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Submitted By	Muktar Idhow	Date Submitted to NIFA	09/27/2013

Program Code: BFRDP

Program Name: Beginning Farmer and Rancher

Project Director

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Recipient Organization

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Performing Department

{NO DATA ENTERED}

Co-Project Directors

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Departments

{NO DATA ENTERED}

Non-Technical Summary

Change in Knowledge Outcome: 12-15 NASAP participants increase their knowledge of agricultural production and marketing strategies via orientation workshops annually. We will disseminate post-workshop surveys to evaluate new skills learned, and store completed evaluations in individual farmer files for reference. Outcome: 12-15 NASAP participants learn how to set financial goals and keep records of expenses and earnings annually. We will provide financial literacy trainings and have participants evaluate new skills learned via survey. Outcome: 8-12 Beginning Market Gardeners increase knowledge about quality control standards and post-harvest handling guidelines. For those enrolled in the beginning market gardener program, staff will provide technical assistance to farmers at harvest times through point of sale, and keep record of assistance provided for farmers' case files. Staff will also take pictures of participants' produce quality (both good and bad) for training purposes. Outcome: 4-6 Advanced Market Gardeners increase knowledge of advanced farming concepts, ie. Crop rotations, succession plantings, fertility management, and cover cropping. We will disseminate post-workshop surveys to evaluate new skills learned, and store completed evaluations in individual farmer files for reference. Change in Action Outcome: 12-15 NASAP participants implement production techniques learned in orientation workshops, each year, at the incubator farm site in Dunbarton, NH. We will provide technical assistance on the farm and document this applied knowledge through photography story boards of changes in production techniques over time. Outcome: 12-15 market gardeners sell produce via Farmers' Markets, CSA and wholesale outlets through the Fresh Start Farms collective. Staff will work with farmers to create market plans, provide technical assistance at markets, assist farmers with sales records, and keep documentation in farmer case files. Change in Condition Outcome: 12-15 NASAP participants experience an increase in the quality of life through farming annually. Since immigrant cultures are primarily oral, face-to-face feedback is often the most effective evaluation strategy project staff will conduct periodic in person evaluations with each farmer, focusing on client satisfaction and the long-term effectiveness of assistance received. Outcome: 12-15 NASAP participants increase the amount of fresh vegetables consumed by their families. This information will also be documented via farmer testimonials. Outcome: 8-12 Market Gardeners increase the financial stability of their families. We will help participants track income and expenses and will document annual revenue in farmers' case files Outcome: Five refugees become beginning farmers as evidenced in \$1,000 sales. We will help participants track income and expenses, will document annual revenue in farmers' case files and will report annually on number of farmers who have achieved at least \$1,000 in sales.

Accomplishments

Major goals of the project

The Somali Bantu Community Association of New Hampshire (SBCA-NH) is committed to aiding in the resettlement of Somali Bantu, Bhutanese and other refugee groups in New Hampshire by providing assistance, training, resources and opportunities

that promote self-sufficiency. SBCA-NH's primary goal for this BFRDP project is consistent with the organization's mission: assist new Americans to build sustainable farm enterprises that are consistent with their culture and lifestyle aspirations and that strengthen regional, sustainable food systems as a whole, through the implementation of the New American Sustainable Agriculture Project (NASAP), a community-based agricultural initiative. The long-term goal of the project is to encourage and support limited resource and socially disadvantaged farmers to successfully acquire, own and operate farm- and food-based businesses in New Hampshire. SBCA-NH has identified four objectives that will help it achieve this goal: 1) Continue existing outreach and orientation training for refugees and immigrants in Manchester. 2) Establish and run an incubator farm that will provide land-based training and opportunities for new Americans to grow food. 3) Establish marketing training programs and marketing collective for new Americans who are growing food as a source of income. 4) Share resources and best practices with other refugee training programs throughout New England and the country. NASAP's approach is different, in that we provide information and build skills that will give refugees and immigrants the tools necessary to successfully produce for American markets, earn money and progress toward self-sufficiency. NASAP connects participants with mentor farmers and USDA agencies, such as UNH Cooperative Extension, providing a chance for new Americans to establish professional relationships and draw on the wealth of local agricultural expertise. This approach ensures long-term benefits to its participants beyond the life of any program funding and integrates participants into the local agricultural community.

What was accomplished under these goals?

Change in Knowledge-Outcome: 43 NASAP participants increased their knowledge of agricultural production and marketing strategies via orientation workshops. Outcome: 15 NASAP participants learned how to set financial goals and keep record of expenses and earnings. Outcome: 25 Beginning Market Gardeners increased knowledge about quality control standards and post-harvest handling guidelines. Outcome: 25 farmers are introduced to the staff, agencies, and services housed at the local USDA service center. Outcome: 25 farmers learn about season extension via demonstration at the organization's high tunnel. Change in Action-Outcome: 40 NASAP participants implemented production techniques, learned in orientation workshops, at the incubator farm sites. Outcome: 40 farmers utilized a BCS machine with rear-tine attachment for the first time to make raised beds. Outcome: 12 farmers enroll in the Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) through the Farm Service Agency. Outcome: 12 farmers keep records required for the NAP. Outcome: 25 market gardeners sell produce via Farmers' Markets, CSA and wholesale outlets through the Fresh Start Farms collective. 12 farmers participate as vendors in the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program. Outcome: Six farmers access mainstream farmers' markets independently. Change in Condition-Outcome: NASAP leveraged support from the USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service to develop infrastructure at the Dunbarton Farm Site, including a High Tunnel for season extension, artesian well for irrigation, and an electric fence to protect crop loss from wildlife. Outcome: Refugee farmers in NH have increased access to agricultural service providers, whom have a better understanding of these farmers needs. Outcome: Five refugees became beginning farmers as evidenced in \$1,000 sales.

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

Continued existing outreach and orientation training for refugees and immigrants. Conducted 57 interviews with new and existing participants to identify their individual farm goals, background, skill levels and specific training needs. Coordinated 5 financial literacy skills workshops and agricultural ESL classes for 15 farmers. Established and ran two incubator farms that provided land-based training and opportunities for new Americans to grow food. Revised and extended lease of 7 acre incubator farm in Dunbarton, NH. Established a lease agreement for a 4 acre incubator farm in Bedford, NH. Developed crop rotation, soil conservation, and other management plans for Dunbarton, and Bedford, including 10 acres of production by beginning farmers. Enrolled 40 participants in incubator farm program. Managed farm activities, including coordination of spring tilling and fall cover cropping. Coordinated land use for farmers, market gardeners and other growers. Established market based training programs and a marketing collective for new Americans who are growing food as a source of income. Delivered 4 marketing specific orientation workshops that built skills in production planning, post harvest handling, record keeping. Established incubator markets, including CSA and farmers markets. Facilitated collective sales through "Fresh Start Farms" brand name. Provided technical assistance for 25 beginning famers at incubator markets. Shared resources and best practices with other refugee training programs throughout New England and the country. Hired evaluation consultant to assist with program planning and evaluation. Coordinated with NIFI, Refugee Agriculture Partnership Program, other national programs to share resources. Coordinated with NOFA, Cooperative Extension and other service providers to register for regional and national conferences and workshops. Developed and updated 2 websites and a Fresh Start Farms Facebook page.

Delivered 10 orientation workshops focused on building agricultural knowledge to 43 beginning farmers and market gardeners. Facilitated attendance and interpretation for 19 beginning refugee farmers at the Northeast Organic Farmers Association of NH, Winter Conference. Services: Referred 57 participants to appropriate programs/options; (community gardens, incubator farm, or exit NASAP to pursue non-agricultural opportunities).

How have the results been disseminated to communities of interest?

Provided interpretation and other culturally appropriate assistance at meetings, workshops and trainings in order to facilitate the farmers' participation and learning. Coordinated with NIFI, Refugee Agriculture Partnership Program, other national programs to share resources.

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	0	0	0	0
Technical	1.5	0	0	0	1.5
Administrative	0.1	0	0	0	0.1
Other	0	0	0	0	0
Computed Total	1.6	0	0	0	1.6

Target Audience

The primary audience was Bhutanese, Congolese, Somali Bantu and other new American farmers, living in or around Manchester, NH. 100% of the funds from this BFRDP project were allocated to address the needs of these socially disadvantaged farmers. According to the USDA, a "socially disadvantaged (SDA) farmer, rancher, or agricultural producer is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial ethnic, or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as a member of the group without regard to his or her individual qualities. SDA groups are women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders."

New immigrants to New Hampshire are bringing collective and unique agricultural knowledge and experience to this country and this project. While refugees are excellent farmers, there are many obstacles to a smooth transition for them to becoming for-profit agricultural producers in the U.S. The environment is dramatically different in its climate and ethnic make-up from that of their native lands. Most NASAP farmers are preliterate, limited English proficient, with very little to no experience learning in a classroom environment. Additional supports and interventions for refugees are necessary for them to progress toward self-sufficiency. It is requiring an intense and constant focus to get these farmers prepared to be successful at their farm enterprises. Despite these challenges, these communities show great potential and commitment to begin farming.

Income opportunities that honor the skills and business experiences that immigrants and refugees offer are vital for their economic integration. They have the necessary skills and ambition to be successful farmers and enhance agricultural production in the region. While farming is not the goal of all refugees in Manchester, many have continued to pursue opportunities to access land to grow food. And for those that seek to generate income by selling the food they produce, participation in NASAP provides the means for them to do so. NASAP workshops focus on vegetable production, agricultural ESL, financial literacy and marketing in order to give new Americans the tools necessary to become for-profit farmers in the U.S.

Products

{Nothing to report}

Other Products

Product Type

Educational Aids or Curricula

Description

Developed new pictorial curricula, including three Powerpoint presentations to train beginning farmers on best practices in Plain Language Format.

Changes/Problems

{Nothing to report}