

Title:	Groundswell New Farmer Training Program		
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Submitted By	Judith Green	Date Submitted to NIFA	11/27/2013

Program Code: BFRDP

Program Name: Beginning Farmer and Rancher

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Recipient Organization

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Performing Department

{NO DATA ENTERED}

Co-Project Directors

{NO DATA ENTERED}

Departments

{NO DATA ENTERED}

Non-Technical Summary

The long-term goal of the Groundswell New Farmer Training Project is to increase the number, diversity, profitability, and environmental sustainability of beginning farmers in our region. Recognizing the diversity of beginning farmers in our community, we will establish training and support programs addressing the needs and constraints of three distinct target audiences: --Start-Ups - those recently started in farming on their own, yet needing further training, mentoring, and business planning support in order to succeed; --Farming Interns - those able and willing to spend two years working and learning on established farms; --Market Gardeners - minority and/or immigrant urban gardeners interested in developing commercial farming enterprises to serve local community markets. The Project builds on training programs already established by Groundswell and other collaborating organizations by: --Actively engaging and supporting trainees from local minority communities (African American, Hispanic and immigrant); --Developing a two-year, structured Farm Internship Program in collaboration with the new Finger Lakes CRAFT (Collaborative Regional Alliance for Farmer Training); --Providing Mentor Training and ongoing support to Farmer Mentors to increase their effectiveness in training new farmers, including black, Hispanic, immigrant and other minority trainees; --Conducting 8 on-farm Daytime Workshops and 8 two-hour Twilight Workshops each year to address the different scheduling constraints of our three target groups; --Assisting trainees in developing a comprehensive Business Plan and connections to local markets; --Providing new farmers with affordable access to land, production and marketing infrastructure, and ongoing mentoring through a Farm Business Incubator program.

Accomplishments

Major goals of the project

GOAL: The long-term goal of Groundswell's New Farmer Training Project is to increase the number, diversity, profitability, and environmental sustainability of beginning farmers in our region. Our focus is creating effective and efficient training pathways that will enable new farmers to develop the knowledge, hands-on experience, business plan, and access to land and mentoring necessary to launch a successful business. Recognizing the diversity of beginning farmers in our community, we will establish three primary training pathways, each addressing the needs and constraints of a distinct Target Audience: --An Independent Start-Up pathway for those recently started in farming on their own, yet needing further training, mentoring, and business planning support in order to succeed; --A Farming Internship pathway for those able and willing to spend two years working and learning on established farms, with the possibility of establishing their own farm business at our Farm Business Incubator site. --A Market-Garden pathway for urban gardeners (project will focus on minority and immigrant gardeners) beginning with marketing surplus produce through one or more easy-access local markets, increasing their production-for-sale as they gain skills and confidence, and possibly establishing a larger market garden or other farming enterprise at our Farm Business Incubator site. OBJECTIVES: 1) Actively engage and support trainees from local minority

communities (African American, Hispanic and immigrant); 2) Develop a two-year, structured Farm Internship Program in collaboration with the new Finger Lakes CRAFT (Collaborative Regional Alliance for Farmer Training); 3) Provide Mentor Training and ongoing support to Farmer Mentors to increase their effectiveness in training new farmers, including black, Hispanic, immigrant and other minority trainees; 4) Conduct 8 on-farm Daytime Workshops and 8 two-hour Twilight Workshops each year to address the different scheduling constraints of our three target groups; 5) Assist trainees in developing a comprehensive Business Plan and connections to local markets; 6) Provide new farmers with affordable access to land, production and marketing infrastructure, and ongoing mentoring through a Farm Business Incubator program.

OUTPUTS: --Prospective and beginning farmers served: 68 --Interns completing the First-Year CRAFT Internships Program: 36 --Interns completing the Second-Year CRAFT Internship Program: 18 --Other trainees (20 independent beginning farmers and 12 market gardeners) participating in CRAFT Workshops: 32 --Completed Farm Business Plans: 18 --New farm businesses launched: 10 --Farmer Mentors trained to become culturally competent and effective (12)

What was accomplished under these goals?

I. FIVE NEW FARMER TRAINING PROGRAMS were offered in 2013, serving a total of 82 trainees (2012 programs and participants were reported in Year 2 Report and are not included here)

1. Farm Business Planning Course: Jan-Mar 2013, 10 sessions, 30 hours training, 19 trainees (Face-to-face classroom)
2. Sustainable Farming Certificate Program: May-Oct 2013, 13 trainees in 2013 (Face-to-face mentoring) includes 9 trainees enrolled in the full Certificate Program and 4 enrolled in the component courses, Organic Vegetable Production Basics, Organic Livestock Basics, and Farming Fundamentals:
On-Farm and Classroom Workshops: 30 sessions, 90 training hours
Supervised On-Farm Work: 6 mentor farms, 96 training hours
3. Finger Lakes CRAFT: May-Oct 2013, 28 trainees in 2013, including the 13 Certificate Program trainees (Face-to-face mentoring)
6 Farm Tours: 18 training hours
3 potlucks: 9 peer-mentoring hours
4. Livestock Intensive Workshops: Aug-Oct 2013, 3 sessions, 26 training hours, 15 trainees
5. Homestead Farmers and Gardeners Network: 5 Homestead (non-commercial) Farm Tours, 15 hours training, 33 trainees

II. THE GROUNDSWELL INCUBATOR FARM was launched with 2 Incubator Farmers

1. Applications for the 2013 season were accepted starting Fall 2012, and two Incubator Farmers were accepted into the program. Both farmers are New Americans, one from Bermuda and one from Armenia.
2. Field was prepped by Groundswell staff (Fall 2012: plow, disk, apply compost, plant fall cover crop. Spring 2013: plow, disk, rototill)
3. An 8' deer fence was installed; water supply and irrigation system were installed; storage shed erected; construction of coolbot produce cooler was started.
4. Each farmer was matched with an experienced Mentor Farmer, who met several times with them over the course of the season.
5. Farmers successfully produced their crops of mixed vegetables. Staff were able to provide only limited help connecting farmers with potential markets, consequently farmers were able to find markets for some but not all their product.
6. USDA funds paid for a portion of the Incubator Coordinator's salary, Mentor Farmers' services, and tractor rental for field operations. Other sources of funding paid for all infrastructure & equipment.

III. NUMBERS AND DEMOGRAPHICS OF TRAINEES IN 2013 (2012 participants were reported in Year 2 Report and are not included here)

82 Total trainees included:

- 17 Socially disadvantaged
- 24 Limited Resource, 24 Not Limited Resource, 34 Not Known
- 4 Immigrant
- 17 Farm workers
- 46 Females
- 35 males

At the START of the program (all programs):

- 23 were already farming
- 24 were planning to farm
- 15 were not planning to farm
- 11 were undecided
- 9 not known

At the END of the program (all programs):

- 34 were already farming
- 13 were planning to farm
- 17 were not planning to farm
- 2 were undecided

16 not known

IV. YEAR 3 OUTCOMES/IMPACTS

2012 Sustainable Farming Certificate Program May-Nov 2012:

Four of the original 25 trainees (16%) completed the full 100 hours of training and received a Certificate of Sustainable Farming. 17 (68%) completed at least 25 hours of training. 6 trainees completed less than 10% of the program.

2013 Sustainable Farming Certificate Program May-Oct 2013:

4 out of 9 trainees (44%) planned to start farming and two (22%) were just considering farming.

3 (33%) were already farming, including 2 farm intern-employees and 1 owner-operator of a non-commercial homestead farm. 4 of the 9 completed at least 95% of the program requirements. 3 dropped out of the program – one decided against farming, one moved away, and one could not keep up.

2013 Farm Business Planning Course, January-March 2013:

At the beginning of the course, 12 of 19 trainees (63%) planned to start farming. Of these Planners:

Four (21% of total, 33% of Planners) began farming spring of 2013.

Two (10%) decided against farming and dropped the class after several sessions. We consider these decisions NOT TO FARM to be positive outcomes of our training programs, just as important as decisions to farm.

At the beginning of the course 6 of the 19 trainees (32%) were already farming. Of these farmers:

Two were intern-employees on farms

Four were farm owner-operators

All 6 of these farmer-trainees completed the course, all were still farming at the end of the course, and all continue to farm at this time.

13 trainees (68%) completed the course and of these:

All 13 (68% of total or 100% of those completing the course) developed a farm plan including preliminary production, marketing, and financial plan.

All 13 (68% of total or 100% of those completing the course) demonstrated significantly increased knowledge and skills through submission of homework, class discussions, and final presentation of their farm plans.

The "Groundswell Community" of aspiring, beginning and experienced farmers continues to grow. It serves as a robust and diverse social support network that is enhancing knowledge transfer, collaboration and problem solving among area farmers and provides a beacon for diverse beginning farmers across the region.

What opportunities for training and professional development has the project provided?

Five distinct New Farmer Training Programs were offered in 2013, serving 82 trainees:

1. Farm Business Planning Course: 19 trainees
2. Sustainable Farming Certificate Program: 13 trainees
3. Finger Lakes CRAFT: 28 trainees
4. Livestock Intensive Workshops: 15 trainees
5. Homestead Farmers and Gardeners Network: 33 trainees

See Above for details.

One day-long Mentor Training Workshop was provided for 20 farmers and other educators.

We contracted with an outstanding local outdoor education organization, Primitive Pursuits. Three of their staff organized and facilitated this full-day training session on February 10, 2013.

We co-organized and hosted a two-day FarmHack event in October 2012 for 60 early-stage beginning farmers from across the Northeast region.

Groundswell's cultural competency work was featured at a conference of 80+ beginning farmer service providers at the Northeast Beginning Farmer Learning Network meeting 10/28-30/2013

How have the results been disseminated to communities of interest?

We distributed 12 monthly E-Newsletters to a growing list of 1200-1600 contacts. Newsletters include program updates and trainee profiles.

We used 4 e-platforms for ongoing communication with trainees and public

1. Groundswell Website: www.groundswellcenter.org
2. Groundswell Blog: <http://groundswell-ithaca.blogspot.com>
3. Groundswell Facebook page: www.facebook.com/groundswellcenter.org
4. Groundswell Twitter account: <https://twitter.com/GroundswellCtr>

We produced and distributed 4400 palm-cards, posters and brochures

1. Groundswell general purpose tri-fold brochure (600)
2. Brochure in plain language geared for New American beginning farmers (2000)
3. Sustainable Farming Certificate Program cards (500)
4. Farm Business Planning Course Cards (200)

5. Incubator Farm posters and cards (300)
6. Finger Lakes CRAFT postcards (400)
7. Homestead Farmers & Gardeners Network postcards (400)

We hosted a "Local Food & Farming Festival" in October 2012 featuring farming-related educational demonstrations and activities and featuring several of our trainees and their new enterprises.

We created a new table-top display and participated in 8 local community events to share information about our programs and trainees.

What do you plan to do during the next reporting period to accomplish the goals?

{Nothing to report}

Participants

Actual FTEs for this Reporting Period

Role	Faculty and Non-Students	Students within Staffing Roles			Computed Total by Role
		Undergraduate	Graduate	Post-Doctorate	
Scientist	0	0	0	0	0
Professional	0.5	0	0	0	0.5
Technical	0.6	0	0	0	0.6
Administrative	0.3	0	0	0	0.3
Other	0	0	0	0	0
Computed Total	1.4	0	0	0	1.4

Target Audience

Target Audience

Groundswell has a strong commitment to supporting beginning farmers from historically disadvantaged populations, including people of color, immigrants, and those with very limited economic resources, who have often been excluded from the sustainable farming and local foods movements. Our goal is to foster a new generation of farmers that reflects the diversity of culture, color, and class in our region. In our third year of this project we again surpassed our training targets, both in terms of total numbers of trainees and the number of socially disadvantaged trainees and other priority groups.

Our 3-Year Trainee Targets were:

68 total Prospective and Beginning Farmers served including:

12 Socially Disadvantaged Trainees

36 Farm Worker trainees

20 Early Stage Farmer Trainees.

In 3 years we were able to provide training to 334 Prospective and Beginning Farmers including:

36 Socially Disadvantaged Trainees

64 Farm Worker Trainees

68 Early-Stage Farmer Trainees

Participation of Socially Disadvantaged Trainees

At project start: 0 Socially disadvantaged

Year 1: 12 Socially disadvantaged

Year 2: 17 Socially disadvantaged

Year 3: 7 Socially disadvantaged

Year 3 total: 36 Socially disadvantaged

Products

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Other	Published	2012	YES

Citation

Groundswell News, Sept 2012 -Dec 2012. Monthly electronic newsletter. Provides information and updates on the New Farmer Training Project, including the Sustainable Farming Certificate Program, Farm Business Planning Course, Finger Lakes CRAFT, Groundswell Farm Enterprise Incubator, Homestead Farmers & Gardeners Network and other Groundswell Center and community initiatives. Via e-mail and at: www.groundswellcenter.org, click on News.

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Other	Published	2013	YES

Citation

Groundswell News, Jan 2013 –Aug 2013. Monthly electronic newsletter. See above.

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Other	Published	2013	YES

Citation

Green, J. (2013) The New American Farmer: Groundswell Center supports immigrants who want to farm in central New York. Small Farm Quarterly magazine, 1/14/2013.

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Other	Published	2012	YES

Citation

3 press releases were issued in 2012 during this reporting period (e.g. Sept-Dec 2012):

1. "Building a Groundswell: Local Food & Farm Festival offers family fun and education, and gives a boost to landless beginning farmers," 10/12/2012
2. "Groundswell Center, CCE-Tompkins, and Alternatives FCU team up to offer winter Farm Business Planning Course for beginning farmers," 11/19/12
3. "The New American Farmer: Groundswell Center supports immigrants who want to farm in central New York," 11/26/12

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Other	Published	2013	YES

Citation

5 press releases were issued in 2013 during this reporting period (e.g. Jan-Aug 2013):

1. "Groundswell Announces 2013 Sustainable Farming Programs," 3/19/2013
2. "Groundswell Center Offers Scholarships for Sustainable Farming Trainees," 4/18/13
3. "Reskilling Upstate New York: Groundswell Center offers organic farming classes for aspiring farmers and homesteaders," 5/22/2013
4. "Federal and State Officials will be visiting Groundswell Incubator Farm facility in Ithaca on June 26 and 27: ARC Federal Co-Chair Earl Gohl and NY Secretary of State Cesar Perales will visit site on Thursday and Friday," 6/26/2013
5. "Breaking News: NY Secretary of State Cesar Perales will visit Groundswell's Incubator Farm at EcoVillage in Ithaca on August 14," 8/12/2013

We are not able to track all publications resulting from our press releases. But we do know that Associated press picked up on our Aug 14 release and dozens of articles appeared in print and online media nationally, including the Wall Street Journal. "Immigrants aided on upstate NY 'incubator' farm," Associated Press, 8/14/2013

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Websites	Published	2012	YES

Citation

3 web/mobile platforms for ongoing communication with trainees and public
i. Groundswell Website www.groundswellcenter.org
ii. Groundswell Blog <http://groundswell-ithaca.blogspot.com>
iii. Groundswell Facebook page www.facebook.com/groundswellcenter

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Websites	Published	2013	YES

Citation

4 web/mobile platforms for ongoing communication with trainees and public, continued in 2013
i. Groundswell Website www.groundswellcenter.org
ii. Groundswell Blog <http://groundswell-ithaca.blogspot.com>
iii. Groundswell Facebook page www.facebook.com/groundswellcenter
iv. Groundswell Twitter account: <https://twitter.com/GroundswellCtr>

Other Products**Product Type**

Audio or Video

Description

Six video profiles of Groundswell trainees are currently in production.

Changes/Problems

{Nothing to report}