

Title:	Developing a Solid Foundation for Immigrant Farm workers Transitioning to Farm Operators.		
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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

The stakeholders targeted are primarily socially disadvantaged farmers/ranchers. Most are primarily Mexican immigrants who have worked as farmworkers for years & are now seeking to own their farm. They face many challenges because of their limited education (6th grade in Mexico), limited English skills (they tend to mimic English, but lack comprehension) & cultural marginalization. What they all have is a burning desire to own a piece of land, "un ranchito", where they can have a home, farm a few acres, while maintaining their job outside their farm. Based on our experience in working with them, their passion to learn & hard work ethic make them prime candidates for farm ownership. These challenges are often not adequately addressed by state or federal agencies in their outreach & support policies because they do not have adequate bilingual staff in USDA offices to meet the demand, so partnering with community based organization can make the difference in meeting those demands in helping the new and beginning farmers develop & provide a sense of stability for their farm enterprise. The outcomes are per obj as follows: Obj 1: Outcome -Identify 75 interested new & beginning farmers for follow up -Identify & recruit 30 stakeholders for ed series -Introduce & connect participants to USDA agencies & Ag industry leaders -Survey the needs of participants Obj 2: Outcome -Completion of series by 25 stakeholders in each serv area -Increase knowledge of conservation incentive programs & grant opportunities available from USDA, WSDA & Ag industry resources -Hands on experience in filling out grant applications for NRCS programs like EQUIP & CRS -Increase knowledge in conservation programs to improve land productive capacity while conserving natural resources & returning land to productive Ag use -Increase knowledge of the importance of water & soil conservation to become better stewards of the land -Increase knowledge of water issues, water rights & irrigation systems -Network with other conservation groups Obj 3: Outcome -Completion by 25 stakeholders of the series in each serv area -Increase knowledge about farm management & FSA loan programs -Increase knowledge about how farm management is a vital tool to guaranty long term sustainability -Increase knowledge on how risk management can mitigate loss & prevent the failure of farming enterprises -Increase knowledge on how long term fin planning can assist in acquisition of land, wealth preservation & succession -Increase knowledge about legal strategies & protocols for land transfer & acquisition in regards to leasing & purchasing of farm land Obj 4: Outcomes -Completion by 25 stakeholders of the series in each serv area -Increase awareness of USDA agencies websites & how to navigate them -Increase knowledge about computers as a farm tool -Increase knowledge on how computers are used to access important USDA & Ag industry info & publications -Increase knowledge on computerized acct system that to make the loan process easier -Be able to see their year to date financials for analysis & long term planning Obj 5: Outcomes -Formation of 2 new coops in each region

Accomplishments

Major goals of the project

The goal is to enhance food security by providing opportunities and a solid foundation for Latino/Hispanic immigrant farmers and others in helping them create successful & sustainable farming enterprises & utilizing USDA programs & services". Obj 1: Sponsor a Small Farms Conference called "El Camino Al Exito" (Road to Success) for two years of the grant targeting farm workers and new/beginning farmers & ranchers to highlight project, partnerships, mentors & stakeholders for 75 stakeholders. Obj 2: Conduct annual 30-hour educational series on Farm Sustainability on conservation planning, renewable energy, production & management strategies for 30 stakeholders per series. Obj 3: Conduct annual 30-hour educational series Farm Business Management that will increase their knowledge of financial risks in farming. Obj 4: Conduct an annual 30-hour Computers-Tools for Success Beginners series. Obj 5: Set up, train, & promote two coop groups with similar production for increased marketing opportunities & provide a \$56,000 loan from non USDA funds to each coop for start up costs & equipment. The time lines for the objectives are as follows: Objective 1: The Small Farms Conference will be held in January for years 2013 and 2014 Objective 2: The Farm Sustainability Educational Series will be held in February to mid March of 2013 for the South region and in February to mid March of 2014 for the North region Objective 3: The Farm Business Mgt Educational Series will be held in two phases starting in mid March to April of 2013 and finishing in February to mid March of 2014 for the South region. The North region will start the series in mid March to April 2014 and finish in February to mid March of 2015. Objective 4: Computers Educational Series will be held in November to mid December of 2013 for the South region and in November to mid December of 2014 for the North region Objective 5: Assisting Cooperative Groups will be on-going work in both regions for years 2013, 2014, and 2015

What was accomplished under these goals?

Obj 1: Sponsor a Small Farms Conf for 2 yrs called, "El Camino Al Exito" (Road to Success)?

The Conf-El Camino Al Exito was held in Yak on **2/07/14**, attended by 136 new/beginning farmers/ranchers & farmworkers, nearly doubling the project Obj of serving 75. Participants identified & prioritized the needs & gaps in services:

- Language/cultural barriers w/USDA agencies
- Lack of knowledge of documentation for loan apps
- Lack of access to USDA programs/services

100 attendees (73%) were contacted after the conf:

- 5 FSA loan apps submitted
- 3 NRCS apps submitted
- 2 RMA crop ins apps submitted
- 1 crop ins claim submitted

Other changes documented:

- 4 BFR developed living will & estate plan for their operation
- 2 BFR purchased life ins

The 2nd Conf-El Camino Al Exito held in Yak on **2/06/15**. Attendance increased from the 1st year by 20%, reaching 172 farmworkers & new/beginning farmers/ranchers. Participants identified & prioritized needs & gaps in services that differed from the previous year:

- TA for succession & estate planning
- TA for health care reform
- TA to identifying & purchasing farm land
- TA training & resources regarding food safety

Following 2014 procedures, 100 attendees (more than half (57%) were contacted after conf:

- 4 FSA loan apps submitted
- 2 NRCS apps submitted
- 2 WSDA Organic certification apps submitted

Other changes documented:

- 3 BFR purchased medical ins
- 19 BFR received WSDA pesticide credits &/or handlers card

Obj 2: Conduct an annual 30-hr ed series on Farm Sustainability on cons planning, renewable energy, production & Mgt strategies.

Four 30-hr ed series on Farm Sustainability were conducted in Yak (Nov 2012 & Apr 2015) & Wenatchee (Dec 2012 & May 2015) serving a total of 116 participants, with 85 participants completing series (73% completion rate). 85 stakeholders completing one of the 4 ed series exceeded the project goal.

Participants identified & prioritized the needs & gaps in services:

- NRCS needs to be accessible
- Need increased access to grants from WSCC & USDA
- NRCS lack of culturally sensitive staff
- Lack of knowledge of USDA & state agencies
- TA to fill out FSA loan apps

Upon completion, pre/post quiz responses documented increased knowledge:

- 80% of the stakeholders increased knowledge on all topics
- 40% increased knowledge in all topics of series

The apps submitted by participants during this series included:

- 14 FSA
- 3 NRCS
- 1 RD

Follow-up contacts were made to 72 of the stakeholders, including 23 onsite visits to confirm that they started implementing the info learned. Staff documented the following activities:

- 3 cleaned out hazardous materials & expired chemicals
- 3 implemented energy efficient light bulbs throughout their homes/farms
- 3 tested soil to take proper action
- 2 energy audits w/Pacific Power & implemented recommendations
- 2 amended their last will & testament to forever secure their land
- 1 applied best practices for burning farm waste per county codes
- 1 hired a presenter on purchase of farm property
- 1 prepared a medical directive
- 1 organized farm files to develop production projections for 2016
- 1 obtained WSDA licenses to be a 3rd party vendor
- 1 converted a row irrigation system to a drip system
- 1 surveyed land to determine property line
- 1 increased windmill horsepower to reach more acres

Obj 3: Conduct an annual 30-hr ed series called Farm Business Mgt.

Three Farm Business Mgt Phase I workshops were held in Granger, March 2013; Wenatchee, Jun 2013, & Yak, August 2014. Two Phase II workshops were held in Yak, April 2014 & Wenatchee, May 2014. The 30-hr ed series on Farm Business Mgt served a total of 44 Phase I stakeholders with 35 completers, & 40 Phase II stakeholders with 35 completers. Participants identified & prioritized the needs & gaps in services:

- Faster loan processing from FSA
- Animal safety workshops
- GAP audit assistance
- QuickBooks Workshop
- No Spanish speaking staff for FSA, RD, RMA & NRCS
- Lack of staff from NRCS to provide assistance
- Pesticide Training

Pre/Post surveys were conducted, an average of 90% of participants increased their knowledge in sustainability of long term farming, mitigation of loss, long term fin planning to acquire land, & legal knowledge in land transfers & land leases.

Specifically, the average percent for each series:

- Consistently, more than 90% increase in knowledge in succession planning
- Consistently, more than 90% increase in knowledge in risk Mgt
- Consistently, more than 90% increase in knowledge in legal strategies for farm acquisitions
- Range of 60-98% increase in knowledge in farm business Mgt
- Range of 60-98% increase in understanding of credit & fin statements
- Range of 60-98% increase in knowledge in farm equity assessments

The apps submitted during series included:

- 12 FSA apps submitted, 7 approved, \$438,720 invested
- 1 RMA crop ins app submitted
- 3 NRCS apps submitted

In the Jun Phase I Wenatchee series, all of the participants had been referred by FSA because they had already received a

loan & this class was part of the loan requirements. 100% of attendees (44) were contacted after Phase I series at all three sites (Granger, Wenatchee & Yak). In addition, more than half of the participants were contacted after Phase II. 12 onsite visits & 70 calls were made to ascertain the implementation of better fin Mgt practices.

Staff documented the use & implementation of the practices & Mgt concepts:

Farm Business Mgt Phase I

- 2 set up an organized filing system
- 3 prepared monthly cash flows manually
- 1 set up bookkeeping system & does payroll on 3 operations
- 1 hired legal counsel to clean up credit prior to a loan app
- 1 implemented a bookkeeping system to apply for an operation loan
- 1 changed his irrigation system to increase production
- 1 established a manual bookkeeping system.

Farm Business Mgt Phase II

- 1 prepared her last will & testament
- 1 realized concerns with rights to property & sought legal counsel
- 1 followed up with personal water rights to determine proper action
- 1 had soil tested to plant new crop
- 1 amended his farm operation into a LLC

Obj 4: Conduct an annual 30-hr ed series called Computers-Tools for Success

Four 30-hr ed series on Computers-Tools for Success were conducted in Yak (August 2013 & Nov 2014) & Wenatchee (Sept 2013 & Nov 2014) serving 64 participants, with 59 participants completing the series (92% completion rate).

Participants identified & prioritized the needs & gaps in services:

- Acct & Payroll computer training
- More time for computer classes

Pre/Post surveys conducted & 32-44% of the participants from series increased their knowledge & skills in:

- Computer basics
- Word & excel
- USDA web surfing & related sites
- Email creation & use

100% of attendees contacted after series by email. Through email contact, staff was able to ascertain that 80% of graduates were implementing what they had learned during the series. Staff documented the following activities demonstrating an increased use & implementation of computerized systems in operations:

- 9 purchased computers for farm operation
- 2 graduates prepared cash flow statements on their computers for FSA
- 2 submitted annual reports online to FSA
- 44 of the graduates actively used email with Center
- 2 used excel to develop actual & projections for FSA
- 1 used computerized acct software for payroll

Obj 5: Set up, train, & promote two cooperative groups with similar production for increased marketing opportunities & provide a \$56,000 loan from non USDA funds to each coop for startup costs & equipment.

Staff held meetings with farmworkers & new/beginning farmers/ranchers in 2013, 2014 & 2015. As a result, a \$70,000 loan closed 8/28/15, 2015 & the Art of Inc & Bylaws were filed for a coop in the South. A coop in the North was not formed due to lack of interest.

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

Staff was able to receive the needed training needed to facilitate and coordinate the projects objective as well as personal skill development for professional growth within the organization.

How have the results been disseminated to communities of interest?

Results have been disseminated to communities of interest by various avenues such as personal on-site visits, phone calls to beginning and established producers, press releases to all media outlets, emails to stakeholders, partners, Ag industry agencies, USDA agency and all interested groups.

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

{Nothing to report}

Participants**Actual FTE's for this Reporting Period**

Role	Non-Students or faculty	Students with Staffing Roles			Computed Total by Role
		Undergraduate	Graduate	Post-Doctorate	
Scientist	0	0	0	0	0
Professional	0	0	0	0	0
Technical	0	0	0	0	0
Administrative	2	0	0	0	2
Other	2	0	0	0	2
Computed Total	4	0	0	0	4

Student Count by Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code

{NO DATA ENTERED}

Target Audience

The target audience was immigrant farmers/ranchers with limited English proficiency and low education skills, but who were highly motivated to succeed in their quest to become successful farm operators. The various trainings were provided in Spanish, with English translations. English.

A compilation of data generated through the previously awarded grant was intended to lead to the development of strategies to better serve the Latino immigrant new and beginning farmers/ranchers, ultimately, to maximize access to a full range of USDA programs for socially disadvantaged farmers to help increase profitability and ability to sustain their farming operation.

Products

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Conference Papers and	Published	2014	YES

Citation

Objective 1: Sponsor a Small Farms Conference that would bring at least 75 people together for mentoring and training.

- Mailed/mailed notice to partners, stakeholders, Ag industry reps, community reps, others
- Mailed/mailed invitations to partners, stakeholders, Ag industry reps, community reps, others
- Prepared and faxed/mailed press released to all media
- Prepared and mailed/mailed newsletters with event dates & inserts
- Prepared curriculum & presenter's presentations to print and handout
- Translated material into Spanish as needed by professional translator
- Prepared pre/post quizzes for conference/training/workshop etc.

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Conference Papers and	Published	2014	YES

Citation

Objective 2: Conduct an annual 30-hour educational series on Farm Sustainability on conservation planning, renewable energy, production & management strategies that will enhance land stewardship for a minimum of 30 stakeholders per series.

- Mailed/mailed notice to partners, stakeholders, Ag industry reps, community reps, others
- Mailed/mailed invitations to partners, stakeholders, Ag industry reps, community reps, others
- Prepared and faxed/mailed press released to all media
- Prepared and mailed/mailed newsletters with event dates & inserts
- Prepared curriculum & presenter's presentations to print and handout

- Translated material into Spanish as needed by professional translator
- Prepared pre/post quizzes for conference/training/workshop etc.

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Conference Papers and	Published	2014	YES

Citation

Objective 3: Conduct an annual 30-hour educational series called Farm Business Management that will increase their knowledge of financial risks in farming. Phase 1 will consist of understanding credit, financial statements, and equity assessments. Phase 2 will consist of farm succession planning, managing risk with insurance products, and legal strategies for farm and land transfer and acquisition for a minimum of 30 stakeholders per series.

- Mailed/emailed notice to partners, stakeholders, Ag industry reps, community reps, others
- Mailed/emailed invitations to partners, stakeholders, Ag industry reps, community reps, others
- Prepared and faxed/emailed press released to all media
- Prepared and mailed/emailed newsletters with event dates & inserts
- Prepared curriculum & presenter's presentations to print and handout
- Translated material into Spanish as needed by professional translator
- Prepared pre/post quizzes for conference/training/workshop etc.

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Conference Papers and	Published	2014	YES

Citation

Objective 4: Conduct an annual 30-hour educational series called Computers-Tools for Success for new users of computers. The series will focus on basic computer literacy and web browsing, internet research, and other basics for a minimum of 30 stakeholders per series.

- Mailed/emailed notice to partners, stakeholders, Ag industry reps, community reps, others
- Mailed/emailed invitations to partners, stakeholders, Ag industry reps, community reps, others
- Prepared and faxed/emailed press released to all media
- Prepared and mailed/emailed newsletters with event dates & inserts
- Prepared curriculum & presenter's presentations to print and handout
- Translated material into Spanish as needed by professional translator
- Prepared pre/post quizzes for conference/training/workshop etc.

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Conference Papers and	Published	2014	YES

Citation

Objective 5: Set up, train, & promote two cooperative groups with similar production for increased marketing opportunities & provide a \$56,000 loan from non USDA funds to each coop for startup costs and equipment.

- Mailed/emailed notice to partners, stakeholders, Ag industry reps, community reps, others
- Mailed/emailed invitations to partners, stakeholders, Ag industry reps, community reps, others
- Prepared and faxed/emailed press released to all media
- Prepared and mailed/emailed newsletters with event dates & inserts
- Prepared curriculum & presenter's presentations to print and handout
- Translated material into Spanish as needed by professional translator
- Prepared pre/post quizzes for conference/training/workshop etc.

Other Products

Product Type

Other

Description

Objective 1: Sponsor a Small Farms Conference that would bring at least 75 people together for mentoring and training.

- Facilitated grant advisory committee meetings made of USDA reps, Ag industry, stakeholders and others
- Conducted monthly radio program in Spanish
- Conducted monthly TV announcements in Spanish
- Used appropriate equipment for each conference/workshop/training etc.
- Outreach to new and existing producers

Product Type

Other

Description

Objective 2: Conduct an annual 30-hour educational series on Farm Sustainability on conservation planning, renewable energy, production & management strategies that will enhance land stewardship for a minimum of 30 stakeholders per series.

- Facilitated grant advisory committee meetings made of USDA reps, Ag industry, stakeholders and others
- Conducted monthly radio program in Spanish
- Conducted monthly TV announcements in Spanish
- Used appropriate equipment for each conference/workshop/training etc.
- Outreach to new and existing producers

Product Type

Other

Description

Objective 3: Conduct an annual 30-hour educational series called Farm Business Management that will increase their knowledge of financial risks in farming. Phase 1 will consist of understanding credit, financial statements, and equity assessments. Phase 2 will consist of farm succession planning, managing risk with insurance products, and legal strategies for farm and land transfer and acquisition for a minimum of 30 stakeholders per series.

- Facilitated grant advisory committee meetings made of USDA reps, Ag industry, stakeholders and others
- Conducted monthly radio program in Spanish
- Conducted monthly TV announcements in Spanish
- Used appropriate equipment for each conference/workshop/training etc.
- Outreach to new and existing producers

Product Type

Other

Description

Objective 4: Conduct an annual 30-hour educational series called Computers-Tools for Success for new users of computers. The series will focus on basic computer literacy and web browsing, internet research, and other basics for a minimum of 30 stakeholders per series.

- Facilitated grant advisory committee meetings made of USDA reps, Ag industry, stakeholders and others
- Conducted monthly radio program in Spanish
- Conducted monthly TV announcements in Spanish
- Used appropriate equipment for each conference/workshop/training etc.
- Outreach to new and existing producers

Product Type

Other

Description

Objective 5: Set up, train, & promote two cooperative groups with similar production for increased marketing opportunities & provide a \$56,000 loan from non USDA funds to each coop for startup costs and equipment.

- Facilitated grant advisory committee meetings made of USDA reps, Ag industry, stakeholders and others
- Conducted monthly radio program in Spanish
- Conducted monthly TV announcements in Spanish
- Used appropriate equipment for each conference/workshop/training etc.
- Outreach to new and existing producers

Changes/Problems

The following areas are observations of the evaluator:

1. Effectiveness of recruitment techniques used to outreach to the target market, Latino farmers/ranchers, in regard to conference. It is obvious that this grantee had the outreach in place to contact the vast number of farmers in their geographic region. It is always impressive what the center does for the community at large and the connections they have with Latino community.
 2. Effectiveness of outreach used for USDA and other agencies participation. Again the relationships from their past interactions attracted a cadre of agencies and elected officials who have respect for the grantee. However, there was a reluctance from certain trainings to participate by the USDA agencies because of staffing, schedule conflicts and budget constraints.
 3. Attendance to conference per projections. There projections were ambitious, and were not only met but exceeded expectations.
 4. Response to survey and follow-up was a high point again showing the improvement in the skill level but also the need for training.
 5. Instrument used for data collection. The instrument was comprehensive and administered appropriately
 6. Use of workshops for providing information. Workshops were good, informative and created natural dialog. According the feedback, they were very well received and complimented as not only being useful but piqued their interest in more training.
 7. Level of participant engagement with all educational presentations and materials. Great interaction as mentioned above, comfortable atmosphere.
 8. Survey results in regard to data collection. Results of the survey provided a data framework that validated the ensuing project objectives.
 9. Effectiveness of recruitment techniques used to outreach to the target market, Latino farmers/ranchers, in regard to each series. Each educational series was unique and brought forward farmers who had knowledge of the topic as well those who were hearing it for the first time. More important was the aggressive outreach to get participants there. They used Spanish Media, personal phone calls, word of mouth relationship with families, friends, and neighbors.
 10. Effectiveness of communication among and between project participants and partners. It was obvious that the partners had a good relationship with the farmers, the grantee made the farmers comfortable in the setting.
 11. Attendance to each series per projections. Some topics generated more attendance than others, but overall attendance was good, despite some timing conflicts with the growing season.
 12. Level of participant engagement with all educational presentations. The farmers were heavily engaged in every workshop. This was the highlight of the training.
 13. Grant Advisory Committee this consisted of all the agencies of USDA, WSDA, WSCC, WorkSource, HCC, CWU and YVCC. This illustrious committee provided feedback and recommendations.
 14. Farm Service Agency they want to recruit Latino farmers to participate on the FSA County Committees. This grant provided the access to leadership and to promote participation in these type of groups.
 15. WSDA utilized this grant to get information out to the farmers regarding pesticide education and food safety.
- Overall the workshops appeared to be well planned and carried out, allowing for ample discussion and input. The farmers appeared to be having a good time while at the same time listening and learning the content. This modality for learning was a good environment for them.
- The Evaluator was impressed with the amount of knowledge that was obtained in such a short period of time. The farmers are "thirsty" for this type of training as evidenced by the fact that they sacrificed days off of work to participate in the conferences and trainings. As one participant said, "this is our only source".

This grant showed the need in the community for trainings for Latino Farmers. Their passion to modernize and keep up with current trends not only helps their business but it helps the broader community. The effectiveness of the small farms conference in regard to farmer participation and understanding of USDA programs and services is severely needed.