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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

In the poorest neighborhoods in New York City (the South Bronx, East and Central Harlem, and North and Central Brooklyn) more than 1 in 3 residents live in poverty. Residents of these neighborhoods, primarily represented by African-American, Latino, and Caribbean populations, are disproportionately affected by diet-related illnesses like diabetes, heart disease, and obesity. In 2004, 12.5 percent of the city's adult population reported having diabetes. Adults with the lowest household incomes are more than twice as likely to have diabetes as adults with the highest household incomes. Urban agriculture has been gaining momentum as a solution that will feed, heal, employ, educate and empower communities. At the grassroots level, participation in backyard and community gardening is skyrocketing . People want to grow more healthy food for their families and their communities. The prevalence of urban farming as an entrepreneurial activity is also growing exponentially, as people engage in opportunities to earn an income growing high-quality food on their own. People creatively use space by farming in community gardens, indoors, on rooftops, in small greenhouses, and on under-utilized public, private and government land. Given the current confluence of crises in the food, health, and financial sectors, and the rapidly growing interest in local food systems and urban agriculture, the work of NYC community gardeners and city farmers has been celebrated as cutting edge and there has been an increase in demand for training urban agriculture education programs in NYC. While there is building excitement around urban agriculture, there is a growing recognition that New York does not have enough educational infrastructure to support the growth and expansion of this work. The NYC School of Urban Agriculture will serve to meet this need by providing an agricultural training resource for New York City and the Northeast. New York City School of Urban Agriculture (NYCSUA) will serve as an agricultural training resource for New York City and the Northeast. The program will be available to all urban farmers and aspiring urban agricultural professionals, and will place a particular emphasis on meeting the needs of socially disadvantaged students. The School will target students from low-income households and expand urban agriculture-related economic opportunities for low-income New Yorkers through the creation of innovative marketing activities that mutually benefit agricultural producers and NYC consumers. As a result, this project will focus its primary outreach and program activities in low-income communities in New York City, with particular emphasis paid to engaging high-need neighborhoods in the Bronx, Harlem, and Brooklyn. In the first three years of this project, 3,000-3,500 students will gain increased skills and knowledge of sustainable urban agriculture, food production, preparation, distribution, and/or marketing; 1,600-2,400 students will apply this knowledge, 475-600 students will have enhanced urban-agriculture skills for urban agriculture-related employment, and 60-20 will secure an income stream related to this training.

Accomplishments

Major goals of the project

The School will be an educational resource for all of New York City, as well as for students from municipalities across the Northeast. While the broader goal is to reach all New York City gardeners, urban farmers, and other individuals who want to learn about growing food, the aim is to ensure that low-income students will have access and that the student body itself will represent the full diversity of New York City. Objective 1 By amplifying the capacity of established and emerging urban agriculture leadership through diverse course offerings in urban agriculture production, preparation, distribution, marketing and advocacy skills, The School will increase the self-reliance of New York City's communities to improve food security and increase food sovereignty in low-income communities. In the first three years, as a result of The School: 3,000-3,600 students will have increased knowledge of sustainable urban agriculture food production, preparation, distribution, advocacy, and/or marketing skills 1,600-2,400 students will apply knowledge of sustainable urban agriculture by growing, preparing, distributing, and/or marketing of local food 225-300 students will engage in community-based sustainable urban agriculture projects 75-150 students will have increased leadership skills Objective 2 The School will provide beginning urban farmers with the knowledge and skills to produce food sustainably and develop and manage innovative marketing activities. 3,000-3,600 students will have increased skills and knowledge (of sustainable urban agriculture, food production, preparation, distribution, and/or marketing) 1,600-2,400 students will apply urban agriculture knowledge (by growing, preparing, distributing, and/or marketing food) 75-150 students will gain increased leadership skills 475-600 students will gain enhanced job skills for urban agriculture-related employment 60-120 students will secure income streams related to farm school skills and training Long Range Outcomes of Project on the Sustainability of Beginning U.S. Farmers The School will play a vital role in the sustainability of beginning farmers, particularly those focusing on urban agriculture. Graduates from The School will engage in urban agriculture projects in New York City, leading to a proliferation of farming and related marketing and entrepreneurial projects in the City. These projects will serve as resources and models for other groups nationally and internationally.

What was accomplished under these goals?

Faculty
33 temporary job opportunities were provided for Farm School NYC teachers. In the first year of Farm School NYC, 21 faculty were hired to teach classes. Each year, we hire new faculty, and we now have 30 faculty members teaching Farm School NYC courses.

Curriculum was improved and completed for the first and second year of the Certificate program. The apprenticeship program was designed and then implemented in 2012. In 2013, the apprenticeship was improved upon for its second year. Plans were developed for additional courses in 2014.

An accomplishment particularly worth noting is that among our new faculty, we hired three Farm School NYC alumni to teach three different courses. They brought both previous expertise and their unique experience as Farm School NYC students, and evaluation feedback from students was overwhelmingly positive.

In evaluations, students rated their teachers on a scale of 1 to 5 with regards to how knowledgeable the teachers are about their subject. 93% of teachers were rated as "knowledgeable" or "very knowledgeable" by each of their students.

Years Measured after Initial Training: 0

Number of Participants Affected by Change: 30

Participant Total for your grant: 30

Change in knowledge & Change in skills and attitude & Change in business practices

Student skills

We have two different types of classes: individual courses (4 to 10 sessions long) that are part of the larger Certificate program, and one-time workshops. Over the three year grant reporting period, individual courses offered increased from 15 to 21 per year, totalling 57 courses that were attended by a total of 301 people. One-time workshops over the same period totaled 192 and were attended by a total of 3251 people.

From course evaluations, we gathered data about change in knowledge over the three year grant reporting period. Students reported a greater than 40% change in the following areas:

57% of students in knowledge of botany.

81% of students in knowledge of characterizing traits of common crop families.

75% of students in understanding of botanical terminology.

82% of students in understanding scientific classifications of plants.

89% of students in knowledge of soils.

All students in ability to recognize different tillage approaches.

All students in ability to conduct soil tests and interpret results.

All students in understanding what soil is made up of and basic physical properties.

73% of students in knowing components of seed starting mixes.

87% of students in knowledge of propagation.

91% of students in understanding wounding and stages of vegetative propagation.
91% of students in understanding different methods of vegetative propagation.
68% of students in knowledge of season extension techniques.
86% of students in understanding methods and materials to use for season extension in this region.
84% of students in asset-based community mapping.
All students in ability to create their own asset map in their community.
47% of students in improved leadership skills.
46% of students in understanding of the functioning ecosystem.
46% of students in increased value and appreciation of biodiversity.
54% of students in understanding human vs. natural disturbances and their impacts on ecosystems.
75% of students in confidence to use crop-planning techniques suited to specific real-life projects.
44% of students in knowledge of growing flowers and caring for apple trees.
57% of students in food justice competency.
69% of students in ability to advocate for urban farming.
89% of students in knowledge of irrigation.
90% of students in knowledge of when and why to water.
89% of students in confidence in designing an irrigation system.
62% of students in knowledge of crops management.
75% of students in knowledge of intercropping and companion planting.
59% of students in ability to safely and effectively harvest and store crops.
54% of students in knowledge of pest/disease management.
65% of students in ability to assess a site for potential to grow crops.
75% of students in ability to use management strategies to minimize vegetable diseases.

Years Measured after Initial Training: 0
Number of Participants Affected by Change: 301
Participant Total for your grant: 301

Change in skills

While all participating students reported an increase in skills, 2 out of 7 graduating students now have farm-related business plans, 1 out of 7 is starting a new urban farm project, and one student is launching a chicken-keeping operation.

Alumni

Four of our alumni now receive income from teaching farming-related subjects; two of our alumni and three other students have started farming rurally; one of our alumni plans to start farming; one of our alumni was hired as the program assistant for Farm School NYC.

We currently have one set of alumni (8 alumni), with another group of students on their way to graduating. Our first group of alumni organized 2 professional development opportunities for themselves, other students, and the larger community. Three of our eight alumni were hired to teach Farm School NYC classes and received very positive feedback from students. Three of our alumni were hired to teach other farm-related courses and workshops. One of our alumni moved to Ithaca, bought land, started his own farm, and has gotten involved with BFRDP grantee Groundswell Center. One of our alumni moved to Toronto to begin a farm/Bed and Breakfast with her husband, and one of our alumni spent several months farming in Hawaii this year. Two of our soon-to-be alumni are also planning their own farming-related businesses.

We would be remiss if we did not also include that two of our alumni, who met through the program, are now engaged to be married.

Years Measured after Initial Training: 1
Number of Participants Affected by Change: 8
Participant Total for your grant: 8

Evaluation

Six student evaluation meetings were held; 67 course evaluations were distributed to students; 1 comprehensive teacher evaluation was conducted by the students; teachers filled out evaluations of their experience. In addition, we organized a stakeholder retreat, consisting of teachers, students, alumni, board and committee members, and host sites, in which

marketing was identified as a priority for the school. In total, we had over 50 partners present, and we spent about 19 hours together.

Changed business practices

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

Professional development opportunities were offered for teachers and committee members in all Farm School NYC subject areas, free of charge.

Farm School NYC has now offered three full years of courses. This included core courses (three years running) and advanced courses (two years running). We have now had two sets of students complete apprenticeships. In addition to the skills listed in the section above, the following opportunities for training and professional development have been provided.

Apprenticeships

Farm School NYC students are invited to participate in the apprenticeship program after they have met their basic requirements of course work. We work with a network of different urban farming sites around the city who are interested in hosting our students, and those sites fill out an application form with necessary information. We create a list of sites that includes location, hourly requirements, expectations of student, experience of the supervisor, and more, so that students can make an informed decision with their apprenticeship selection. Farm School NYC's role is to cultivate those relationships, to make sure that the apprenticeship sites are supported and that students have a positive educational experience.

This year, one of the apprenticeship host sites enjoyed the experience so much that the site supervisor decided to make a personal financial donation to Farm School NYC. We held a year-end evaluation meeting and learned that sites and students found the experience to be valuable. We also received important feedback for how to improve the program in the future.

Specifically, students who spent more than one year at a site tended to have a richer experience.

Some student apprenticeship accomplishments include: managing and improving an aquaponics system; working with chickens at a compost facility; being in charge of site irrigation and weeding; managing the site beekeeping operation; building and maintaining a compost system; maintaining a rooftop farm; working at the urban farm of a correctional facility; expanding a school garden and chicken project; starting, organizing, and creating curriculum for a church farm project.

Years Measured after Initial Training: 0

Number of Participants Affected by Change: 19

Participant Total for your grant: 19 students, 14 sites

Changed marketing practices

Alumni Network: Support professional aspirations of alumni network.

Type: Online learning

An intranet site was set up for Farm School NYC students and alumni to find out about job opportunities.

1 educational event

Type: Field days/Farm visits/Trips and classroom-based course/workshop

Alumni organized one farm day and one workshop for continuing professional development opportunities for students and alumni.

2 educational events

30 participants

2 organizations

Type: Other

We began research into the viability of starting a Farm School NYC consulting operation to be an income source for alumni, teachers, and Farm School NYC itself. We started a 6 month research project to look into competitors, demand, and other logistics. If it is carried out and successful, this project will provide employment connections to our alumni.

1 educational events

1 organizations

Changed business practices

How have the results been disseminated to communities of interest?

From the beginning, outreach has been an important priority for Farm School NYC, particularly with regards to recruiting a diverse applicant pool. We have hired two grassroots outreach interns working specifically to design our outreach efforts. With our recent partner strategic planning retreat, we identified a need to improve our marketing strategies so that we have an application pool that increasingly matches the population of New York City. We recruited several students to help with outreach efforts, printed brochures and flyers for posting and distributing, and we requested support from our partners.

Building an effective outreach strategy that is grassroots and reaches new groups of people continues to be a priority in the upcoming year.

In this past year, we tragically lost one of our students, Michael Raven, to suicide. His death deeply affected our community, and his family reached out to connect with Farm School NYC. Because of how committed Michael was to our program and to urban farming, his family asked that in lieu of flowers, friends and family donate money to Farm School NYC. Our program director also spoke at Michael's funeral service. As a result of all of this, several new students reached out to take classes and

become a part of the Farm School NYC community, in honor of continuing Michael's work.

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	0.3	0	0	0	0.3
Technical	0	0	0	0	0
Administrative	1.5	0	0	0	1.5
Other	0	0	0	0	0
Computed Total	1.8	0	0	0	1.8

Target Audience

Socially Disadvantaged & Limited Resource - Students

Our goal is that the student body reflects the diversity of New York City, which means that we pay close attention to racial demographics, particularly noting the percentage of African American, Latin American, Asian American, and Native American applicants. We do not particularly target women, but about 70% of our applicants are female. We have three different types of students - Certificate students enrolled in a 2-5 year program; individual course students enrolled in a 4 to 10 session course; workshop students attending a one-time class. Of the Certificate students, 69% are female, 50% are limited resource, and 63% qualify as socially disadvantaged. Over the three year grant reporting period, the percentage of Certificate students who were socially disadvantaged increased from 60% to 67%. Of the Individual course students, 69% are female, 40% are limited resource, and 52% are socially disadvantaged. Over the course of the three year grant reporting period, the percentage of Individual students who were socially disadvantaged increased from 46% to 63%. Of the students enrolled in leadership training, 89% are female and 69% are socially disadvantaged. We do not have demographic details of students at one-time classes.

Number: 48

This number represents our Certificate students that qualify as socially disadvantaged.

Socially Disadvantaged & Limited Resource - Applicants

In the most recent pool of 100 applicants, 60% identify with a group that qualifies as socially disadvantaged. Of the 100 applicants, 53% qualify as limited resource. Farm School NYC offers sliding scale tuition options, based on household size and family income. Our goals also include selecting a class that is diverse with regards to age, gender, geography (borough), and background.

Socially Disadvantaged - Faculty

Our goal is to recruit a teaching team that reflects the diversity of New York City's population, which includes ensuring that socially disadvantaged individuals with a variety of ethnicities and races are part of our staff. Among our teachers, 14 out of 30 qualify as socially disadvantaged, and 19 are women.

Number: 14

Baseline Number:

14

Products

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Websites	Published	2012	NO

Citation

MAKING UNPROCESSED ACCESSIBLE & LOCALLY GROWN THROUGH URBAN FARMING
10/22/2012 in Eating Rules
http://www.justfood.org/sites/default/files/121022_eating_RULES.pdf

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Websites	Published	2013	NO

Citation

Farm School NYC Seeds Local Urban Food System
01/29/2013 in Urban Gardens
http://www.justfood.org/sites/default/files/130129_Urban_Gardens.pdf

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Journal Articles	Published	2013	YES

Citation

Farm School NYC: A Different Kind of Urban Growth
04/22/2013 in Crain's New York Business
http://www.justfood.org/sites/default/files/130422_crains_new_york.pdf

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Other	Other	2012	NO

Citation

Glassberg, Lauren (2012). Growing Farmers in New York City. WABC evening news.
http://justfood.org/sites/default/files/120809_ABC_News_0.pdf

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Journal Articles	Published	2012	YES

Citation

Morrison, Cheryl (2012). I Am, Because We Are. Urban Farm: Sustainable City Living. Magazine.
justfood.org/sites/default/files/Karen_Urban_Farm_May-June_2012.pdf

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Websites	Published	2012	YES

Citation

Ryerson, Nancy (2012). Farm School NYC's Urban Agriculture Students Dig into their Second Year. City Spoonful. Online magazine. http://justfood.org/sites/default/files/120313_City_Spoonful.pdf

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Journal Articles	Published	2011	NO

Citation

Meet Just Food's Jane Hodge, Director of NYC's First Farm School
09/07/2011 in Edible Manhattan.
http://justfood.org/sites/default/files/110907_Edible_Manhattan_0.pdf

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Websites	Published	2011	YES

Citation

Yowell, Ed. (2011). Real Farm Bill Stories: Farm School NYC. Food Systems NYC. Monthly newsletter.
http://justfood.org/sites/default/files/110903_Foodsystems_1.pdf

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Websites	Published	2011	YES

Citation

Cacciola, J. (2011). Until Monday Only, Sign up for Farm School in the City. Edible Manhattan. Published every two months, with online blog. <http://www.ediblemanhattan.com/topics/farms-foodshed/until-monday-only-sign-up-for-farm-school-in-the-city/>

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Websites	Published	2010	NO

Citation

Newman, Jessica. "Farm School NYC: The New York City School of Urban Agriculture" (2010). Campus Progress.
<http://genprogress.org/voices/2010/11/13/16012/farm-school-nyc-the-new-york-city-school-of-urban-agriculture/>

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Websites	Published	2010	YES

Citation

Matthews, Karen. "Farm School Hits NYC" (2010). Huffington Post. The Internet Newspaper: News Blogs Video Community. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/11/07/farm-school-hits-nyc_n_780095.html

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Other	Published	2011	NO

Citation

Go! Magazine (2011). The Very Best of New York, Best Green Thumbs. Magazine.

Other Products**Product Type**

Other

Description

Newsletter(s)

In addition to targeted faculty recruitment, we sent out 19 newsletters that went to our contact list of 3010 people.

Promotional Materials Amount: 5

Promotional Materials Audience Size: 3,010

Newsletter(s)

We sent out 14 newsletters promoting upcoming classes to our contact list of 3,010 people.

Promotional Materials Amount: 14

Promotional Materials Audience Size: 3,010

In addition, promotional mailings were sent to 129 food pantry locations and farmer market partners.

Promotional Materials Amount: 1,580

Promotional Materials Audience Size: 1,580

Product Type

Other

Description

Other Products - Training Materials

Data or Databases

We created an online list of apprenticeship sites so students can access it from anywhere and make decisions about their apprenticeship sites. The list includes information about the site, supervisor, and apprenticeship expectations. We keep the website updated so students can have access to the most up-to-date information available.

Curricula

While individual lesson plans belong to the teachers, Farm School NYC created, improved and refined our comprehensive course outline curriculum. We will continue developing the curriculum.

Amount: 1

Physical collections or resources

Farm School NYC set up a google drive folder sharing system so students can access their reading materials from home.

All training materials are shared by teachers in the folders.

Amount: 1

Product Type

Other

Description

Other Products - Events

Promotion/Outreach

Farm School NYC spoke at 25 events and tabled at 12 events.

Promotional Events Amount: 37

Promotional Events Audience Size: 6,300

In addition, site visits to 25 rural farms were conducted.

Apprenticeship/Internship

19 students participated in apprenticeships at 14 sites. Students were required to work a minimum of 140 hours, and many students worked over that amount. The apprenticeships stretched throughout the growing season.

Amount: 19

Participants: 19

Organizations: 14

Field days/Farm visits/Trips

The overall course offerings breakdown per year includes: 14 core courses (50% field days/50% classroom time) 7 advanced courses (70% classroom time, 30% field days) 70 workshops (90% field days)

Online learning

We also created an intranet where students can find out about job listings and upcoming events. We hope that in the future this website will also be a place where students can find out more about their student status, upcoming courses, etc.

Amount: 1

Program evaluation

Six student evaluation meetings were held; 67 course evaluations were distributed to students; 1 comprehensive teacher evaluation was conducted by the students; teachers filled out evaluations of their

experience.
Amount: 25
Participants: 50
Organizations: 14

Product Type

Other

Description

Other Products - Partnerships

Partners throughout the three years of this grant include:

Bissell Gardens
Bk Farmyards
Black Urban Farmers and Gardeners (BUGS)
Brooklyn Botanic Garden/GreenBridge
Brooklyn Grange
Citizens Committee for NYC
Cornell Cooperative Extension
The Durst Organization
Earth Matter
East New York Farms!
Ecostation:NY
Genesis Park Community Garden
Hattie Carthan Community Garden
Heifer International
Hughes Hubbard
The Jim and Patty Rouse Charitable Foundation
La Familia Verde Community Garden Coalition
La Finca del Sur
Manhattan Borough President's Office, Scott Stringer
McEnroe Organic Farm
The New Farmer Development Project
The New York City Community Garden Coalition
The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets
New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, GreenThumb
Taqwa Community Farm
The New York Botanical Garden, Bronx GreenUp
The New York Restoration Project
Weeksville Heritage Center
WHY Hunger

Partnerships are the foundation of the program. We depend on partnerships for host sites, teachers, recruitment support, and for volunteer board and committee support. Farm School NYC was founded through a collective vision of partners and continues to be run largely through these and new partnerships.

Farm School NYC is managed by an executive board and four committees that are made up of a diverse group of individuals and organizations involved with the local food and farming movement. The group has included urban farmers, community gardeners, government agencies, botanical gardens, nonprofit staff, other community leaders, and now students and alumni.

Recruitment and hiring is led by Farm School NYC's faculty committee, made up of volunteers and partner organizations. In addition, courses are taught by teachers from partner organizations. Farm School NYC's model depends on these partnerships, since our goal is that students learn from and experience urban farming sites around the city.

Number of Organizational Partners: 29

Number of Participants from all Partner Organizations: 35

Classes are held at partner sites throughout the city.

Number of Organizational Partners: 20

Number of Participants from all Partner Organizations: 20

Teachers of courses are responsible for distributing and collecting evaluation forms.

Number of Organizational Partners: 9

Number of Participants from all Partner Organizations: 28

Apprenticeship sites:

Number of Organizational Partners: 14

Number of Participants from all Partner Organizations: 14

Changes/Problems

{Nothing to report}