

Title:	New American Sustainable Agriculture Project-NH		
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Submitted By	Muktar Idhow	Date Submitted to NIFA	12/30/2015

Program Code: BFRDP

Program Name: Beginning Farmer and Rancher

Project Director

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Recipient Organization

SOUTHERN NEW HAMPSHIRE SERVICES INC
40 PINE ST
Manchester, NH 031036207
DUNS No. 088584065

Performing Department

{NO DATA ENTERED}

Co-Project Directors

Bye, Andrea

Departments

{NO DATA ENTERED}

Non-Technical Summary

The Organization for Refugee and Immigrant Success (ORIS) and its fiscal agent Southern New Hampshire Services, Inc. are utilizing Standard BFRDP Project funding to implement the New American Sustainable Agriculture Project, a community-based agricultural initiative. NASAP assists 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. The primary goal for this BFRDP 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. ORIS has identified five objectives that will help it achieve this goal: 1) Provide outreach and beginning level training for refugees and immigrants in Manchester, NH. 2) Provide advanced agricultural training opportunities for participating refugee and immigrant farmers. 3) Establish and run an incubator farm that will provide land-based training and opportunities for new Americans to grow food. 4) Facilitate market based training programs and a collective marketing initiative. 5) Share resources and best practices with other refugee training programs throughout New England and the country. The stakeholders are Latino, Congolese, Bhutanese, Somali Bantu and other adult new American farmers living in Manchester, NH. 100% of the funds from this BFRDP project will be allocated to address the needs of these socially disadvantaged farmers. 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. Objectives and Outcomes Goal 1: Increase the number of Refugees with Agricultural Knowledge and Skills 25-30 refugees attend entry level NASAP orientation trainings focused on agricultural production and marketing. 20 refugee access farm land at ORIS incubator farm sites. 6 refugee growers attend advanced trainings based on business planning and risk management strategies. 5 farmers develop business plans. Goal 2: Refugee growers begin to earn an income from farming 16 farmers earn an income from farming. At least 5 refugee farmers earn a minimum of \$1,000 in sales.

Accomplishments

Major goals of the project

The primary goal for this BFRDP 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. ORIS has identified five objectives that will help it achieve this goal: 1) Provide outreach and beginning level training for refugees and immigrants in Manchester, NH. 2) Provide advanced agricultural training opportunities for participating refugee and immigrant farmers. 3)

Establish and run an incubator farm that will provide land-based training and opportunities for new Americans to grow food. 4)Facilitate market based training programs and a collective marketing initiative. 5)Share resources and best practices with other refugee training programs throughout New England and the country. Objectives and Outcomes Goal 1: Increase the number of Refugees with Agricultural Knowledge and Skills 25-30 refugees attend entry level NASAP orientation trainings focused on agricultural production and marketing. 20 refugee access farm land at ORIS incubator farm sites. 6 refugee growers attend advanced trainings based on business planning and risk management strategies. 5 farmers develop business plans. Goal 2: Refugee growers begin to earn an income from farming 16 farmers earn an income from farming. At least 5 refugee farmers earn a minimum of \$1,000 in sales.

What was accomplished under these goals?

The following impacts have been observed:

Goal 1: Provide outreach and beginning level training for refugees and immigrants in Manchester

33 refugees attended entry level trainings on agricultural production and marketing

23 refugees accessed land at ORIS incubator farm site

12 refugees attended advanced trainings based on business planning, cooperative development and risk management strategies

14 farmers accessed land at sites in Bedford and Concord with support from ORIS

12 farmers developed business plans

12 farmers applied skills related to season extension by building and growing specialty crops in high tunnels

10 farmers applied skills related to alternative energy investments on the farm, installing and using solar powered drip irrigation

Goal 2: Refugee farmers earn income through farming

20 farmers earned an income from farming

12 refugee farmers earned a minimum of \$1,000 in sale

Objective 1) Provide outreach and beginning level training for refugees and immigrants in Manchester, NH

Outcome: 26 participants increased knowledge of production and marketing strategies Outcome: 26 participants increased knowledge on how to create a production plan for CSA Outcome: 26 participants learn about the National Organic Program standards and certification process Outcome: 26 participants learn about Food Safety and Post Harvest Handling practices

Outcome: 26 farmers learn practices in preventing pests and disease Outcome: 26 participants increased knowledge about quality control and packaging standards Outcome: 15 participants increase awareness of farm safety risks and prevention

Outcome: 15 participants increase knowledge of farm and market English vocabulary.

Objective 2) Provide advanced agricultural training opportunities for participating refugee and immigrant farmers

Outcome: provided support to 8 farmers applying to NRCS/EQIP for their own high tunnels Outcome: 8 farmers construct 4 high tunnels via EQIP contracts Outcome: Refugee farmers in NH have increased access to agricultural service providers, whom have a better understanding of these farmers' needs Outcome: 8 farmers develop production plans that include season extension Outcome: 8 farmers increase knowledge about Federal Farm Income Taxes/Schedule F and file a Schedule F for the first time Outcome: 8 farmers increase knowledge about preparing an enterprise budget Outcome: 8 farmers increased knowledge about USDA programs Outcome: 8 farmers increase knowledge about recordkeeping requirements for the Non-Insured Disaster Assistance Program Outcome: 6 beginning farmers participate in NAP. Outcome: 6 farmers adopt new recordkeeping practices through participating in NAP. Outcome: 8 beginning farmers implemented business plans and evaluated achievement of farm goals. Outcome: 2 farmers apply for FSA Microloan Assistance Program Outcome: 8 participants complete NASS census Outcome: 12 farmers increased knowledge about cooperative principles related to farm businesses and develop cooperative agreements as part of farm business plans Outcome: 12 farmers develop business plans with cash flow projections

Objective 3: Establish and run an incubator farm that will provide land-based training and opportunities for new Americans to grow food

Coordinated land use for 37 new Americans to grow food. 23 Farmers accessed farmland at ORIS's 7 acre incubator farm site in Dunbarton; 7 additional farmers accessed farmland and greenhouse for seedling production in Bedford; 7 additional farmers accessed farmland at a site in Concord with support from ORIS

Provided on-site consultation and technical assistance for producers to overcome production challenges, including pest and wildlife control, access to water for irrigation, soil fertility management, weed management, cover cropping and season extension

Provided technical assistance for EQIP contracts

Received a Conservation Innovation Grant to install rainwater catchment systems to the 5 high tunnels and equip each tunnel with solar-powered drip irrigation.

Outcome: 22 farmers implemented production techniques learned in orientation workshops, at the incubator farm site in Dunbarton. Outcome: 22 farmers utilized post-harvest area at incubator farm. Outcome: 22 farmers experience an increase in the quality of life through farming. Outcome: 12 farmerextended the season Outcome: 10 farmers adopt alternative energy systems on the farm. Outcome: 10 farmers implement drip irrigation in the high tunnels. Outcome: 10 farmers demonstrate conservation innovation practices to over 70 farmers and technical service providers from NH, ME, and MA and CT. Outcome:

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Refugee farmers in New Hampshire become recognized as experienced growers who are contributing positively towards sustainable farm and food systems in the region. Outcome: There is growing interest in high tunnel production among refugee farmers in NH

Objective 4) Facilitate market based training programs and a collective marketing initiative

Increased marketing efficacy of Fresh Start Farms brand through promotion and outreach

Facilitated sales for a 90 member (total by end of project) CSA program

Coordinated an 18 week multi-farm CSA, at multiple pick-up sites, communicating delivery logistics to the farmers on an ongoing basis.

Supported farmers to establish their first wholesale account with a local grocery chain and by end of project expand to additional wholesale accounts

Provided TA to 10 farmers with completion of farmers market applications and SFMNP paperwork

Provided on-site TA with post-harvest handling for CSA, wholesale and SFMNP for 18 weeks

Assisted farmers with invoicing and record keeping

Supported 3-4 farmers selling as Common Earth Farm, which operates independently

Outcome: 20 refugees earned an income from farming, increasing financial stability of their families. Outcome: 20 growers sold produce through Fresh Start Farms Outcome: 12 refugees earned a minimum of \$1,000 in sales Outcome: 9 farmers grew, delivered, etc. CSA shares independently Outcome: 15 farmers improved quality control standards and post-harvest handling guidelines Outcome: 10 farmers increased revenue via season extension Outcome: Refugee farm businesses continue to grow with increased recognition and sales for Fresh Start Farms, indicated by growth of CSA and other market outlets

Objective 5) Share 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. Facilitated participatory program evaluation

Shared farmer training and agricultural ESL curricula with the Somali Bantu Community Outreach-MA and Clark University

Collaborated with Cooperative Development Institute and UNH Cooperative Extension to deliver training and technical assistance that would meet the needs of refugee farmers.

Collaborated with USDA state and county offices to deliver culturally appropriate outreach on existing programs and services

Shared resources and best practices on getting farmers to participate in USDA programs

Collaborated closely with the National Immigrant Farmers Initiative in 2013 to co-host a Refugee & Immigrant Leaders in Northeast Agriculture convergence

Represented NH and immigrant farmers at the New England Food Summit for 3 years

Coordinated two phone conferences with other BFRDP grantees

Outcome: Farmers provide feedback on what has worked well and what needs improvement and staff has incorporated participant feedback into the program Outcome: Other organizations are aware of NASAP and of the contributions of refugee farmers to local agriculture Outcome: Staff mutually supports other refugee farm programs Outcome: Staff engages in professional development that enhances their capacity to support refugee farmers Outcome: Other technical service providers in the state and region have a better understanding of the needs of refugee farmers and how best to deliver services.

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

Objective 1) Provide outreach and beginning level training for refugees and immigrants in Manchester, NH

- NASAP training coordinator delivered 8 beginning level workshops in year 1. They included: Orientation to NASAP; Introduction to Direct Marketing; a two-part CSA workshop; Farmers Market Display (delivered by Nada Haddad of UNH Cooperative Extension); Food Safety (delivered by Alice Mullen of UNHCE); Introduction to Organic Production (delivered by Ray Conner of NOFA-NH); Organic Certification (delivered by Victoria Smith (NH Dept. of Agriculture, Markets and Food); and Cultural Practices for Pest and Disease Prevention (Cheryl Smith, UNHCE). 20 participants attended these trainings.

- NASAP staff collaborated to deliver 8 workshops for beginning farmers in year 2. They included: Season Extension; Integrated Pest Management in High Tunnels (delivered by Cheryl Smith of UNH Cooperative Extension); Alternative Energy Investments on the Farm; USDA programs (at local USDA office, with FSA, NRCS, and RD); Whole Farm Planning; Cost of Production; Market Analysis; Irrigation Management. 26 participants attended these trainings.

- NASAP staff delivered 8 beginning level workshops in year 3 to new farmers. They included: Orientation to NASAP; Intro to Direct Marketing; Farmers Markets; CSA; Wholesale; Farm Expenses/Your Farm as a Business; Production Calendars; and Intro to Weed & Pest Management

- ORIS staff coordinated registration and interpretation logistics for 15 NASAP participants to attend the Northeast Organic Farmers Association-NH Winter Conference in 2013 and 2014 and for 3 aspiring farmers to attend in 2015.

- Staff collaborated with NH Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health to deliver 4 farm safety workshops in years 1 and 3. 15 participants attended trainings in year 1 and 13 new participants in year 3.

Objective 2) Provide advanced farmer workshop series for participating refugee and immigrant farmers

- ORIS collaborated with the Cooperative Development Institute to deliver 4 workshops related to cooperative strategies. Topics included an introduction to cooperative strategies; worker cooperatives; cooperative equipment sharing; worker cooperatives; technical assistance with joint operating agreements. 2 sessions were delivered to the 4 producers in the Common Earth Farms worker cooperative. 2 workshops were targeted to 8 of the producers in the Fresh Start Farms collective. Each group had different goals for implementing cooperative strategies. All 12 farmers formed joint operating agreements specific to their business models, as a result of these sessions.
- ORIS coordinated an informational session with the Belknap-Merrimack-Hillsborough County USDA office annually 2013-2015 to review the application and record keeping requirements for the FSA's Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program. FSA staff advised farmers to select their top 4 most valuable crops, rather than to cover all of their spring seeded annuals. There was also an emphasis on production reporting, which farmers indicated they needed additional technical assistance to complete. Other USDA and FSA programs and services were also presented.
- ORIS facilitated the participation of 1 staff member and 1 farmer to attend Growing Power's annual Winter Conference in Milwaukee, WI in January 2014.

Objective 3) Establish and run an incubator farm that will provide land-based training and opportunities for new Americans to grow food.

- ORIS staff provided hands on training on high tunnel construction, as 8 refugee producers built 4 tunnels in November, 2013
- ORIS provided hands on training in the high tunnels to 12 farmers on season extension for spring seeded cold-season crops and fall plantings.
- ORIS provided hands on training for farmers in installation of rainwater catchment systems for their high tunnels
- ORIS provided hands on training for farmers with installation of drip irrigation in their high tunnels
- ORIS provided hands on training for farmers on use of the solar powered pumps for their drip irrigation systems
- ORIS collaborated with UNH Cooperative Extension to deliver land based workshops on Integrated Pest Management in both the field and high tunnels.

Objective 4) Facilitate market based training programs and a collective marketing initiative

- Staff delivered marketing workshops with a focus on farmers' markets and Community Supported Agriculture and Wholesale opportunities.
- Staff delivered marketing specific workshops around production planning for CSA and Wholesale accounts
- Staff delivered training on Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program vendor requirements to 9 farmers who participated as vendors in 2014 and 2015
- Staff delivered training on post harvest handling to 20 producers

How have the results been disseminated to communities of interest?

In year 1, ORIS collaborated closely with the National Immigrant Farmers Initiative in 2013 to co-host a Refugee & Immigrant Leaders in Northeast Agriculture convergence. 100+ attendees, including refugee and immigrant farmers from New Hampshire, Maine, and Massachusetts; Commissioner of Agriculture for NH, Lorraine Merrill; staff of State and County levels of Farm Service Agency and Natural Resource Conservation Service; staff of UNH Cooperative Extension; State of NH Refugee Coordinator, Mayor of Manchester, NH, local farmers and community members, and the Board of Directors of NIFI.

In year 1, ORIS' Farm Production Specialist presented at the NOFA-NH winter conference on the New American Sustainable Agriculture Project, and the collective experience, production and crop diversity, and contributions that refugee and immigrant producers are bringing to NH agriculture. NOFA-NH and ORIS have since been in communication on how best NOFA-NH can serve this group of farmers with their programs.

In year 3, ORIS's Agricultural Training Coordinator and 2 new American farmers had an informational table at the NOFA-NH winter conference, increasing public

awareness of the program.

During year 2, ORIS collaborated with NH USDA/NRCS and UNH Cooperative Extension to host a NH Immigrant Farmers' Innovation Twilight Meeting, at ORIS' incubator farm site. 100+ attendees, including refugee and immigrant farmers from New Hampshire, Maine, and Massachusetts; NH Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food's Director of Agricultural Development; staff of State and County levels of Natural Resource Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency; staff of UNH Cooperative Extension; Russel Foundation, New Entry Sustainable Farming Project, Urban Farm Institute, and local farmers and community members.

For all three years, ORIS staff and farmers were invited to represent NH at the New England Food Summit. In years 1 and 2, Farm Production Specialist, Anthony Munene was invited on behalf of new American farmers, as an immigrant farmer himself. In year 3, one of the new American farmers, Sylvain Bukasa, attended along with a youth Farm & Food Leader and son of another new American farmer very involved in his mother's farm business, Mohamed Daud. The summit focused on issues related to food justice.

In year 2, ORIS co-facilitated a focus group for NASAP participants to provide input to the NH Food System Network as they gathered feedback throughout the state to inform the development of a NH Food Strategy. The NH Food System Network's goal for this session was to gather information from refugee producers about what they are currently doing as farmers in NH, what they would like to be doing, and what they need (resources, technical assistance, etc) to attain their dream as farmers in NH. In year 3, ORIS's Agricultural Training Coordinator was part of the NH Food Alliance "Strategy Team" and included and advocated for refugee farmers' unique needs at all Strategy Team meetings.

Mukhtar Idhow, PD and Andrea Bye Co-PD presented on ORIS' BFRDP project at the annual project directors' meeting in Baltimore, MD. Mukhtar Idhow provided NASAP program updates to the National Immigrant Farming Initiative (NIFI) at monthly board meetings via conference calls.

In year 3, ORIS welcomed the Assistant Secretary of Agriculture to the incubator farm for a farm tour and potluck lunch prepared by the refugee farmers. Attendees also included representatives from NRCS, UNH Cooperative Extension, the Commissioner of Agriculture for NH, and others.

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	1.8	0	0	0	1.8
Administrative	0.1	0	0	0	0.1
Other	0	0	0	0	0
Computed Total	1.9	0	0	0	1.9

Student Count by Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code

{NO DATA ENTERED}

Target Audience

The primary target audience reached by this project were limited resource, socially and economically disadvantaged beginner farmers and ranchers. More specifically, the stakeholders consisted of refugee and immigrant producers from the Somali Bantu, Bhutanese, Congolese, Burundi, and other new American communities who have not operated a farm or ranch, or for less than ten years.

Products

{Nothing to report}

Other Products**Product Type**

Other

Description

Websites- staff updated the Freshstartfarmsnh.org web page with updates and information about CSA, farm stands, markets, wholesale, events, and other achievements.

Product Type

Other

Description

Social media campaigns- Staff initiated and developed social media campaigns using facebook, twitter, instagram and other popular platforms to market to the public.

Product Type

Other

Description

Marketing materials- Fresh Start Farms CSA brochures, flyers, and other promotional materials

Product Type

Educational Aids or Curricula

Description

Developed and revised 8 entry level market and production workshops for pre-literate refugee farmers

Product Type

Other

Description

ORIS partnered with local organizations to deliver agricultural ESL courses, farm safety courses, and more advanced farmer workshops.

Product Type

Other

Description

9 of the New American Sustainable Agriculture Project's graduates have formed their own self-sustaining co-op, the New American Farmers Co-op.

Changes/Problems

During year 1, the Organization for Refugee and Immigrant Success underwent a process to transition to an independent 501 c3, leaving fiscal agent Southern NH Services, beginning October 1, 2012. ORIS experienced some difficulty in transferring the grant, but worked closely with USDA and NIFA and the problem was resolved.

While ORIS did hire and sign an MOU with an English as a Second Language(ESL) instructor to deliver 48 hours of Agricultural ESL in year 2, this deliverable was not completed. The instructor's availability did not seem to be a good fit with the schedule of the participants. The instructor delivered 3 classes to 2 participants. ORIS then worked to develop a plan where the ESL would be provided on the farm and at the markets. The instructor did not follow through.

During year 3, ORIS decided to instead incorporate agricultural and market ESL vocabulary into the beginner workshops series for new refugee farmers, had farmers' market roleplay workshops with advanced farmers to practice conversational English skills, and provided ESL practice on the farm and at the farm stands. This was also more effective for the farmers' busy schedules of other employment, family, and farming commitments.