

Final Report

<b>Title:</b> Gaining Ground: A Farm Incubator with Training and Technical Assistance for Beginning Socially Disadvantaged Farmers in Wisconsin	
<b>Sponsoring Agency</b>	NIFA
<b>Funding Source</b>	Non Formula
<b>Accession No.</b>	228725
<b>Project No.</b>	WISW-2012-01980
<b>Project Start Date</b>	02/01/2012
<b>Reporting Period Start Date</b>	02/01/2012
<b>Submitted By</b>	Janet Parker
<b>Project Status</b>	COMPLETE
<b>Reporting Frequency</b>	Final
<b>Grants.gov No.</b>	
<b>Award No.</b>	2011-49400-31216
<b>Proposal No.</b>	2012-01980
<b>Project End Date</b>	08/31/2014
<b>Reporting Period End Date</b>	08/31/2014
<b>Date Submitted to NIFA</b>	11/10/2014

**Program Code:** BFRDP

**Program Name:** Beginning Farmer and Rancher

**Project Director**

Janet Parker  
608-845-8724  
janetparker8@gmail.com

**Recipient Organization**

LINDA AND GENE FARLEY CENTER FOR PEACE  
2299 SPRING ROSE ROAD  
Verona, WI 535930000  
DUNS No. 969345102

**Performing Department**

{NO DATA ENTERED}

**Co-Project Directors**

Strader, Claire  
Salinas, Jay

**Departments**

{NO DATA ENTERED}

**Non-Technical Summary**

In southern Wisconsin there are many aspiring and beginning fresh market vegetable and fruit farmers, including socially disadvantaged and immigrant growers, who need support to succeed. They need to access to farm land, equipment, technical assistance, and marketing avenues to reach customers. The goal of Gaining Ground is to assist these growers so that they can begin and sustain successful farm businesses. The project will provide outreach and education in English, Hmong and Spanish statewide through video and Internet, as well as during hands-on workshops. Southern Wisconsin Land Link will be created so that land owners and beginning farmers can meet and find ways to share land. The Farley Center farm incubator will become a regional hub of support for beginning growers. Preparations will be made to launch innovative marketing programs including a collaborative CSA and mobile produce vending. The Farley Center for Peace, Justice, and Sustainability - a nonprofit dedicated to promote ecological justice through education, demonstration and research - is the lead applicant organization. Funded partners will be the Madison Area Community Supported Agriculture Coalition; Community GroundWorks; Flats Mentor Farm; the Fondy Food Center, and the Farm Business Development Center at Prairie Crossing. At every stage of the project, beginning growers involved will determine program direction so that their needs are met. Beginning farmers in Wisconsin will launch and strengthen farm businesses with help from the proposed project. These growers will learn valuable information on organic farming, make key contacts through attendance at workshops and conferences, and have opportunities to share their own substantial knowledge of farming. This project will generate the whole range of environmental, economic, and community benefits that make locally-grown food such a vibrant new/old idea. Economically, the project will have a major impact on Wisconsin as consumers' dollars for fresh produce will be spent locally, rather than for produce that has been trucked in from other states. Wisconsin is extremely well suited for sustainable medium-scale fresh market vegetable and fruit farming. Here there is ample rainfall, unlike in California where fresh produce is grown under irrigation. Farmers here can deliver fresh produce to consumers using far less petroleum and emitting far less carbon. Wisconsin's farmers are aging and farmland is threatened by development. Retiring farmers and other landowners are seeking sustainable arrangements to make their land available to the next generation of farmers. Land link connections and community-building between landowners and beginning farmers will deliver positive outcomes for land and people. Growing vegetables is just the beginning of succeeding as a market farmer. Finding profitable ways to sell the produce is often much more difficult. Staff of Gaining Ground will lay the groundwork for new marketing strategies that allow beginning farmers in the region to succeed, and put more healthy locally-grown food into

Accession No. 228725

Project No. WISW-2012-01980

the hands of consumers in the region.

## Accomplishments

### Major goals of the project

Train beginning farmers and reach out to aspiring new farmers statewide through linguistically-appropriate workshops, Troy Farm internships, mentoring, farm visits, radio segments, and video for off-season training to assure that beginning farmers have support for production and management strategies that are safe, ecologically sustainable and profitable. Hundreds of beginning farmers will launch and strengthen farm businesses, learning valuable information on organic farming and making key contacts through attendance at the workshops and conferences. Participating organizations will also learn from each other, such as the information transferred between the Flats Mentor Farm in Massachusetts, the Farm Business Development Center at Prairie Crossing, Fondy Food Center's Afterglow Farm, and the Farley Center Farm Incubator. The trainings will be taught for beginning farmers on site at the Farley Center and Troy Community Farm, accompanied by interpreters as needed. Gaining Ground staff will recruit intensively for socially-disadvantaged growers to participate in the renowned Troy Community Farm Intern Program. A collaboration of local government, university and NGO partners will adapt existing CSA and sustainable farming curricula to hold participatory trainings in Hmong, Spanish and English. 2. Create Southern Wisconsin Land Link to establish this service and bring at least 8 beginning farmers onto new land in each year of the grant. Staff will hold public events that orient landowners and farmers to the opportunities and suggest successful strategies for communication and shared responsibility. Events will include informal mixers so that people can pair up to discuss specific land use arrangements. Some area landowners have offered their land rent-free, happy to know that it is being well used for production of organic food for local consumption. 3. Formalize & Expand Services at the Farley Center Organic Farm Incubator on two adjacent pieces of farmland in Springdale, Wisconsin, a hub of Gaining Ground education, outreach, and technical assistance for hundreds of beginning farmers. 4. Build new and improved marketing strategies as sustainable, profitable options for beginning growers. a. Support a collaborative CSA to help beginning growers reach customers directly, building on tremendous strength, history, and market potential of CSA in the Madison area. At least 15 farmers will participate, putting into practice the skills they have learned in trainings, and hundreds of customers will join the CSA. b. Improve marketing options for at least 60 farmers through one-on-one support for better links to profitable farmers markets, restaurants, institutional buyers and a new mobile produce vending initiative.

### What was accomplished under these goals?

#### Goal 1: Train beginning farmers and reach out to aspiring new farmers statewide

We worked with hundreds of farmers, providing one-on-one support at the incubator and through land link, and holding workshops in twelve counties throughout Wisconsin. Our staff and BFRDP-funded partners taught 6 workshops in 2012, 11 in 2013, and 16 in 2014. About 54 farmers participated in the workshops in 2012, 98 in 2013, and 226 farmers in 2014. We provided Hmong and Spanish interpretation. Topics included ag business fundamentals; crop planning; growing specific crops; planning, building, and managing a hoop house; food safety and post-harvest handling; winter production; cover crops; pathogens; CSA shares; farm dreams; farm cooler construction; farm taxes; and organic certification. Some workshops were hands-on and most took place at farms. Eight construction workshops were team efforts to teach how to build hoop houses and farm coolers, some with EQIP cost share. We also supported farmers to attend workshops or tours led by other groups such as: beekeeping, mushroom cultivation, UW School for Beginning Market Growers, and season extension. Interns at Troy Community Farm learned from field work, classes and trips.

We funded 10-20 farmers each year to attend educational meetings and conferences, often sending Hmong and Spanish interpreters along. Examples are the Immigrant and Minority Farmers Conference, which this project sponsored in 2014, and the MOSES Organic Farming Conference, the largest organic farming conference in North America, where in 2014 we helped organize their first ever workshop held in Hmong, attended by 57 farmers.

#### Goal 2: Create Southern Wisconsin Land Link

Five land link events were held by project staff to connect farmers with landowners, and two additional land link events were held in partnership with Fitchburg, a neighboring city. In total, 43 farmers and 25 landowners participated. Staff worked with the UW Law & Entrepreneurship Clinic to create a model farmland lease. From 2012 – 2014 at least 4 farm businesses owned by Hmong and Latino farmers reached agreements and started farming on new leased land that they found through the program, and all 4 are still farming at these sites now. We provided Hmong and Spanish interpretation at the linking events, questionnaires and a model lease, and follow-up staff support.

Accession No. 228725

Project No. WISW-2012-01980

**Goal 3: Formalize & Expand Services at the Farley Center Organic Farm Incubator**

The incubator provided land, shared equipment, marketing support, and intensive business development assistance to 5 - 9 farm businesses each year. In 2014, 7 farm businesses participated in the farm incubator. We created new products to aid management including a procedures manual (also translated into Spanish) that contains business plans, a farm equipment picture index, policy agreements, and organic certification documents. The incubator held monthly farmer meetings to exchange ideas, work together on infrastructure improvements, and for trainings. The trainings were usually farmer-to-farmer, and topics included accepting WIC/SNAP checks at farmers markets, safe farm equipment operation, and preventing tomato blight. Staff met with farmers individually to do business planning, prepare for organic certification, and to do year-end assessments. Staff helped farmers to manage the first CSAs in Wisconsin run by Hmong and Latino farmers, and to complete an umbrella organic certification for the farm incubator in 2014.

**Goal 4: Build new and improved marketing avenues including launching collaborative CSA**

The beginning farmers at the Farley Center and other farmers in our network increased their sales dramatically from 2012 - 2014. They grew from selling primarily at small farmers markets to managing large CSAs and using other innovative marketing methods.

Beginning in 2011 under earlier BFRDP funding, farmers and staff developed a collaborative marketing model for immigrant farmer CSA businesses. As a result three collaborative ventures were launched: Hmong Toj Siab, Los Jalapeños, and Spring Rose Growers Coop, all socially disadvantaged farmer CSAs. The collaborative CSAs have grown, and in 2014 they had over 150 members for their 20 week season. One of the incubator farmers was the first recent immigrant to be accepted into the local Wisconsin CSA coalition, FairShare, in 2013.

In 2011, with support from an earlier BFRDP grant, a Farley Center farmer launched a successful produce stand at a WIC clinic in Madison. Building from this, farmers and project staff worked to develop partnerships with local faith communities and medical facilities to identify potential host sites for farm stands and CSA pick-up sites in 2013 and 2014. Negotiations were successful and by 2014 the incubator farmers had farm stands at 4 medical facilities, and Sunday morning CSA pick-ups at 4 churches. Our funded partner veteran farm sold produce and CSA shares at a VA hospital in 2014. A "Market Share" punch card system of discounted produce sales was started in 2014, and 44 punch cards were sold at \$50 each. The farmers and their CSA members benefitted from the Farley Center's negotiated customer rebates with three local Health Maintenance Organizations, a \$200 value to CSA members. With press releases, news media stories, radio, TV, CSA newsletters and brochures, we created brand awareness about the Farley Center farmers. Incubator farmers began selling wholesale and to a farm to school program in 2012 and continued through 2014.

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

We provided technical assistance and training for hundreds of beginning farmers, detailed above, through farm incubation, workshops, internships, land link, marketing support and conferences. Four interns were trained at the Farley Center and 26 others at Troy Community Farm. We hosted many field days and farm tours for the public, new immigrant groups, veterans and other agency staff. Each year staff met with dozens of farmers statewide. Farmers, staff and board members travelled to visit farm incubators and attend conferences including the MOSES Organic Conference in La Crosse; the Immigrant and Minority Farming Conference and the NIFTI Farm Incubator Field School, both in Minnesota; the First Nations Food Sovereignty Summit in Green Bay; Prairie Crossing Farm Business Development Center in Illinois; and the New Entry Sustainable Farming Project in Massachusetts. Our staff helped lead a training session for Extension agents to learn to work with Hmong farmers, and also helped train staff from NRCS, FSA, and technical colleges when they attended our workshops for farmers such as hoophouse trainings for Hmong farmers who had NRCS EQIP cost share.

**How have the results been disseminated to communities of interest?**

Educational events occurred at the Farley Center Farm Incubator, 6 Hmong family farms, Peacefully Organic Produce veterans farm, Dane County's Silverwood Farm, Troy Community Farm, a tribal community college, FairShare CSA Coalition, conferences, and the state Dept of Agriculture. Outreach to aspiring farmers also occurred at community events. Outreach methods included visits to community leaders, groups and churches throughout Wisconsin such as Hmong Mutual Aid

## Final Report

Accession No. 228725

Project No. WISW-2012-01980

Associations, Centro Hispano, and the Lac Courte Oreilles Band of the Ojibwe. Our farm incubator served as a case study for NIFTI's Farm Incubator Toolkit. The project was featured in numerous newspaper and magazine articles, radio segments including local Hmong and Spanish shows, TV interviews that aired statewide, and videos in Hmong and Spanish. Videos filmed at our workshops and produced by Spring Rose Growers Cooperative are on YouTube, and were aired on a California TV station. The most viewed video teaches in Spanish how to build a hoophouse, and it has been watched over 6600 times on YouTube. We created numerous flyers, brochures, workshop handouts and newsletters in English and Spanish, for farmers, consumers including CSA members, and landowners. We created a display for community events, a website with our resources, and we shared resources through USDA Start2Farm. We had direct contacts with aspiring farmers, and hosted dozens of groups including immigrants and veterans for tours of the incubator farm. We co-sponsored a screening of a film about veteran farmers, "Ground Operations," which garnered 5 media articles. We used list serves and direct contact to reach project partners, who also disseminated results to farmers and farm advisors. Most of our workshops were interpreted into Spanish and Hmong.

**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	1.8	0	0	0	1.8
Technical	1.8	0	0	0	1.8
Administrative	0.9	0	0	0	0.9
Other	0	0	0	0	0
Computed Total	4.5	0	0	0	4.5

**Student Count by Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code**

{NO DATA ENTERED}

**Target Audience**

The Gaining Ground project has served hundreds of beginning and aspiring farmers in twelve Wisconsin counties: La Crosse, Eau Claire, Wausau, Dane, Adams, Green, Green Bay, Milwaukee, Racine, Jefferson, Ozaukee, and St. Croix. Efforts included farm incubation, a land link program that introduces farmland owners to farmers, formal classroom instruction, hands-on workshops, one-on-one consulting, group discussions, season-long farm internships, field walks at farms, marketing meetings, visits to partner farming organizations, conferences, outreach meetings, vocational rehabilitation and compensated work therapy with veterans, and radio, TV, internet and print outreach.

Over the course of the project, 5 – 9 farm businesses participated in the farm incubator each year. Since we launched the farm incubator in 2010, there have been 16 farm businesses that have participated for one season or more. Of those 16 businesses, 13 were owned by socially disadvantaged beginning farmers (7 owned by women, and 10 by people of color). In 2014, 7 farm businesses participated in the farm incubator; 5 were owned by farmers from Hmong, Thai and Latino ethnic groups, one by a recent immigrant from Russia, and one by a Wisconsin-born Euro-American. Two were owned by women. One farm business owner who was enrolled in the incubator from 2012 to 2013 is disabled.

With each year of the project, more farmers participated in activities held by the Farley Center and our subcontracting partners. For instance, in 2012, 54 farmers and aspiring farmers attended the 6 workshops offered by the project. In 2013,

## Final Report

Accession No. 228725

Project No. WISW-2012-01980

we offered 11 workshops and they were attended by 98 people. In 2014, we offered 16 workshops and they were attended by 226 people.

Beginning and aspiring farmers participating in the project were comprised of women and men from Hmong, Latino, Native American, African American and European Americans ethnic groups. Each year of the project between 58% and 93% of the farmers served were members of socially disadvantaged groups, the vast majority Asian (Hmong), approximately 18% Latino, and less than 2% African American or Native American.

Through open houses, conference presentations, and a subcontract to Peacefully Organic Produce in Waunakee, the project reached dozens of veterans, including 6 veterans who participated weekly in 2014 in vocational rehabilitation and compensated work therapy through the local VA hospital, and as CSA worker shares. The project supported 26 interns who each worked 200-300 hours at Troy Community Farm.

**Products**

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Journal Articles	Published	2014	NO

**Citation**

"New SEED grant program brings farmers' market produce to Madison public health clinic clients." Article by Nora G. Hertel in The Isthmus, 8/18/2014.

<http://m.isthmusparents.com/eats/article.php?article=43405&sid=60bf2ff50dcab65dd73e6b6d98f192e1>

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Journal Articles	Published	2014	YES

**Citation**

"Gaining Common Ground at the Farley Center Farm Incubator." Article by Keefe Keeley in Edible Madison magazine, Spring 2014. <http://ediblemadison.com/articles/view/gaining-common-ground-at-the-farley-center-farm-incubator>

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Journal Articles	Published	2014	NO

**Citation**

"Coming Full Circle: Yee Ythao continues her family's strong farming history at the Farley Center in Verona." Article by Otehlia Cassidy in Madison Magazine, July 23, 2014. <http://www.madisonmagazine.com/Madison-Magazine/August-2014/Coming-Full-Circle/>

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Journal Articles	Published	2014	NO

**Citation**

"Small Farm, Small Kitchen - Farley Center / Spring Rose Growers' Coop." Video for Madison Magazine by Otehlia Cassidy, Jul 23, 2014. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KkCWWRU-XFs>

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Journal Articles	Published	2014	NO

**Citation**

"Tamaleria El Poblano." Article by Josh Perkins in the Willy Street Co-op Reader, Sept 30, 2014. <http://www.willystreet.coop/digest/reader-editions/2014/10/tamaleria-el-poblano>

## Final Report

<b>Accession No. 228725</b>	<b>Project No. WISW-2012-01980</b>
-----------------------------	------------------------------------

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Journal Articles	Published	2014	NO

**Citation**

“A Veteran’s Journey from Battlefield to Farmfield.” Article by Dulanie Ellis, in Edible Madison, July 15, 2014.  
<http://ediblemadison.com/articles/view/a-veterans-journey-from-battlefield-to-farmfield>

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Journal Articles	Published	2014	NO

**Citation**

“Veterans Find Peace on the Farm.” Video and article on NBC News channel 15, July 17, 2014.  
<http://www.nbc15.com/home/headlines/Veterans-find-peace-on-the-farm-267599921.html>

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Journal Articles	Published	2014	NO

**Citation**

“Veterans Return to the Field.” Article in The Progressive Farmer, August 2014. <http://dtnpf-digital.com/publication/?i=218347&p=9> USDA mentioned in article.

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Journal Articles	Published	2014	NO

**Citation**

“Farm offers vocation for returning veterans.” Article by Roberta Baumann in the Waunakee Tribune, May 9, 2014.  
[http://www.hngnews.com/waunakee\\_tribune/news/local/article\\_6771c1b6-d55d-11e3-b50a-0017a43b2370.html](http://www.hngnews.com/waunakee_tribune/news/local/article_6771c1b6-d55d-11e3-b50a-0017a43b2370.html)

Type	Status	Year Published	NIFA Support Acknowledged
Journal Articles	Published	2014	NO

**Citation**

“Local veterans-run farm turns swords into ploughshares.” Article by Rob Thomas in The Cap Times, 7/18/2014.  
[http://host.madison.com/news/local/local-veterans-run-farm-turns-swords-into-ploughshares/article\\_946eb89d-1396-5e75-8850-8d819bc581fb.html](http://host.madison.com/news/local/local-veterans-run-farm-turns-swords-into-ploughshares/article_946eb89d-1396-5e75-8850-8d819bc581fb.html)

**Other Products****Product Type**

Audio or Video

**Description**

Assisted the Spring Rose Growers Cooperative with production and dissemination of 14 radio spots on organic production in Hmong and Spanish. Also assisted the Spring Rose Growers Cooperative with dissemination of 6 training videos on hoophouse and coolbot construction (filmed at workshops we held) and organic soil mix preparation.

**Product Type**

Educational Aids or Curricula

**Description**

-- Farmer training happens through a mix of workshops held by Farley Center and Spring Rose Growers Cooperative, and farmer attendance at trainings held by partners groups. A syllabus that reflects all the farm business training we offer is under development.

Accession No. 228725

Project No. WISW-2012-01980

--2 written training documents, on hoophouse and coolbot construction, were completed.

**Product Type**

Other

**Description**

Dozens of flyers were created to advertise workshops and events. Most were produced in English and Spanish, for both print and email distribution.

**Product Type**

Educational Aids or Curricula

**Description**

Overview of Organic Production Resources. A 20 page farmer training curriculum including links to resources and presentations. Website: [www.farleycenter.org](http://www.farleycenter.org)

**Product Type**

Educational Aids or Curricula

**Description**

"Southern Wisconsin Land Link Questionnaire for Farmers" and "Southern Wisconsin Land Link Questionnaire for Landowners" - two questionnaires were created and are in use now to link farmers seeking land with people who have farmland through our land link program.

**Product Type**

Educational Aids or Curricula

**Description**

Farm Incubator Procedures Manual updated and translated into Spanish.

**Product Type**

Educational Aids or Curricula

**Description**

Farm Equipment Picture Index. Document matches photos of a range of farming equipment with names and a brief description of their uses. Website: [www.farleycenter.org](http://www.farleycenter.org)

**Product Type**

Educational Aids or Curricula

**Description**

Crop plans, cover crop plan and fertility plan created with the beginning farmers for Farley Center incubator land.

**Product Type**

Educational Aids or Curricula

**Description**

Boletín Agrario Latino, a Spanish language newsletter for farmers and aspiring farmers, Oct 2013 issue at [www.farleycenter.org](http://www.farleycenter.org)

**Product Type**

Educational Aids or Curricula

**Description**

Boletín Agrario Latino, a Spanish language newsletter for farmers and aspiring farmers, Jan 2014 issue at [www.farleycenter.org](http://www.farleycenter.org)

## Final Report

Accession No. 228725

Project No. WISW-2012-01980

farleycenter.org

**Product Type**

Educational Aids or Curricula

**Description**

1 model lease was created for the Land Link program.

**Product Type**

Other

**Description**

Several brochures were created to publicize and promote the Farley Center CSA Farms.

**Product Type**

Other

**Description**

20 weekly CSA newsletters were created during each growing season with the farmers in the farm incubator collaborative CSAs.

**Product Type**

Audio or Video

**Description**

Radio announcements aired weekly on both Hmong-language and Spanish-language radio programs, to publicize our farmer training opportunities.

**Product Type**

Audio or Video

**Description**

"Buscando Soluciones" a weekly business talk-show in Spanish, on TV Telemundo-Milwaukee featured an interview with Farley Center outreach staff announcing our services for beginning farmers, which aired twice statewide in Wisconsin, 2/8/2013 and 2/9/2013.

**Product Type**

Audio or Video

**Description**

"Inviting Veterans To The Organic Farming World" – Interview on the talk show Central Time, Wisconsin Public Radio, aired on September 20, 2013, promoted a Veterans Open House at the Farley Center Farm Incubator held on September 21, with outreach staff from the Farmer Veteran Coalition <http://www.wpr.org/inviting-veterans-organic-farming-world>

**Product Type**

Audio or Video

**Description**

Spanish language radio interview on Farley Center programs for aspiring farmers on "Por su Salud (For Your Health)" radio program on Spanish-language La Movida AM radio in Wisconsin, April 1, 2013.

Accession No. 228725

Project No. WISW-2012-01980

**Product Type**

Audio or Video

**Description**

Distribution continued for 6 instructional videos in Hmong and Spanish which were filmed at workshops sponsored by this project. Videos were created in 2012 by Spring Rose Growers Cooperative; they can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/user/SRGC2013>

**Changes/Problems**

From the seeds that this project has sown, and the hard work of an amazing network of farmers and staff, many positive outcomes have grown that we did not foresee in the initial project planning. A few examples follow.

On Sept 29, 2014 the Farley Center Farm Incubator achieved organic certification from the Midwest Organic Services Association (MOSA). The farm incubator has been committed to organic practices since it was launched in 2011. But at the outset of the project, we did not know if certification would be possible or desired by the farmers, most of whom are English language learners. Most of the farmers at the incubator are recent immigrants and learned to farm in communities which have millennia of uninterrupted organic farming experience. So their organic farming skills are extremely strong. But the organic certification paperwork can be daunting. After trainings with MOSA, attendance at organic conferences and workshops, and deliberation together, the farmers decided to take the step to certify. This umbrella certification covers all 7 businesses in the incubator and the land they cultivate, and was the culmination of years of effort. Our staff has helped many more Hmong farmers in Wisconsin to consider organic certification, and by 2014, two Hmong family farmers with their own farmland have also achieved certification.

In 2014, the project supported new work by our partners FairShare CSA Coalition and Dane County Cooperative Extension, to create a Demonstration Farm. The work has been exciting because of the broad interest in and support for the farm, including from the Dane County Executive, who has included the farm's infrastructure needs in the 2015 county budget. Accomplishments include research into the needs of potential users of the demonstration farm; building partnerships with educational, governmental, and private organizations to develop programming and infrastructure plans for the farm; a base proposal and timeline for development; and laying the foundation for programming to begin at the farm as early as 2015.

Over the three growing seasons, a total of 26 interns worked 200-300 hours each at Troy Community Farm. The internship program is the preeminent hands-on training program in our region for beginning vegetable farmers. Interns learn through lessons in the field, formal classes, weekly field walks, field trips to other area farms, written training materials, and hands-on work. Many former farm interns now run their own farms and work in management positions at other local farms.

The farm incubator holds annual end-of-season reflection events, as well as winter planning meetings for the season to come. At these meetings, incubator participants expressed their thanks for the land with its beauty and fertility; for the community; for continued learning; for everyone's hard work; and for the support. The farmers have explained that farm profit is only one of the outcomes of the project. They report that growing food for one's community brings them pride, cultural continuity, health, happiness, and relaxation. Farmers have expressed pride that they applied for organic certification, and explained that they have learned from farmers from different cultural backgrounds. Highlights mentioned included time spent together building a hoop house and learning to use the tractor and implements, so they are now producing more food with less effort.

The farm incubator made improvements to the farm infrastructure at this educational hub. Farmers and staff researched and prioritized infrastructure needs and made improvements such as a whole farm irrigation plan, root cellar, hoop house, better facilities and flow to the cooling and packing area, and soil improvement with cover crops, manure and compost.

The project provided major sponsorship for the Immigrant and Minority Farmers Conference in Minnesota in January 2014. This conference is the premier event for socially disadvantaged farmers in our region. There were 160 attendees, and they are not counted in our numbers of farmers served and demographics, as most were from Minnesota and other Midwestern states beyond Wisconsin. A video summary is here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dLZdQzWaGy4&feature=youtu.be>. Over half of the farmers in attendance were Hmong, and another 44% of attendees were socially disadvantaged farmers, including Latino, Bhutanese, Nepalese and Somali. As well as sponsoring, we

## Final Report

Accession No. 228725

Project No. WISW-2012-01980

supported travel and lodging for Wisconsin farmers to attend this conference.

More unexpected outcomes of the project include a new food and catering business started by the sister of one of the incubator farmers. The farm spin-off business, Tamalería El Poblano, sells wholesale value-added farm products at two large local grocery cooperatives. Produce from the farm is used seasonally to make a line of tamales and fresh salsas which are available at the grocery deli. Another farmer enrolled in the incubator project created a niche market by teaching customers to use vegetables which were new to them. Los Jalapeños CSA (run by incubator farmers) partnered with a local food business to make canned ketchup and spicy ketchup from tomatoes and peppers they grew. The jars of ketchup were included in CSA boxes in 2014.

Each year we improved on the evaluation process. Surveys were in English, Spanish and Hmong and many were presented orally. Results were used to improve subsequent workshops.

We asked:

- Did you learn something?
- Do you plan to do something differently because of what you learned?
- Did you change your perspective or way of thinking?
- Were the materials useful?
- Did you learn something to help you begin farming? (if not farming already)
- Did you gain information that will improve your farming business?
- What could be improved about the event?
- How long have you been farming or growing veg for market? (years)
- What is size of your farm? (acres)
- How many people work with you on the farm?
- Do you have any other comments about the program?

The overwhelming majority of attendees felt they "gained information that will help them enter farming" and "will improve their farming business". They also learned something, plan to do something differently because of what they learned, they changed their perspective, and they thought the materials were useful. They typically farm on very small acreages (6 acres or less) with one or a few helpers.