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START: 01 SEP 2009 **TERM:** 31 AUG 2012
GRANT AMT: \$515,862 **GRANT YR:** 2009
INITIAL AWARD YEAR: 2009
INVESTIGATOR: Peterson, G.
PERFORMING INSTITUTION:
AGRICULTURE & LAND-BASED TRAINING ASSOCIATION (ALBA)
700 OLD STAGE ROAD
ALINAS, CALIFORNIA 93912

CREATING BEGINNING FARMER OPPORTUNITIES IN FARM WORKER COMMUNITIES

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY: The target audience for this work consists of farm workers and other low-income people seeking to become independent farm business owner-operators, as well as existing farm operators with less than 10 years of experience. We work with the growing Latina/o demographic among farmers in this region - most of whom are relatively small operators in contrast to large-scale, high-value agriculture that dominates the region. Monterey County alone had a 2007 agricultural production value of more than \$3.8 billion. ALBA leverages its participants' rural backgrounds and vocational skills with education on business and financial literacy, farm production crop planning and management skills. The result is dozens of beginning Latino farmers operating at varying levels of business development. Our long-term goal is to integrate beginning farmer opportunities with economic development and wealth creation in low-income communities. There are enormous obstacles facing beginning socially disadvantaged farmers in our region, including: 1) limited educational backgrounds; 2) lack of experience and technical assistance in management and marketing; 3) language barriers and cultural differences; 4) limited ability to seek alternative marketing channels, financing options, or access to existing farmer networks; 5) few educational options on low-input agricultural technologies and diversified cropping systems; 6) difficulties in securing credit; 7) lack of understanding and access to risk management concepts and tools; 8) increasing environmental regulations, and 9) marketing and financing systems that primarily protect the interests of brokers, wholesalers and larger-scale producers. The proposed objectives fulfill key priorities for Standard BFRDP Projects as determined by our own experience working with our region's aspiring farmers. The project focuses on the following BFRDP topics: whole farm planning (particularly crop planning, e.g. successive plantings and rotations); conservation and regulatory compliance assistance; organic farming practices; integrated pest management; farm safety; information processing (record-keeping); resources and referrals; entrepreneurship and business training; financial management; market diversification and timing; technical assistance in acquiring access to land; and development/use of model land-lease contracts. The long-term goals of this project include: 1. The number of beginning farmers in Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Benito counties increases as a result of consistent business education and start-up opportunities for limited-resource and minority residents, particularly farm workers who are aspiring farmers, 2. Opportunities for long-term access to land and viable markets increase for beginning socially disadvantaged farmers who access technical assistance on business planning and appropriate financing to sustain and grow independent farming businesses. 3. The viability of beginning farmer education programs nationwide increases with dissemination of ALBA's farmer tracking and assessment systems, program evaluation strategies, and a study of our experience in assisting beginning socially disadvantaged farmers.

OBJECTIVES: Project goals: 1. The number of beginning farmers in Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Benito counties increases as a result of consistent business education and start-up opportunities for limited-resource and minority residents, particularly farm workers who are aspiring farmers, 2. Opportunities for long-term access to land and viable markets increase for beginning socially disadvantaged farmers who access technical assistance on business planning and appropriate financing to sustain and grow independent farming businesses. 3. The viability of beginning farmer education programs nationwide increases with dissemination of ALBA's farmer tracking and assessment systems, program evaluation strategies, and a study of our experience in assisting beginning socially disadvantaged farmers. Activities and intended outcomes in relation to the four central objectives include: 1. Beginning Farmer Education: generate business education, farm management and marketing education opportunities for beginning socially disadvantaged farmers with advisory services, professional development, and practical learning opportunities among farm workers and other aspiring farmers. Outcomes: a) 75 aspiring and beginning farmers complete the course b) 180

beginning farmers attend workshops with impacts verified through interviews with 60 beginning farmers. C) Evidence of sales records of 70 growers' sales to ALBA Organics, 2. Farm Business Incubation and Development: Build financial stability, business management skills and provide assistance to beginning farmers in accessing land. Outcomes: a) 40 beginning farmers will access land, b) Provide records of technical assistance for 70 growers, and document at least 5 farmers' leases/purchases of land outside the incubator. c) Create and maintain 300+ digital records of technical assistance, by farmer, topic, and date - including time devoted to each and records of follow-up actions. Summarize beginning farmers needs as indicated by demand/trends in technical assistance. 3. Monitor and Evaluate Farmer and Program Success. Outcomes: a) use at least 60 beginning farmer interviews to inform plans to meet their needs, with summary reports to be submitted to the BFRDP, three farm conferences and BFRDP project directors' meetings. b) demonstrated consistent use of evaluation practices. c) Documented changes to our IT system, and records of three annual staff training activities to expand/improve our day-to-day use of the Salesforce system. 4. Contribute to the field of Beginning Farmer Development: Assess and document critical factors affecting the success of beginning socially disadvantaged farmers at varying stages in their development, and use that information to increase the effectiveness of technical assistance provided by ALBA and our partners in the field. Outcomes: a) Publication of a professional research report for dissemination nationwide. B) assist EE and OC projects in evaluating impacts of programs to support beginning farmers and ranchers based on our experience with curriculum development, program management such as monitoring and evaluation, and results of farmer interview.

APPROACH: Approach: Educational methodologies are designed for the bilingual context in which we conduct this work, and also must take into consideration the widely varying levels of education among participants. Beginning and aspiring farmers are recruited through well-established methods, including current incubator participants, our extensive farmer contact database (700 farmers), word of mouth, Spanish language media and ag commissioner lists. In addition, past ALBA program graduates are forming a farmer-led group, Pequeños Agricultores de California (Small Farmers of California) with a goal to increase opportunities for beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers. Project activities focus largely on experiential-based learning strategies in farm business incubators that provide beginning farmers with access to land, equipment and irrigation infrastructure. Experiential marketing education occurs at ALBA Organics located on the farm with 1600 square feet of cold storage space and two delivery trucks making regular routes. The work will take place primarily at two farm properties totaling 305 acres (150 of which are cultivable) near Salinas and Watsonville, California - both owned and operated by ALBA. Evaluation: ALBA's approach to evaluating the success of each program is conducted with a comprehensive M&E framework. Each specific program has an M&E plan that summarizes main objectives, process indicators, which monitor the implementation of the program's activities and the dynamics of service delivery and outcome indicators, which evaluate how interventions made a change in the human or environmental condition and contributed to the program's goal. California Institute for Rural Studies (CIRS) will conduct interviews with 100 individuals who have graduated from PEPA since 2001. Interviews and surveys will be administered to assess a range of issues including: land access and the terms thereof, farming practices, market channels, access to credit, demand/needs for technical assistance, farm revenues, profit margins and plans for continuation or expansion. An additional survey will be administered to individuals who are not currently farming to assess their experiences in farming, vocational/career skills attained, and reasons for exiting agriculture. Quantitative data will provide descriptive information and will be used to identify outcomes among program participants. Qualitative data will gather information regarding key challenges affecting beginning and immigrant farmers and will elicit information on best practices, lessons learned and recommendations for ways ALBA can better meet participants needs. The assessment findings will provide ALBA with useful information and recommendations that will allow it to refine and improve its programs. Assessment findings will be shared with BFRDP Educational Enhancement projects as a means of contributing to the larger body of knowledge regarding effective ways of serving and promoting the success of new, immigrant and limited-resource farmers in the United States. CIRS will continue to work with ALBA and the BFRDP in Years 2 and 3, providing a continuous feedback loop for quality improvement.

PROGRESS: 2009/09 TO 2012/08

OUTPUTS: Outreach was conducted in the form of news articles, radio announcements, television media, and presentations at various events, in efforts to recruit participants for our Farmer Education Program (PEPA). During the term of the project over 250 applications were distributed and 90 participants enrolled and completed the PEPA course. The three cycles of the course offered during this grant, provided over 550 hours of instruction during January-June 2010, January-June 2011, and October 2011-October 2012. Participants demonstrated knowledge of the topic areas covered in the course such as marketing, crop planning, business planning, pest management and soil fertility. 47 workshops and field days, for a total of 105 workshop hours presented and 2959 participant hours, were

delivered to 195 recipients, covering topics including: Advanced Cover Cropping, Business Planning, Financial Management, and Marketing tools for Small Farms, Farm Financing, Food Safety, and Labor Law. 37 monthly bulletins were produced and distributed to 62 Incubator tenants. 7 bilingual newsletters were produced and distributed to 600+ farmers in the region. Bilingual flyers promoting all of our educational events and Farmer Education Program were created. The ALBA website is maintained monthly and includes links to our various educational materials and media impacts. ALBA maintains 1070 fans on Facebook, a 20% increase over last year. ALBA Organics worked with over 60 incubator tenants and 66 additional farmers to provide ongoing education on marketing techniques. In addition, ALBA staff devoted over 30 hours providing one-on-one direct marketing technical assistance to farmers. 62 beginning farmers were able to access land on ALBA's farms. ALBA held 24 farmer meetings on topics such as production, access to farm equipment, and irrigation planning. 541 records of technical assistance with 60 farmers were recorded in our salesforce.com client relationship management system, for a total of 463 hours. Leading topics includes USDA Program Access, Food Safety, Organic Certification, and Loan Applications. ALBA published its Farmer Education Program Resource Guide and ALBA's Farm Incubator Toolkit to Start2Farm.gov, the BFRDP's Curriculum and Training Learninghouse for new and beginning farmers. PARTICIPANTS: Project Staff: Patricia Carrillo, Business Education Program Manager; Andy Rea, Agriculture Education Program Manager (departed July 2011); Nathan Harkleroad, Farm Incubator Program Manager (2009-2011) & Agriculture Education Program Manager (started August 2012); Nancy Custos, Communications & Development Associate; Patty Howe, Administrative Director; Brett Melone, Executive Director (departed June 2011); Alfred Navarro, Interim Executive Director (June 2011-March 2012); Chris Brown, Executive Director (started April 2012); Deborah Yashar, Food Systems Program Manager (departed November 2011); Mary Peterson, Communications & Development Director (departed June 2012); ALBA Organics: Silverio Ruiz, Warehouse Manager; Tony Serrano, General Manager; Noel Velasco, Sales Associate (departed November 2011). Collaborators: California FarmLink, California Institute for Rural Studies, California State University Monterey Bay, Community Alliance with Family Farmers, Ecological Farming Association, El Pajaro Community Development Corporation, Elkhorn Consulting, Friedman Associates, Everyone's Harvest Farmers' Markets, Food Bank for Monterey County, Hartnell Community College, Monterey County Agricultural Commissioner's Office, Monterey County Health Department, Institute for International Studies, National Center for Appropriate Technology (ATTRA), Roots of Change Santa Cruz Community Farmers' Market Association, UC Cooperative Extension, USDA, NRCS, FSA, Rural Development Women's Fund for Monterey County. TARGET AUDIENCES: Target audiences include farm workers and other low-income people seeking to become independent organic farm business operators, as well as existing farm operators with less than 10 years of experience. ALBA has over 600 regional farmer contacts in its database, focused on hispanic farmers, at least 110 of whom started their careers in the training programs now operated by ALBA. More than a quarter of Monterey County's labor force consists of field workers or low-wage employees in the produce packing industry. As of 2009, 17% of the population in Monterey County lived below the poverty line - disproportionately greater in rural communities. Key indicators of those who are aspiring farmers include advancement in agricultural employment, rural backgrounds and entrepreneurship. The number of Latino farmers in Monterey County remained stable from 2002-2007 according to the USDA Census of Agriculture, with a total of 374 Latino-operated farms in Monterey County. The number of Latino farmers in California overall increased by 18.5% from 2002-2007 - by far the fastest growing segment of new farmers. This trend demonstrates the timeliness and importance of our work. Only 9% of California farmers have operators who are less than 35 years old, while 42% of farms are operated by individuals who are 55 years or older. According to data available from NRCS, 56% of farms in Monterey County are considered limited-resource and 35% are beginning farmers or ranchers. There are two primary categories of farmers with whom ALBA works: PEPA program graduates who are tenants in the Small Farm Incubator, and socially disadvantaged and limited-resource growers in the tri-county region, most of whom speak Spanish as their first language. ALBA's farmer-tenants have acreages between 1/4 to 5 acres while they are in the Incubator and average gross sales incomes of \$10,000 to \$30,000 per acre. The primary marketing outlet is our own wholesale distributor, ALBA Organics, but farmer-tenants also sell through alternative direct markets such as farmers' markets and/or farm stands, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), or farmer-to-farmer sales. Growers who are not farmer-tenants have similar or lower production values in the region, and include small farmers who started at ALBA. PROJECT MODIFICATIONS: The project did not experience significant deviations from the original work plan.

IMPACT: 2009/09 TO 2012/08

Farmer Education Program application materials were updated to serve as an intake application and help capture baseline data at entry. Updates include disability status, veteran status, and self-employment questions. These updates will allow us to compare data over time and track important indicators of success including when clients leave

overty. 108 farmers demonstrated verified management changes as a result of attending ALBA educational events and receiving individualized technical assistance. Evaluation methods include: surveys at end of workshops; annual interviews including economic performance assessment; third-party interviews that are conducted every 5 years. 62 beginning farmers were able to access land and over 55 created or updated business plans. Annual business planning has improved over time and farmer-tenants now see the value of creating budgets to improve business performance. ALBA customized its salesforce.com database and is now able to track continuing education and farmer technical assistance hours easily. 8 farmers secured additional land outside of the Incubator. 26 farmers applied for farm operating or equipment loans and 23 were approved for a total of \$228k in loans. Better coordination with the USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) and local FSA lenders and improved business planning, led to this unprecedented number of loans, the average was 3-4 per year in prior years. As a result, ALBA farmers are able to access financing when they need it the most. 14 beginning farmers received Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) contracts with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. By obtaining EQIP contracts, 8 farmers have been able to secure funding to set-up high tunnels that will allow for season extension and steady production during the winter months to increase business profitability. ALBA was able to increase access to markets for emerging agricultural businesses by expanding the operation of their ALBA Organics (AO) distribution unit. As a result of acquiring an additional 12,000 square feet of cold storage space, AO was able to increase its sales by 40%. The end result of the expansion is an increase in sales of \$1 million. The expansion has accommodated AO's growth and the growth of current and newly established farm operations that use the wholesale outlet as their primary market. ALBA continues to work with the California Institute of Rural Studies (CIRS) in efforts to improve our monitoring and evaluation framework based on results of participant surveys. Narrative results from CIRS' last survey of ALBA graduates, "Talking with Graduates: participant experiences and perspectives..." can be found on ALBA's website. ALBA's salesforce.com database, is now set up to measure core program outcomes, including demographics served, technical assistance hours, workshop attendance hours, farm incomes, and job creation, among many others.

PUBLICATIONS (not previously reported): 2009/09 TO 2012/08

ALBA published its Farmer Education Program Resource Guide and ALBA's Farm Incubator Toolkit to Start2Farm.gov, the BFRDP's Curriculum and Training Clearinghouse for new and beginning farmers. ALBA is excited to share its resources with organizations nationwide in efforts to advance the field of organic agriculture and decrease the risks that beginning farmers face when they first begin operating their small farms (ALBA, 2012).

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

OUTPUTS: Materials produced included 1 Spanish flyer; 1 English brochure and 1 Spanish brochure; news articles placed in print media, radio announcements and television stories were placed, and presentations to Adult School and groups organized by other agencies helped recruit participants for the Farmer Education Program during September - December 2010. Approximately 85 application packets were distributed, and 42 individuals applied to the program. 34 aspiring farmers were offered enrollment, and 30 ultimately enrolled for entire course. In addition, eight Hartnell College students participated in portions of the program. The six-month long Farmer Education Program delivered 160 hours of instruction from January-June 2011. A total of 38 aspiring or beginning farmers participated in one or more modules of Farmer Education Program. Modules each last one month with about 26 hours of instruction, accredited by Hartnell College. The 38 beginning farmers that participated in one or more modules demonstrated knowledge in those topics via regular module exams, and each completed portions of a farm business plan associated with each module, such as a crop plan, business plan, pest management plan, nutrient/irrigation management plan, etc. Upon program completion, 24 beginning farmers graduated in July 2011. This means that they each completed all module exams, created an initial farm business plan, and attained a greater-than-80% attendance record. 13 workshops and field days, for a total of 32 hours, were delivered to 75 farmers, covering topics including: Weed Control, Conservation Planning, Equipment, Food Safety, Seeding/Transplanting, Labor Laws, Business Financing, Irrigation, Succession Planning, Market-Records, Rodent Control, Computers; and Labor Law. 12 monthly bulletins were produced and distributed to 40+ incubator tenants, including updates on educational events, USDA programs and agronomic tips. 3 bilingual newsletters were produced and distributed to 590 farmers in ALBA's tri-county region. 6 event flyers were created to promote educational events at ALBA and sent to 550+ regional farmers. Program information/materials were shared with 8 communities interested in replicating our model. ALBA website maintained and updated at least monthly, including a total of 15 farmer profiles, 12 of which are beginning farmers. ALBA maintains 882 fans on Facebook, a 30% increase over last year. Media exposure included more than 25 newspaper articles; radio interviews/spots; TV interviews/spots; and, internet/blog coverage. Access to land provided to 38 beginning farmers in Farm Incubator and 5 additional farmers for a total of 43. 9 farmer meetings were held, covering leadership,

management and production topics. 48 incubator farmers (and recent graduates) attended a total of 21 educational events and management meetings, for a total of 323 hours of attendance by those farmers. 692 records of technical assistance with 68 farmers (62 of whom are beginning farmers) were recorded in the ALBA database. Leading topics addressed include Marketing (66), Equipment (60), USDA Programs (41), Business Skills (37), Financial Planning (33) and 22 other categories. PARTICIPANTS: Project Staff: Nancy Bustos Porto, Communications and Development Associate Patricia Carrillo, Business Education Program Manager Juan Garcia, Farm Management Assistant Nathan Markleroad, Farm Incubator Program Manager Patty Howe, Administrative Director Brett Melone, Executive Director (departed June 2011) Alfred Navarro, Interim Director Gary Peterson, Deputy Director Andy Rea, Ag Education Program Manager Silverio Ruiz, Warehouse Manager, ALBA Organics Tony Serrano, General Manager of ALBA Organic Joel Velasco, Sales Associate, ALBA Organics Deborah Yashar, Food Systems Program Manager Collaborators: California FarmLink California Institute for Rural Studies California State University Monterey Bay Community Alliance with Family Farmers Ecological Farming Association El Pajaro Community Development Corporation Elkhorn Consulting (database configuration) Everyone's Harvest Farmers' Markets Food Bank for Monterey County Friedman Associates (monitoring and evaluation) Hartnell Community College Monterey County Agricultural Commissioner Monterey County Health Department Monterey Institute for International Studies National Center for Appropriate Technology/ATTRA Radio Bilingue Roots of Change Salinas Adult School Santa Cruz Community Farmers Market Association UC Cooperative Extension USDA NRCS, FSA, and Rural Development Women's Fund for Monterey County Training and Professional Development included: Pest management Financial management training Food safety Marketing Post-harvest handling TARGET AUDIENCES: The target audience for this work consists of farm workers and other low-income people seeking to become independent farm business owner-operators, as well as existing farm operators with less than 10 years of experience. Currently ALBA has 590 regional farmer contacts in its database, focused on hispanic farmers, at least 110 of whom started their careers in the training programs now operated by ALBA. More than one-quarter of the working-age population in Monterey County consists of field laborers or low-wage employees in the fresh produce packing industry. As of 2009, 17% people in Monterey County live below the poverty line - disproportionately greater in rural communities. Key indicators of those who are aspiring farmers include advancement within ag employment, rural backgrounds and entrepreneurship. The number of Latino farmers in Monterey County remained stable from 2002 to 2007 according to the USDA Census of Agriculture, with a current total of 374 Latino-operated farms in Monterey County. The number of Latino farmers in California overall increased by 18.5% from 2002 to 2007 - by far the fastest growing segment of new farmers. This trend demonstrates the timeliness and importance of our work. As of the 2007 Census of Agriculture, only 8.8% of California farms have operators who are less than 35 years old, while 42.2% of farms are operated by individuals who are 55 years or older. According to data available from NRCS, 56% of farms in Monterey County are considered limited-resource and 32% are beginning farmers or ranchers. In Santa Cruz County the figures are similar - 70% are considered limited-resource, while 31% are operated by beginning farmers or ranchers. San Benito County demonstrates equally significant numbers of limited-resource farmers at 79% and beginning farmers and ranchers at 33% of the total. The growers with whom we work often do not see themselves as "life-long learners," in part due to limited levels of previous education and the peer environment in which they work. There are two primary categories of growers with whom ALBA works: 1) ALBA program graduates who are farmer-tenants in the small farm incubators we operate, and 2) socially disadvantaged and limited-resource growers in the region described above, most of whom speak Spanish as their first language but are not ALBA tenants. The farmer-tenants have acreages ranging from one to twelve acres, and typically have gross sales incomes of \$10,000-\$20,000 per acre with at least two annual cycles of various crops - often with a mix of wholesale, direct-to-retail, and consumer-direct marketing strategies. Growers who are not farmer-tenants often have similar or lower production values in the region, and include beginning small farmers who started at ALBA. Many have bought less-expensive farm land in more interior regions of the three-county area where crop values are somewhat less than areas with cool coastal influence conducive to high-value strawberry and lettuce production. PROJECT MODIFICATIONS: The project is not experiencing significant deviations or unexpected results. One area of significant development in the reporting period is the finalization of 48 core program outcomes, evaluation tools for measuring each of them, and database configuration and protocols for recording and reporting on those outcomes. In terms of budget, sub-award consulting for California FarmLink will not be expended during the project, as California FarmLink secured other grants for offering services among farmers at ALBA. The funds will be re-allocated to key consulting needs on database development and evaluation planning. Other changes in the consulting budget are relatively minor **IMPACT:** 2010/09/01 TO 2011/08/31
Farmer Education Program application materials were updated and improved to include questions about "coachability"

f applicants, and capture more baseline economic information. 68 farmers demonstrated verified management changes as a result of participating in educational events and receiving technical assistance, covering 28 defined topics. Evaluation methods included: written and verbal surveys at end of educational events; interviews post-event; early business assessment, follow-up on technical assistance interventions; third-party interviews that take place once each five years (including Summer/Fall 2009). 43 incubator tenants held a land lease and 38 created/updated annual business plans. Incubator lease improved to include requirement of 12 hours continuing education per year. Actual hours by farmers are now easily tracked in ALBA's client-relationship-management database operated on salesforce.com. 4 farmers secured additional land leases or purchases. 6 applied for a business loan and 3 secured them. 4 beginning farmers received Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) contracts with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Size of target beginning farmer audience: At project start (baseline) = 30 Year 1 = 60 Year 2 = 62 Of those who participate in an educational event or training program: % who are farming = 85% % change in knowledge = 95% % change in attitudes = 80% % planned change in behavior/approach = 95% % plan to start farming = 20% % plan to continue farming = 87% One-year after those who completed a workshop and training program: 45% changed farming\land management practices; 62 developed farm plan; 35% started farming; 70% not farming; 10% stopped farming; 45% changed marketing practices; 35% changed business practices; 90% who continue to participate in your training programs In order to contribute to the Field of Beginning Farmer Development LBA is working with California Institute of Rural Studies (CIRS)/ Of the 30 participants who have or have had their own farm business: * 80% still operate their own business; * 20% no longer operate their own business; * 17% (20 participants) are not operating and have not operated their own farming business (reported separately) * Years in business average of 3.98 years with a range of 0-15 * 28% 1 year or less * 27% in business for 5 or more years * respondents indicated working a weekly average of 39.6 hours on their farm with a range of 2-80 hours * Mean number of employees is 3.66, range 0 to 10 More recent work includes CIRS' compilation of narrative responses and draft report entitled, "Talking with Graduates: Participant experiences and perspectives..." CIRS continues to advise LBA on its monitoring and evaluation framework based on survey results. The basis for measuring outcomes, ALBA's database, is now measuring 48 core program outcomes, include demographics served, attendance and education hours, technical assistance, farm incomes, jobs, and wealth creation by beginning farmers.

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

no publications reported this period

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

OUTPUTS: Dissemination materials produced (1 Spanish flyer; 1 English brochure and 1 Spanish brochure); conducted via print media, radio, television, presentations to Adult School and groups organized by other agencies, to recruit participants for the Farmer Education Program September - December 2010. 100+ application packets distributed, 53 individuals applied to the program. 42 individuals offered enrollment in the program, 33 enrolled for entire course. The six-month, six-module Farmer Education Program was delivered over more than 150 hours of instruction during January-June 2010. 43 beginning farmers participated in one or more modules of Farmer Education Program. This includes 10 individuals that enrolled in one or more modules, but not the entire course. Modules last one month, are accredited by Hartnell Community College, and include the following topics: Leadership, Goal-Setting and Management Self-Assessment; Agricultural Market Planning; Crop Planning; Soil Fertility Management; Pest Management: Insect, Disease, Weed and Vertebrate Pests; Agricultural Business Planning and Whole Farm Planning. The 43 beginning farmers that participated in one or more modules demonstrated knowledge in one or more of the abovementioned topics, and completed the plan associated with each module completed, such as a crop plan, business plan, pest management plan, nutrient/irrigation management plan, etc. 26 beginning farmers graduated from the six-month, six module Farmer Education Program in July 2010. 17 educational events (workshops/field days), for 56 hours, delivered to 126 farmers, covering topics including: Tractor Safety, Equipment Options, Season Extension, Irrigation Efficiency, Farmer Health, Food Safety in the Field, Business Planning; Farm Business Financing, Credit Worthiness, and Crop Insurance; Computer Basics; Labor Law, Farmers' Market Marketing Field Trip, and Berry Jam and Tomato Sauce Making Workshop. 12 monthly bulletins were produced and distributed to 30-40 incubator tenants. 4 quarterly print bilingual newsletters were produced and distributed to 525 farmers. 13 flyers were created to disseminate/promote educational events (exclusive of Farmer Education Program) Program information/materials disseminated to 11 communities interested in replicating our model: Hoopa Indian Tribe; Soil Born Farms; Allensworth/Center on Race, Poverty and the Environment; BuRRST for Prosperity; Seattle Tilth; University of Washington; Farley Center for Peace Justice and Sustainability; Low Country Local First; HOPE Services; North Carolina Small Farm Center; and, UC Hansen Trust. ALBA website maintained and updated at least monthly, for a total of 12 updates. ALBA maintains 622

ans on Facebook. Media exposure included 30 newspaper articles/pieces; radio interviews/spots; tv interviews/spots; and, internet/blog coverage. Access to land provided to 40 beginning farmers in Small Farm Incubator Program. 18 farmer meetings were held, covering leadership, strategic planning, farm management and production topics. 15 farmers received 55 hours of technical assistance on land and capital access. 334 technical assistance records with 55 farmers were recorded. PARTICIPANTS: Project Staff: Nancy Bustos Porto, Communications and Development Associate Patricia Carrillo, Business Education Program Manager Juan Garcia, Farm Management Assistant Nathan Markleroad, Farm Incubator Program Manager Patty Howe, Administrative Director Brett Melone, Executive Director Dolfo Ortega, Delivery Driver, ALBA Organics Gary Peterson, Deputy Director Andy Rea, Ag Education Program Manager Silverio Ruiz, Warehouse Manager, ALBA Organics Tony Serrano, General Manager of ALBA Organics Noel elasco, Sales Associate, ALBA Organics Deborah Yashar, Food Systems Program Manager Collaborators: California FarmLink California Institute for Rural Studies California State University Monterey Bay Community Alliance with Family Farmers Cultivo Consulting Ecological Farming Association El Pajaro Community Development Corporation Everyone's Harvest Farmers' Markets Feed the Hunger Foundation Food Bank for Monterey County Friedman Associates Hartnell Community College Monterey County Agricultural Commissioner Monterey County Health Department Monterey Institute for International Studies National Center for Appropriate Technology/ATTRA Radio Lingue Roots of Change Salinas Adult School Santa Cruz Community Farmers Market Association UC Cooperative Extension USDA NRCS, FSA, Rural Development Women's Fund for Monterey County Professional Development: Pest Management Business planning Financial management Accounting Food Safety TARGET AUDIENCES: The target audience for this work consists of farm workers and other low-income people seeking to become independent farm business owner-operators, as well as existing farm operators with less than 10 years of experience. More than one-quarter of the working-age population in Monterey County consists of field laborers or low-wage employees in the fresh produce packing industry. At least 12.9% of the people in Monterey County live below the poverty line - and the numbers are far greater in rural communities. Unemployment in the county is consistently more than the state average, currently ranging from 13 % to more than 20% in rural communities. These statistics are fairly similar across the three-county region where ALBA focuses its work: Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Benito counties. We work with the growing Latina/o demographic among farmers in this region - most of whom are relatively small operators in contrast to large-scale, high-value agriculture that dominates the region. The number of Latino farmers in Monterey county remained stable from 2002 to 2007 according to the USDA Census of Agriculture, with a current total of 374 Latino-operated farms in Monterey County. The number of Latino farmers in California overall increased by 18.5% from 2002 to 2007 - by far the fastest growing segment of new farmers. This trend demonstrates the timeliness and importance of our work. As of the 2007 Census of Agriculture, only 8.8% of California farms have operators who are less than 35 years old, while 42.2% of farms are operated by individuals who are 55 years or older. According to data available from NRCS, 56% of farms in Monterey County are considered limited-resource and 32% are beginning farmers or ranchers. In Santa Cruz County the figures are similar - 70% are considered limited-resource, while 31% are operated by beginning farmers or ranchers. San Benito County demonstrates equally significant numbers of limited-resource farmers at 79% and beginning farmers and ranchers at 33% of the total. The growers with whom we work often do not see themselves as "life-long learners," in part due to limited levels of previous education and the peer environment in which they work. There are two primary categories of growers with whom ALBA works: 1) ALBA program graduates who are farmer-tenants in the small farm incubators we operate, and 2) socially disadvantaged and limited-resource growers in the region described above, most of whom speak Spanish as their first language but are not ALBA tenants. The farmer-tenants have acreages ranging from one to twelve acres, and typically have gross sales incomes of \$10,000-\$16,000 per acre with at least two annual cycles of various crops - often with a mix of wholesale, direct-to-retail, and consumer-direct marketing strategies. Growers who are not farmer-tenants often have similar or lower production values in the region, and include beginning small farmers who started at ALBA. Many have bought less-expensive farm land in more interior, hot-climate regions of the three-county area where crop values are somewhat less than areas with cool coastal influence conducive to strawberry and lettuce production. PROJECT MODIFICATIONS: Funds for California FarmLink collaboration were not expended in first year. It is likely that we will request a significant amount of these funds for the entire project period to be reallocated to a different line item. California FarmLink is providing services to farmers that ALBA works with without this funding. We are currently negotiating an agreement with California FarmLink that will likely result in a strict fee for service arrangement based on referrals that ALBA makes for specific farmer needs.

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

Farmer Education Program application materials were updated and improved to include questions about "coachability"

f applicants, and capture more demographic information. 37 farmers demonstrated verified management changes as a result of participating in educational events and receiving technical assistance, covering topics including pest/disease management, crop planning, organic certification, nutrient management, weed control, irrigation, contract compliance equipment use and safety, season extension, soil conservation, water quality compliance, labor, marketing, post-harvest handling, food safety, record keeping, business planning, financial management, and leadership development. Evaluation methods included: written and verbal surveys at end of educational events; interviews post-event; follow-up via technical assistance interventions; third-party interviews. 40 incubator tenants held a land lease and 40 created/updated annual business plan. Incubator lease improved to include requirement of 12 hours continuing education per year. 3 farmers secured a land lease or purchase. 5 applied for a business loan and 4 secured the loan. Size of target beginning farmer audience: At project start (baseline) = 30 Year 1 = 40 Of those who participate in an educational event or training program: % who are farming = 87% % change in knowledge = 95% % change in attitudes = 90% % planned change in behavior/approach = 95% % plan to start farming = 8% % plan to continue farming = 87% One-year after those who completed a workshop and training program: 45% changed farming/land management practices; 100 developed farm plan; 39% started farming; 61% not farming; 0% stopped farming; 45% changed marketing practices; 35% changed business practices; 95% who continue to participate in your training programs. Contribute to the Field of Beginning Farmer Development - Working with California Institute of Rural Studies, preliminary results include: Overview 115 total farmers contacted; 44% response rate; 26% (30 participants) are currently operating or have operated their own farming business since ALBA; Of the 30 participants who have or have had their own farm business: 80% still operate their own business; 20% no longer operate their own business; 7% (20 participants) are not operating and have not operated their own farming business (reported separately) Operating a Farm Years in business average of 3.98 years with a range of 0-15 28% 1 year or less 27% in business for 5 or more years Respondents indicated working an average of 39.6 hours on their farm with a range of 2-80 hours Mean number of employees is 3.66, range 0 to 10 73% of respondents had purchased farm equipment (tractors, plows, bed shapers, etc.) 30% of respondents report getting help from other organization apart from ALBA 63% indicated making changes to their farming operation (including production practices, irrigation strategies/equipment, switching to organic, marketing, etc.) 63% indicated that they had calculated their crop yields 67% report calculating profit and loss and earning a profit from their farming operations

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no publications reported this period