Flats Mentor Farm annual event-14 farmers. Advisors provided est.300 hrs 1-on-1 consulting in production, marketing, and business development to 13 farmers.Est.750 hrs 1-on-1 on-farm TA-30 participants.

2c. Dissemination(objective 5): Provided technical assistance,shared materials & curriculum with projects:New Farms for New Americans, Alliance Organic Community Gardens,Orange County Partnerships,International Institute of Akron,Philadelphia Community Farm Collaborative Training Program,Cultivate Kansas City,Grow Northampton.Presented in webinars and at National Incubator Farm Training Initiative Field School (attendee range 28 - 55),topics:Partnerships and leveraging resources;How to teach production and harvesting;Organic regulations;Access to farm support services;Introduction to marketing cooperatives;Assessing land for incubators;Assigning plots to farmers;Establishing expectations;Managing shared infrastructure;Equipment training.Presented in Community Food Security Coalition webinar (16 attendees):Addressing Food Safety in Farm Incubator Programs.Coordinated "Learning Community" meeting at incubator farm;11 attendees.

3. Demographics:54 Socially disadvantaged;54 Limited Resource;1 farm worker;33 females;46 currently farming;9 farming less than one year

Add'l Youth Program Outputs: 10 teens visited youth programs in Maine & Boston,participated in leadership workshops.6 teens attended 4 food justice conferences, hosted 2 outreach events and taught 4 workshops to 25 peers.30 teens grew & distributed over \$1000 worth of produce to 10 seniors.Youth created cookbook with recipes,interviews,distributed to youth,volunteers,supporters.

PARTICIPANTS: PD Craig Lapine provided overall program management and direction. Program Manager Daniel Ungier worked on project implementation, curriculum development and delivery, and led training and technical sessions. Farm Manager Sarah Marshall provided overall farm site management, managed the implementation and technical assistance required for participants' 11 EQIP contracts, and provided additional on-site training and technical assistance during the growing season. Youth Programs Manager Anna Sommo worked full-time on implementing all youth activities and managed seasonal staff for youth programs. Outreach Manager Hussein Muktar provided simultaneous interpretation at all training and communicated and coordinated services to participants. Refugee Farmer Specialist Sarah Bostick contributed to farmer training, technical assistance sessions, and marketing training. A number of individuals served as business plan advisors and provided additional technical assistance and support. Laurie McDonnell is a business educator and former farm educator with decades of experience in Maine. Nancy Chandler is a farmer mentor with 30+ years of experience farming in Maine. Dani Scherer provided marketing assistance to refugee farmers and coordinated program efforts to increase and expand market opportunities for program participants, including supporting Fresh Start Farms CSA, and provided technical assistance and support at farmers' markets for the newest participants. The project partnered with Lewiston Adult Education to deliver farm-and-market based ESOL classes and CEI to deliver financial literacy classes and business development tools. The project worked closely with the Androscoggin County NRCS office to support 12 farmers in applying for and managing EQIP contracts. The project collaborates with many local organizations, such as Lots to

ardens, Root Cellar, and Local Sprouts that provide services to our target demographic; collaborations improve both our outreach and expand market opportunities within the communities our farmers serve. The project also collaborates extensively with other refugee agriculture projects, presented at the annual Refugee Agricultural Partnership Program meeting, and either provided consulting services, shared curriculum, or coordinated site visits with many similar projects nationwide (see dissemination section of the outputs report). Hussein Muktar completed his participation in a farm business development course in order to increase his knowledge of core concepts and eventually become a trainer himself. Daniel Ungier traveled to the Sustainable Agriculture Education Association Annual meeting and presented at the National Incubator Farm Training Initiative Field School (see dissemination). Staff received a training in working with trauma survivors so that we better understand the additional challenges that affect our demographic, and at project finish, staff were planning training in collaborative leadership to strengthen the project's ability to transfer farm leadership and decision-making to program participants. **TARGET AUDIENCES:** Our project focuses on delivering specialized training, education and support services to limited-resource immigrants and refugees with an agricultural history or a desire to build a farm-based business. The majority of our participants have limited literacy in English and their native language. Our program is 60% Somali-Bantu, with Sudanese constituting most of the remainder, with lesser numbers of Mexican, Guatemalan, Iraqi, Bhutanese, Burundian, Rwandan, Tanzanian, and Congolese participants. All these groups are socially and economically disadvantaged. Consequently we have found that a hands-on, intensive training program provides the most impact on overcoming the key barriers of our program participants: limited literacy, limited financial resources, and social disadvantages that limit access to education, resource sharing with other farmers, service providers, or community resources. We offer several training series at different levels to program participants which are highly interactive, experiential, and use low-literacy friendly materials & documents that are accessible to our audience, relying heavily on best practices for agricultural development workshops from projects in the developing world. Group discussions, evaluation of photos from the previous farm season, and picture-based worksheets form a large part of the innovative curriculum. Program participants play a large role in shaping the course material at the beginning of the course. These courses are paired with additional programming: annual one-on-one meetings with staff where farmers set their business and educational goals for the coming year; technical assistance sessions in practical skills such as supply sourcing, rototiller repair, etc, and other topics for which most socially disadvantaged participants have few resources to know where to turn. **SOL classes** in farm-and-market based vocabulary; financial literacy classes; and additional support connecting participants to USDA resources such as EQIP contracts through the NRCS, which provides financial resources to help farmers implement conservation practices. Once in the growing season, an intensive training program includes workshops two days a week and extensive in-field technical assistance with individual participants. Technical assistance also extends to mastering direct marketing skills with farmers' markets, CSA, and wholesale accounts, including on-site visits at markets. Technical assistance is intensive and reaches approximately 900 hours of one-on-one service provided. Finally, 10 business planning teams composed of a business plan mentor and production mentor work with farmers to develop their own detailed plans for business development. The project's intensive teaching framework and emphasis on addressing key barriers facing refugee farmers has demonstrably dramatically increased program participants' farm viability, as shown in the outcomes section. We also target youth (the majority of whom are socially disadvantaged) who are seeking job and leadership training through our agriculture-based programs, lending our experiential education focus to improving their skills as the next generation. **PROJECT MODIFICATIONS:** Nothing significant to report during this reporting period.

IMPACT: 2011/09 TO 2012/08

Of those who completed the workshop & training program (out of 28): 100% are farming; 89% demonstrated change in knowledge; 93% planned change in behavior/approach; 93% plan to continue farming. Three years after those who completed a workshop & training program: (out of 28): 93% changed farming/land management practices; 42% developed farm plan; 68% changed marketing practices; 68% changed business practices; 93% who continue to participate in training programs. The immigrant groups are primarily oral, so face-to-face feedback is often the most effective evaluation tool.

staff conduct in person evaluations with each farmer, formal skills assessments, annual meetings, and group evaluation, focusing on client satisfaction and long-term effectiveness of assistance received. Changes in Knowledge (objectives 1-3): 16 of 28 participants demonstrated or reported change in knowledge on topics including marketing strategies, managing wholesale accounts, greenhouse management, seedling care, tomato trellising, small farm machine operation, soil fertility management, pest and disease management, maximizing crop yields, recordkeeping, succession planting, post harvest handling, food safety standard. Changes in Action (objectives 1-3): More significantly, 93% of participants demonstrated a notable change in their farming or marketing practices as a result of training activities (see target audience section for more info about project approach). Behavioral changes in 2012 included improved soil health management, improved crop management, crop rotations, cover cropping, wholesale product standardization, labor efficiency and productive gains, field planning, drip irrigation installation and utilization, increased crop diversity, use of specialized tools, improved weed management, and the topics demonstrating change in knowledge listed above. 68% changed marketing or business practices through the expansion of their CSA base, attending new farmers' markets, managing wholesale accounts, or adding a seedling enterprise to their farm business. Conditions: 100% of program participants indicated a significant increase in home vegetable consumption; 100% indicated some increase and 67% indicated significant increase in income and quality of life. 93% of participants attending ESL increased English skills and 63% of participants attending financial literacy classes demonstrated or reported improvement; ESL and financial literacy provides long-term tools to overcome barriers to success and increase social and economic integration. 76% of participants increased total sales from 2011. Compared to a pre-project baseline of \$15,000, total gross sales were 366% higher than baseline in Year 1, 773% higher than baseline in Year 2, and 940% higher than baseline in Year 3, for estimated gross total sales in Year 3 of \$156,000, including \$47,500 in CSA sales (\$1,000 in low-income shares), \$23,100 in wholesale accounts, \$1,800 in WIC sales, \$56,000 cash sales at farmers' markets, \$7,450 in Senior Farm Share programs, and \$11,800 in food access programs such as EBT sales. 3 farmers used their earnings to send a son or daughter to college.

PUBLICATIONS (not previously reported): 2011/09 TO 2012/08

0 publications reported this period

PROGRESS: 2010/09/01 TO 2011/08/31

OUTPUTS: 1. Outreach materials: 100 outreach brochures; 500+ brochures for Fresh Start Farms CSA; 6 presentations; 2 newspaper articles. For Youth Growers: 80 posters; 100 black and white fliers; Trifold display; 1 web-based photo essay, 1 song, 1 T-shirt design, 1 video produced by youth participants 2a. Workshops and training programs: Farm Planning Series, advanced program participants-23 farmers; Orientation Series, new program participants-33 farmers, 114 hours; Marketing Series, new and advanced program participants-32 farmers, 226 hours; On-Farm Training Workshops - 14 workshops-30 farmers; Technical assistance work sessions-8 sessions-30 farmers; 16-week farm-and-market based ESOL class-26 farmers; 6-week financial literacy class-21 farmers Additional training materials Revised interview form for annual meeting with participants; Individual Farmer Plan (IFP) form summarizes farmer's educational and business goals; skills assessments developed in production, marketing, and business readiness; Developed business planning tools designed for limited-literacy audiences, including: plain language business plan template; recordkeeping booklets; cash flow worksheets; end of year P&L form; Developed production planning tools for limited literacy audiences, including picture based/plain language production calendar; greenhouse crop plan; crops planting guide; production supplies checklist; marketing supplies checklist; recommended price guide; integrated pest management worksheet For Youth Growers: Winter Leadership Series: 4 all-day workshops for 20 youth ending in 3-day summit; two 4-week summer hands-on agriculture job training programs for 27 youth; 10-week farming and culinary/value-added intensive program for 8 youth; 6 month intensive internship on farming, market outreach, and peer education for 4 youth; Rooted In Community (RIC) conference: Grow interns lead workshops 2b. Additional Activities and events: Field visits to 5 farms-20 farmers; Attendance at two regional Farmer to Farmer conferences-17 farmers; 10 business planning teams, 400 hours of 1-on-1 consulting; Approximately 900 hours of one-on-one on-farm technical assistance to 30 farmers; 14 farmers; 14 farmers applied for NRCS contracts, 12

approved. 2c. Dissemination: Phone-based consulting services to 4 projects: Global Gardens, Community Crops, International Rescue Committee, Orange County Partnership for Young Children. Shared program materials/curriculum with 4 additional projects: Catherine Kasper Place; Mountain States Group, Inc. (Global Gardens), Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas, Southern New Hampshire Social Services. In-person resource exchange visits to 4 additional projects: New Entry Sustainable Farming Project, Flats Mentor Farm, New Farms for New Americans, Minnesota Food Association. 3

Demographics of participants attending face-to-face workshops & training programs: Socially disadvantaged-50; Limited resource-50; Farm workers-1; Females-29; Currently farming-39; Farming less than one year-5; For Youth Program: 85% socially disadvantaged immigrants or refugees from 9 countries; 57% African or African American; 75% limited resource; 50% young women ages 14-19

PARTICIPANTS: PD Craig Lapine provided overall program management and direction. Program Manager Daniel Ungier worked on project implementation, curriculum development and delivery, and led training and technical sessions. Farm Manager Sarah Marshall provided overall farm site management, managed the implementation and technical assistance required for participants' 11 EQIP contracts, and provided additional on-site training and technical assistance during the growing season. Youth Programs Manager Alida Payson worked full-time on implementing all youth activities and managed seasonal staff for youth programs. Outreach Manager Hussein Muktar provided simultaneous interpretation at all trainings and communicated and coordinated services to participants. A number of individuals who originally served as business plan advisors increased their hours and involvement in the project and provided additional technical assistance and support. Anthony Munene has extensive agricultural experience in Kenya and the US and experience working in cross-cultural settings with limited literacy populations, and provided technical assistance weekly during the peak growing season. Sarah Bostick has 9 years farm management experience in Maine and provided both farm and direct market technical assistance throughout the peak growing season. William Burke has 5 years experience providing marketing assistance to refugee farmers and coordinated program efforts to increase and expand market opportunities for program participants, including managing Fresh Start Farms CSA. He was assisted by Dani Scherer, a recent graduate with experience working with the Somali-Bantu and with direct marketing, who provided technical assistance and support at farmers' markets for the newest participants. The project partnered with Lewiston Adult Education to deliver farm-and-market based ESOL classes and CEI to deliver financial literacy classes and business development tools. The project worked closely with the Androscoggin County NRCS office to support 11 farmers in applying for and managing EQIP contracts. The project collaborates with many local organizations, such as Lots to Gardens Root Cellar, and Local Sprouts that provide services to our target demographic; collaborations improve both our outreach and expand market opportunities within the communities our farmers serve. The project also collaborates extensively with other refugee agriculture projects, presented at the annual Refugee Agricultural Partnership Program meeting, and either provided consulting services, shared curriculum, or coordinated site visits with 12 similar projects nationwide (see dissemination section of the outputs report). Hussein Muktar enrolled in farm business development course in order to increase his knowledge of core concepts and eventually become a trainer himself. Daniel Ungier traveled to the annual Beginning Farmer Learning Network hosted by Cornell, the Immigrant Farming Conference in St. Paul, MN, and the Refugee Service Provider Conference in Boston. The project is planning a staff training in working with trauma survivors so that we better understand the additional challenges that affect our demographic.

TARGET AUDIENCES: Our project focuses on delivering specialized training, education and support services to limited-resource immigrants and refugees with an agricultural history or a desire to build a farm-based business. The majority of our participants have limited literacy in English and their native language. Our program is 60% Somali-Bantu, with Sudanese constituting most of the remainder, with lesser numbers of Mexican, Guatemalan, Iraqi, Bhutanese, Burundian, and Congolese participants. All these groups are socially and economically disadvantaged. Consequently we have found that a hands-on, intensive training program provides the most impact on overcoming the key barriers of our program participants: limited literacy, limited financial resources, and social disadvantages that limit access to education, resource sharing with other farmers, service providers, or community resources. We offer several training series at different levels to program participants which are highly

interactive, experiential, and use low-literacy friendly materials & documents that are accessible to our audience, relying heavily on best practices for agricultural development workshops from projects in the developing world. Group discussions, evaluation of photos from the previous farm season, and picture-based worksheets form a large part of the innovative curriculum. Program participants play a large role in shaping the course material at the beginning of the course. These courses are paired with additional programming: annual one-on-one meetings with staff where farmers set their business and educational goals for the coming year; technical assistance sessions in practical skills such as supply sourcing, tractor repair, etc, and other topics for which most socially disadvantaged participants have few resources to know where to turn; ESOL classes in farm-and-market based vocabulary; financial literacy classes; and additional support connecting participants to USDA resources such as EQIP contracts through the NRCS, which provides financial resources to help farmers implement conservation practices. Once in the growing season, an intensive training program includes workshops two days a week and extensive in-field technical assistance with individual participants. Technical assistance also extends to mastering direct marketing skills with farmers' markets, CSA, and wholesale accounts, including on-site visits at markets. Technical assistance is intensive and reaches approximately 900 hours of one-on-one service provided. Finally, 10 business planning teams composed of a business plan mentor and production mentor work with farmers to develop their own detailed plans for business development. The project's intensive teaching framework and emphasis on addressing key barriers facing refugee farmers has demonstrably dramatically increased program participants' farm viability, as shown in the outcomes section. We also target youth (the majority of whom are socially disadvantaged) who are seeking job and leadership training through our agriculture-based programs, lending our experiential education focus to improving their skills as the next generation. PROJECT MODIFICATIONS: Not relevant to this project.

IMPACT: 2010/09/01 TO 2011/08/31

Of those who completed training program (out of 45): 97% are farming, 97% demonstrated change in knowledge, 97% planned change in behavior/approach, 10% plan to start farming, 86% plan to continue farming; Two-years after completing training program (out of 29): 93% changed farming/land management practices, 66% developed farm plan, 7% not farming, 79% changed marketing practices, 79% changed business practices, 90% continue to participate in training programs. The immigrant groups are primarily oral, so face-to-face feedback is often the most effective evaluation tool. Staff conduct in person evaluations with each farmer, formal skills assessments, annual meetings, and group evaluation, focusing on client satisfaction and long-term effectiveness of assistance received. Changes in Knowledge: All but one participant demonstrated and/or reported a change in knowledge after participation in training and the same number articulated planned changes in behavior after training. New participants increased understanding of basic marketing and production concepts for a successful farm business in Maine; advanced participants built upon previous knowledge. Changes in Action: More significantly, 93% of participants demonstrated notable change in their farming practices as a result of training (see target audience section for more info about project approach). Multiple diverse behavioral changes were implemented by this 93%, including improvements in cover cropping, crop rotations, weed management, pest management, field plans, fertility management, labor efficiency and productivity gains, succession planting, post harvest handling, crop diversity, using specialized tools, greenhouse management, and more. 79% changed marketing and business practices, increasing the size of their CSA, adding farmers' markets, improving quality and competitiveness at market, improving CSA diversity and quality, and utilizing alternative direct marketing strategies. Changes in Conditions: 100% of program participants indicated a significant increase in home vegetable consumption; 100% indicated some increase and 7% indicated significant increase in income and quality of life. Increased English and financial literacy skills provide long-term tools to overcome barriers to success and increase social and economic integration. Since the inception of the project, by implementing the changes above, the most successful participants have transformed their operations from informal market gardens to impressive working farms. They have developed devoted customer bases at 22 different farmers markets, sold 167 CSA shares at 21 pick-up sites, served 6 wholesale accounts, and have created as much as a tenfold increase in farm income since 2009. The youth program also reported significant behavioral change and changes in

conditions; for example, 100% reported learning new skills related to marketing, educating others and/or farming; 90% reported they eat more fresh, healthy food; 90% reported they see themselves as leaders. 53 youth earned financial stipends, gained job training experience, and increased fresh vegetable consumption with their families, bringing home food they produced.

PUBLICATIONS: 2010/09/01 TO 2011/08/31

no publications reported this period

PROGRESS: 2009/09/01 TO 2010/08/31

OUTPUTS: Create agricultural opportunities for refugees living in Manchester, NH: Our work in NH is via a mentoring relationship with the Somali-Bantu Community Association of New Hampshire (SBCA-NH). SBCA-NH staff did agricultural stake interviews with 11 Somali Bantu, 14 Bhutanese and 1 Iraqi to understand agricultural backgrounds, assess individual agricultural goals and connect individuals with appropriate programs. Farmers participated in 6 workshops that focused on agricultural production, marketing and business planning. Two of the 6 workshops had 100% attendance with 26 refugee farmers attending 2-hour sessions. A workshop coordinated by UNH Cooperative Extension was a daylong session focusing on ethnic crops. Other workshops discussed crop production and selection in the Northeast, pest and disease identification and management, introduction to markets and marketing of vegetables in New Hampshire, greenhouse production and business planning and similar topics. Other workshops focused on risk management and marketing and business planning. Staff brought farmers to two farm visits - 26 participants attend along with interpreters in Nepali and Maay-Maay. Provide opportunities for stakeholders to grow food: Managed Packard-Littlefield Farm in Lisbon, ME, Tidewater Farm in Falmouth ME, and the Boyd Street Urban Farm and Community Garden in Portland, ME to provide incubator farm and community garden sites to beginning refugee farmers and youth. Supported beginning farmers with access to workshops, tools, seeds and other inputs. Increase profitability and sustainability of refugee farmers through business planning teams: Seven farmers or farm teams worked with a business planning team that included a team leader, marketing advisor, production advisor, and business and financial advisor, receiving approximately 40 hours of one-on-one help between the spring and early summer. At the end of the advising period, each participant had developed a business plan which articulated his or her own business vision and financial goals, outlined an individualized marketing strategy, described the equipment, supplies, and expenses necessary to implement their plan, and provided a structure for production practices aimed at increased market growth. Provide agricultural internship opportunities for Maine youth: 52 youth participated as part of Youth Growers, Community Culinary Crew, or Grow Interns. Each youth received approximately 112 hours of hands-on training that combined agriculture skills with training in leadership and stewardship. Share best practices for beginning farmer training: Staff have provided technical assistance to 16 peer or related organizations in the grant year. This includes presentation to USDA's Maine-based staff for a training entitled Embracing Diversity and Unity in February 2010. Project staff presented at the first annual BFRDP project directors meeting in November 2010. Staff presented at a meeting of HHS RAPP grantees in Washington, DC Fall 2009, and in many regional meetings. Co-PDs Craig Lapine and Amy Carrington also serve on the boards of the MOFGA and NIFI respectively, and program information is shared in those settings.

PARTICIPANTS: Information on Amy Carrington, Craig Lapine, Alida Payson, and Sarah Marshall was included in the original application. Additional staff added to the project have been refugee farmer specialist Daniel Ungier and youth programs educator Alfred Jacob. Daniel Ungier organizes marketing, production, and business planning trainings for beginning farmers and market gardeners. He coordinates off-season skills development, regular on farm workshops, visits to other local farms, and travel to regional and national conferences. Daniel develops relationships between refugee and agricultural service providers to coordinate better services for farmers, and manages 8-12 business planning teams each year for farmers with advanced standing in NASAP programs. Daniel has experience facilitating community development and community farming enterprises in limited literacy and international settings, including conducting participatory action research as a Fulbright Scholar in Senegal and contract work with Mercy Corps International in Mongolia. He has spent several seasons on diversified vegetable farms in the U.S. He has experience coordinating food access to low-income and

underserved communities and delivering agricultural curriculum to diverse audiences of youth and adults. Alfred Jacob was born in Sudan and raised in Cairo, Egypt and in Portland Maine. His work with Cultivating Community includes staffing youth programs and conducting outreach to refugee farmers. He is fluent in English, Acholi and Arabic. In addition to his work with Cultivating Community, Alfred runs Aserela, a Sudanese community support organization, and a summer youth soccer program for residents of public housing. He is pursuing his bachelor's degree in history at USM, and he and his wife are expecting their first child in April 2011. Conferences and professional development opportunities pursued by project staff include attendance at MOFGA's Farmer-to-Farmer meeting, the Community Food Security Coalition national conference, the youth-in-agriculture meeting Rooted in Community as well as workshops in the use of QuickBooks for tracking Federal grants. **TARGET AUDIENCES:** Our target population includes recent immigrants with an agricultural history or a desire to build a farm-based business. These have chiefly been among Somali-Bantu and Sudanese farmers, though since the program's inception we have begun enrolling Iraqis, Brundians, and Bhutanese farmers. All these groups are socially and economically disadvantaged; the Somali and Sudanese farmers also often have educational disadvantages. We also target youth (the majority of whom are socially disadvantaged) who are seeking job and leadership training through our agriculture-based programs. Our project IS an education program that encompasses formal and informal programs. The far-reaching in-class instruction is documented in the outputs section of the report. In addition, very rich informal learning happens in the context of technical assistance directly to growers in the field and to youth participating in summer internship programs. Farmers and youth draw on the knowledge of our staff farmers and from our demonstration gardens. Refugee farmers and youth had the opportunity to cook and eat together and learn from each other, particularly in the context of a "resiliency project," a project in which youth interviewed refugee farmers to discover and document skills the refugees identified as important to their resiliency. That project was documented in photographs and web-based materials. **PROJECT MODIFICATIONS:** Not relevant to this project.

IMPACT: 2009/09/01 TO 2010/08/31

Create agricultural opportunities for refugees living in Manchester, NH: 26 Somali-Bantu farmers had produce sales for the first time! Provide opportunities for stakeholders to grow food: 100% of farmers showed a demonstrated increase in their production and marketing skills in 2010. Business planning farmers attended a 27-hour orientation program and a 28-hour marketing workshop series. The business planning program further required farmers to take concepts they had learned about in Cultivating Community's NASAP training curriculum and articulate them in their own words within their plan. Such internalized knowledge acquisition represents a major step for disadvantaged refugee farmers meeting educational and skill development goals for growing for market in the US. In addition, farmers were evaluated mid-season on a range of capacity areas both at market and in the field. Though many areas of future growth were identified, the evaluations illustrated an increase in farmers' skills over previous seasons. In annual meetings in November, staff discussed evaluation with the farmer, farmers identified skills they had developed over the past year and those they wanted to improve upon in the future. Increase profitability and sustainability of refugee farmers through business planning teams: 100% of farmers completed the financial planning portion of the written business plan, which included estimating income from each of their market opportunities, estimating production expenses and marketing expenses, and determining their planned net income. Farmers practiced recordkeeping throughout the season, and in November, they compared their actual profit and loss statement with their plan. Lastly, they used this information to set goals for the following season. Provide agricultural internship opportunities for Maine youth: 75% of Youth Growers reported knowing better how to make a difference in their communities; 63% are more likely to do community service; 79% reported knowing how to be a good employee; 92% reported understanding how to work well in a team. In the Culinary Crew, 89% reported feeling more connected to the natural world, and 78% reported eating a more healthy diet. 100% are now more likely to help a neighbor, feel they can make a difference in their communities, are more concerned with healthy food and hunger as community issues and care where their food comes from. Similar outcomes were documented among Grow Interns where 85% believe they can make a difference in their communities, 90% had a clearer sense of their own interests and skills, 80% reported making choices

ased on impacts to their own health, and 83% felt more likely to step to a problem or opportunity within their own communities. Share best practices for beginning farmer training: The project has demonstrably changed the level of participation of beginning farmers with Federal programs, providing an important template to other programs.. This includes two refugee farmers now funded for organic transition plans, one NASAP participant (and Cultivating Community member) who sits on the Androscoggin County Conservation Commission, and 12 EQIP applications we have supported.

PUBLICATIONS: 2009/09/01 TO 2010/08/31

0 publications reported this period