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Program Code: BFRDP

Program Name: Beginning Farmer and Rancher

Project Director

James Hanson
301-405-8122
jhanson@arec.umd.edu

Recipient Organization

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
3112 LEE BUILDING
College Park, MD 207425100
DUNS No. 790934285

Performing Department

Ag and Resource Economics

Co-Project Directors

Myers, Ronald
Lantz, William
Dill, Shannon
Beale, Benjamin

Departments

Anne Arundel County Extension
Garrett County Extension
Talbot County Extension
St. Mary's County Extension

Non-Technical Summary

The Maryland Collaborative for Beginning Farmer Success will ensure agricultural profitability, meet consumer demands for locally grown food, create economic and job opportunities, promote good land stewardship through teaching Best Management Practices (BMPs), and help to develop the next generation of farmers by developing 300 new, successful beginning farmers and ranchers (and the acreage farmed by them) in the State of Maryland and surrounding region. There will also be new farmers drawn from the traditionally underserved, socially disadvantaged, minority and ethnic, urban, and "explorer" populations from throughout Maryland and will be given access to the proper knowledge, skills, and mentorship needed to make their enterprises financially successful. The short term outcomes are: Beginning farmers are knowledgeable of basic topics related to successful farm enterprises, including environmental compliance rules and regulations, leasing contracts, marketing, financial management, risk management, credit, labor requirements, etc. Successful mentor and internship experiences increases knowledge, skills, and abilities. Practical understanding of equipment needed & proper equipment operation Understanding of proper farm site selection and layout. Know available resources such as equipment loan programs and beginning farmer transfer programs. Awareness of available land for lease. Can make informed decisions and identify further opportunities for their farm enterprises. The medium term outcomes are: Creation of new successful, self-sustaining farmers and ranchers with at least 25% from traditionally underserved or under-represented audiences. Creation of tax revenue through the new enterprises. Creation of employment opportunities for agricultural workers. Increased food production in Maryland through local farm operations producing high-quality products. Increased land in food and crop production in rural areas. Viable agriculture industry maintained in the State of Maryland. The long-term outcomes are: Enhanced land stewardship through use of Good Agriculture Practices and Best Management Practices. Adequate, high-quality, and affordable food supply for Maryland residents Enhanced, knowledgeable next generation of farmers who will be good stewards of the land. Resilient and thriving rural and urban communities and economies in Maryland.

Accomplishments

Major goals of the project

Goal: The Maryland Collaborative for Beginning Farmer Success will increase the number of successful beginning farmers and acreage farmed by them in Maryland, with an emphasis on practical training for beginning farmers, including new underserved, limited resource, socially disadvantaged, minority and ethnic as well as "explorer" farmers interested in learning

to farm. Objectives: 1. Explore - Beginning farmers will be able to explore farming options, understand the components of a successful farm operation, and make decisions about what enterprises best fit their interest. The first step allows participants completely new to agriculture, such as those pursuing a second career as a farmer and new landowners, the opportunity to explore different agricultural enterprises. The "explorer" objective will be achieved through the development of enterprise specific curriculum combined with experiential learning for designed for new farmers. Core subjects will include basic livestock and crop farming practices, marketing, land management, entrepreneurship, business training, financial management, resource acquisition, and management of agricultural credit. 2. Refine - Beginning farmers will be able to further refine their farm interest, understand the requirements and strategies of different farm enterprises and begin developing plans for assessing resources needed to implement a farm plan. The "refinement" objective will be achieved through a traditional in-formal educational program; a farm entrepreneurship coaching program and direct consultation through area Extension offices. The traditional in-formal educational program will consist of training opportunities offered through in-formal classroom settings as well as through interactive and experiential on-farm settings throughout the state. A farm entrepreneurship coaching program developed at UMD will provide beginning farmers attending farm conferences and workshops the opportunity to sit down with a trained entrepreneurial coach to discuss their farm development and enterprise ideas. 3. Develop - Beginning farmers will acquire the skills necessary to develop specific farm plans and obtain needed resources to begin a farm enterprise. The "develop" objective will be achieved by increasing capacity for mentoring and apprenticeships in the state. In addition, 6 workshops will be held around the state that concentrates on development of applied clinical skills, such as safe machinery operation, equipment repair, welding, and livestock handling. Experienced farmers will be recruited and trained as trainer-farmers to conduct successful on-farm learning opportunities. 4. Implement - Beginning farmers will implement farm plans, start agricultural enterprises and continue as successful beginning farmers. Increase the success of beginning farmers and the amount of acreage they farm by linking beginning farmers with available land for lease or purchase and increasing knowledge of land transfer processes (FarmLINK).

What was accomplished under these goals?

Impact Reporting:

The Maryland Collaborative for Beginning Farmer Success (BFS) will increase the number of successful beginning farmers and acreage farmed by them in Maryland, with an emphasis on practical training for beginning farmers.

The collaborative goal is to increase the knowledge, skills and abilities of Beginning Farmers and train them to develop and operate successful farm enterprises. Through workshops, conferences, web materials, mentoring and apprenticeships Beginning Farmers have been able to explore, define, refine and implement their farm plans. The University of Maryland Extension provides workshops, one-on-one consultation, conferences, field days and educational material. Our partner UMES conducts workshops, conferences and facilitates the annual Farm Bus Tour. FH-CASA facilitates the Beginning Farmer Training Program in addition to their workshops and field days. SMADC provides support for beginning farmers searching for land via the Maryland FarmLink website as well as facilitating the Mentor-Match program, which links new farmers with more experienced producers.

A three year follow up evaluation was sent to 336 participants on the email distribution and 27% responded. Participants were asked a four point scale to rate actions they have taken as a result of BFS. Participants have built their business by: Increasing my farm profitability (3.68), Growing products for market (3.62), Selling my product (3.55). Of those responding to the survey 18 have purchased or rented land, 24 have started a farm enterprise and 32 have started their business.

In the area of farm management participants report: Researching agriculture crops and livestock in Maryland (3.48), Writing a Farm Business Plan (3.46), Contacting resources and agencies to start your farm business (3.39). In the area of crop production participants report: Practicing nutrient management on the farm (3.67), Increasing soil productivity and fertility (3.66), Practicing integrated pest management on the farm (3.65), Implementing good agricultural practices and food safety (3.63). In the area of livestock management: Implementing small ruminant management (4.25), Using a rotational grazing system (4.22), Using good pasture management techniques (4.20).

When asked if "what was learned in BFS has increased profitability", 31% responded yes (53% were unsure). Those that responded yes estimated an increase profitability from \$525 to \$1,048 per participant.

In total, our program has reached 2,855 beginning farmers through face-to-face meetings, workshops, and conferences. This number does not include website visits of more than 25,600 and web video views of over 11,400. Beginning Farmer Success, and our partners, developed 65 mentor relations and 22 on-farm apprenticeships and graduated over 41 participants from the Future Harvest beginning Farmer Training Program.

Objective Reporting: All data was collected through a pre and post class survey and included measures to acknowledge a gain in knowledge or a change in action.

Objective 1: Explore - Beginning farmers will be able to explore farming options, understand the components of a successful farm operation, and make decisions about what enterprises best fit their interest. Achieved through the development of enterprise specific curriculum combined with experiential learning for designed for new farmers. A change in knowledge was achieved with participant responses recording: 93% learned what resources and agencies are available to them to start a farm, 79% reported learning about agriculture and livestock in Maryland, 84% reported learning how to market their farm business, 80% learned about farm regulation and policies, and 88% reported learning about best management practices and conservation.

Objective 2: Refine - Beginning farmers will be able to further refine their farm interest, understand the requirements and strategies of different farm enterprises and begin developing plans for assessing resources needed to implement a farm plan. The "refinement" objective will be achieved through a traditional in-formal educational program; a farm entrepreneurship coaching program and direct consultation through area Extension offices. A change in knowledge was achieved with: 756 properties posted on SMADC website, 463 Entrepreneurial Coaching participants, and 76% reported that they learned about how to write a farm business plan, and 86% reported learning about soil productivity and fertility

Objective 3: Develop - Beginning farmers will acquire the skills necessary to develop specific farm plans and obtain needed resources to begin a farm enterprise. The "develop" objective will be achieved by increasing capacity for mentoring and apprenticeships in the state as well as workshops will be held around the state that concentrates on development of applied clinical skills, such as safe machinery operation, equipment repair, welding, and livestock handling. A change in knowledge and action was achieved with: 41 graduates of the FH Beginning Farmer Training Program, 22 apprenticeships and SMADC had 65 mentee-mentor relationships.

Objective 4: Implement - Beginning farmers will implement farm plans, start agricultural enterprises and continue as successful beginning farmers. Increase the success of beginning farmers and the amount of acreage they farm by linking beginning farmers with available land for lease or purchase and increasing knowledge of land transfer processes. A change in action was achieved with participant responses recording: 88% reported they would start their own farm business, 82% reported they would write a farm business plan, 74% reported they would develop farm financial statements and enterprise budgets, 82% reported they would create goals and a farm production plan, and 85% of respondents stated they would start crop enterprises.

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

The BFS program provided more than 207 training opportunities for beginning farmers. These workshops, conferences and classes covered many topics including Enterprise Budgeting, Farm Safety, Risk Management, Crop Production, Livestock Management, Beekeeping, High Tunnel Construction, Integrated Pest Management, Nutrient management, and more. Each of these workshops included PowerPoints developed by the educators as well as some hand-on activities (such as building a high tunnel). These workshops were advertised on the UMD Extension Website as well as through our partners at FH-CASA, UMES, and SMADC. Many of the class materials were shared over the BFS participant directory consisting of 368 participants.

Program publications included the Beginning Farmer Guidebook as well as the Business Planning Workbook and multiple educational videos in partnership with the Maryland Agriculture Law Education Initiative. All of these resource were made available in hard copy, on jump-drives, and online. In addition to workshops, one-on-one mentoring occurred with UMD Extension. Over 463 consultations occurred.

BFS participants could also participate in the FH-CASA Beginning Farmer Training Program, which is a year-long program providing mentorship and training. Participants must develop a business plan as well as attend a number of workshops and training throughout the program. Upon completion and submission of their final business plan the participants receive a scholarship to aid in the development of their farm.

SMADC provides multiple resources for our beginning farmers that focus on acquiring land as well as providing a mentorship program. SMADC hosts the Maryland FarmLink website which provides a forum for people to post or find available land in Maryland. SMADC also coordinates a Mentor-Match program which aids in developing relationships between beginning farmers and those who are more experienced.

Professional development was provided by the BFS program at two Train the Trainer programs. Agriculture service providers from around the state were invited to this program to learn what the BFS program had to offer to Beginning Farmers. Informational supplies including our guidebook, brochures, and USB drives with BFS materials were provided to all attendees (30 in total). The BFS team also attended all three project Directors Meetings for BFRDP and hosted the event in 2014 in Baltimore.

How have the results been disseminated to communities of interest?

In effort to share information about the BFS program two train the Trainer workshops were provided. These events were received very high remarks on the evaluation with 67% being confident in their learning and ability to share of resources to help find and evaluate land, 87% about financing resources for beginning farmers, 76% about business planning resources and 79% about trainings, apprenticeships, and mentor-matches.

BFS representatives also presented at several other events to provide information to other groups about the program, these events were hosted by MARBIDCO (a credit and financing group), the Institute of Applied Agriculture at the University of Maryland, the Frederick County Community College, as well as the Maryland Department of Agriculture. Several presentations were sponsored by BFS at a local middle school to educate on agriculture history and production. In addition, the University of Maryland Extension celebrated their 100 year anniversary so the BFS program was highlighted at several of the county extension offices. These events allowed the BFS program to not only promote the program but to encourage and publicize the farming lifestyle.

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	1.4	0	0	0	1.4
Technical	0	0	0	0	0
Administrative	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0
Computed Total	1.4	0	0	0	1.4

Student Count by Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code

{NO DATA ENTERED}

Target Audience**Target Audience: General Population****Website:** The New Farmer website is open and accessible to the public.

Total Views: 5,964 (Y1) + 11,594 (Y2) + 8,069 (Y3) = 25,627

Target Audience: General Population**Coaching/consulting:** Any person who is a beginning farmer according to the USDA standards is welcome to contact a University of Maryland Extension Educator.

Total Participants: 261 (Y1) + 104 (Y2) + 98 (Y3) = 463

Target Audience: General Population**FarmLink:** The service is open to the public. Those who create a free account on the website may participate in the transactions of land posted to the website and in turn post available land. Currently lists (8/2015) 103 total properties, of which 34 properties are for leasing

Total Participants: 44 (Year 1) + 198 (Y2) + 514 (Y3) = 756

Target Audience: General Population**Training:** Future Harvest's Beginning Farmer Training Program is open to the general public. Those interested in farming can apply to be in the program.

Total Participants: 10 (Y1) + 19 (Y2) + 12 (Y3) = 41

Target Audience: Women***On-Farm Training Program:** While the Beginning Farmer Training Program is open to all people, the demographic for the average Maryland farmer is a white male approximately 57 years of age. The Maryland Beginning Farmer Success Project aims to serve all beginning farmers including the underserved audiences such as women farmers. A majority of the apprenticeship trainees for FH-CASA are women.

Total Participants: 7 (Y1) + 9 (Y2) + 6 (Y3) = 22

* Demographic data was not available for every event

Target Audience: General Population**Mentoring:** The Mentor Match program is open to all beginning and experienced farmers. Total Participants: 12 (Y1) + 38 (Y2) + 15 (Y3) = 65**Target Audience: General Population****Educational Programs:** All Beginning Farmer Success programs are open to all who wish to learn more about farming.

Total Participants: 919 (Y1) + 2814 (Y2) + 2558 (Y3) = 6,291

Total Beginning Farmers: 879 (Y1) + 977 (Y2) + 999 (Y3) = 2855

Target Audience: African American***Educational Programs:** Project partner, University of Maryland Eastern Shore assists the project in reaching underserved audiences.

Total Participants: 25 (Y1) + 32 (Y2) + 54 (Y3) = 111

* Demographic data was not available for every event

Target Audience: Women*

Educational Programs: Women were served through all events held and with programs such as Annie's Project, Women in Agriculture and the UMES Small Farms Conference.

Total Participants: 80 (Y1) + 309 (Y2) + 780 (Y3) = 1169

* Demographic data was not available for every event

Products

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Other	Published	2015	YES

Citation

Newhall, Ashley and Paul Goeringer, Using a Business Structure to Limit Your Farm's Liability, UME Extension Bulletin EB-422 March 2015.

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Other	Published	2015	YES

Citation

Suri, Mayhah. Microbreweries and the New Class 8 Farm Brewery License, ALEI Extension Bulletin, May 2015.

Other Products

Product Type

Audio or Video

Description

The continuation of our YouTube channel, which showcases instructional videos pertaining to beginning farmers, had 11,441 views. The channel has 16 videos: four of which are instructional, four provide spotlight on the project, two are informational about agriculture in Maryland, two are educational material pertaining to agriculture, one describes the extension service and its 100 year celebration, and two are farmer spotlights.

Introduction to Plastics and Drip Irrigation: 9518 views

About Maryland Beginning Farmer Success: 374 views

Maryland Beginning Farmer Success Project: 143 views

Strip Tilling Part 2: 170 views

About the Maryland Beginning Farmers Success Project: 83 views

Keyes Creamery: 84 views

Strip Tilling Part 1: 107 views

Spring Vineyard Pruning: 103 views

Layton's Chance Vineyard: 84 views

Value Added Products: 197 views

Marketing 101 Small Farms Part 1: 93 views

Women in Agriculture Music Video: 192 views

Managing for Today & Tomorrow: 38 views

Talbot Agriculture: 63 views

Beginning Farmer Music Video: 30 views

Cooperative Extension 100 Years: 20 views

Product Type

Other

Description

LISTSERV: Within the website, users can elect to provide personal information to be added to our directory and distribution list. This list receives our monthly newsletter and additional information pertaining to our

partners. There are 368 members in our directory.

Product Type

Other

Description

PARTICIPANTS: Approximately 70 educational workshop opportunities were offered annually to beginning farmers. There were a total of 6291 participants, of which 45% (2855) identified themselves as beginning farmers. These events included field days, workshops, seminars, demonstrations, and conferences. The project partners including University of Maryland Extension, University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Southern Maryland Agriculture Development Commission, and Future Harvest – Chesapeake Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture worked together and singularly to provide direction and implementation of the events.

Product Type

Evaluation Instruments

Description

The team utilized pre-class and post class evaluation surveys to capture demographic information as well as prior and post knowledge. Surveys were collected and compiled to provide the team with information on what is most successful and where focus should be aimed to improve. Specific questions ask for knowledge gained and actions as a result of the educational program in the areas of crop, livestock and business. In the final year of the project (2015) a follow up survey was conducted to determine actual actions taken as a result of the project. Evaluations were reviewed and approved by the UMD institutional review board.

Product Type

Other

Description

WEBSITE: Maryland FarmLink Mentor Match program website: Developed as a part of SMADC. The website had over 71,233 visits.

Product Type

Other

Description

NEWSLETTER: Beginning Farmer Success program creates a monthly newsletter to inform participants of events and program happening around the state, and even in other Beginning Farmer and Rancher programs. 416 read and 2,406 impressions.

SOCIAL MEDIA: Started in 2014 with 58 Twitter followers and 186 Facebook likes.

Product Type

Other

Description

WEBSITE: The Beginning Farmer Success Website hosted over 8069 views including more than 387 downloads of our Business Planning Workbook. <http://extension.umd.edu/newfarmer>

Product Type

Audio or Video

Description

In cooperation with the Maryland Agriculture Law Education Initiative a series of 24 videos and publications.

Product Type

Other

Description

BLOG: Managed by SMADC covered hot topics for all farmers with a large focus on helping farmers gain access to land as well as many other hot topics in agriculture. Over 49 blogs with 3,000 to 9,000 views per month.

Product Type

Educational Aids or Curricula

Description

UMES Small Farm Series was developed and covered many of the key topics identified as important for beginning farmers with their educational curricula and class series.

Changes/Problems

{Nothing to report}