Program Overview

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Introductions

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Assist and educate the public to promote stewardship of soil and water resources
Cumberland County Overview

Urban County, Rural State:

- Population: 287,797 (2014)
- Area: 835 sq. mi.
- Largest City: Portland
- Cumberland County is 93% white (Portland is 85%)
- Economy: Mixed - services, tourism, industrial; unemployment <3%
- Conservation Concerns:
  - Sprawl
  - Decline in water quality, habitat, agricultural land
NACD Project Goals

• Assess urban agriculture needs
• Provide technical assistance
• Develop curriculum for:
  – New American urban gardeners, provide workshops
  – At-risk youth, hold workshops at the Long Creek Youth Development Center
Needs Assessment: Survey Results

Do you grow your own fruits and vegetables?

- Yes, I have a home garden: 60.00%
- Yes, I have a community garden plot: 10.00%
- Yes, I have both a home garden and community garden plot: 20.00%
- No, but I am interested: 10.00%
- No, I am not interested: 5.00%
Which soil tests have you done for your home garden?

- Lead/metal: 25.00%
- pH: 33.00%
- Nutrients: 25.00%
- None: 47.00%
- Other (please specify): 0.00%
Do you know which plants are best to grow in soil that might contain lead?
Would you like a food forest in your neighborhood or town?

- Yes: 90.00%
- No: 10.00%
- Other (please specify): 0.00%

Responses
On a scale of 1 to 4, where 1 is no need and 4 is a great need, please rank the following agriculture needs in your area:

- More community garden space: 3.25
- More food forests: 3.35
- More retail opportunities for market growers: 3.4
- Technical assistance or training for gardeners: 3.2

[Weighted Average]
How far are you from a store where you can purchase fresh fruits and vegetables?

- Less than one mile: 45.00%
- About one mile: 15.00%
- About two miles: 25.00%
- More than two miles: 10.00%
Technical Assistance
Technical Assistance Provided
Technical Assistance
Promoting Food Forests & Community Gardens

Support to plant or expand 4 food forests
Supporting New American Growers

• Held 3 workshops
• Provided supplies
• Improved sites
Educating At-Risk Youth

Long Creek Youth Development Center, a secure State-run facility

• Need: Vocational programs
• Many challenges:
  – Security
  – Administrative complexity
  – State government cutbacks, shutdown
  – Transient population & segregated
Benefits to At-Risk Youth

• Fills the need for entry level ag. workers
• Provides skills to grow healthy food
  – Farmers market options
• Therapeutic
• Re-connect with community in a positive way
Youth Lesson Plans

Lesson 1

Food waste, compost and the current food system

FOOD WASTE IN THE U.S. IS...

EXCESSIVE

40% OF ALL FOOD PRODUCED IN THE U.S. IS WASTED

133 BILLION POUNDS
Food wasted per year. That represents 1,249 calories per person, per day.

EXPENSIVE

$161 BILLION
Uneaten food at retailers, restaurants, and homes costs $161 billion annually

$1,500
Per capita, this amounts to over $1,500 for a family of four

ENVIRONMENTALLY HARMFUL

Food makes up 20% of landfill weight—the single largest municipal waste source

CH4 4 CO2
The methane released by food is a greenhouse gas 21 times more powerful than carbon dioxide

AN OPPORTUNITY

Diverting 15% of the food that currently goes to waste would be enough to cut the number of food insecure Americans in half

Food waste can be composted into sustainable soil additives or be used to generate electricity

Encouraging institutions to purchase so-called “ugly” produce would help farmers find new markets for healthy products that currently go to waste

*All data from U.S. Department of Agriculture and Environmental Protection Agency
www.plingree.house.gov/foodwaste
Youth Lesson Plans

Lesson 2

Cause & effect of soil health and bed prep

- Nutrients
- Erosion
- Tilling
- Pesticides
Youth Lesson Plans

Lesson 3

Preventative practices to keep plants healthy

• Soil testing
• Healthy diet / healthy soil
Youth Lesson Plans

Lesson 4

Vocational Opportunities

• Video
• Expanding options
• Choosing a career
• Communicating with employer
“Guest Speakers”

- Produced a video with local farmers and growers
- Brings the community into the facility
- Honest and from the source
Overcoming Challenges of Working with At-Risk Youth

- **4 workshops conducted to date**
  - Support from facility educators
  - Building rapport and trust with youth
- **Success followed initial workshop**
Next Steps

• Continue educating at-risk youth
  – Fee for service?
  – Sponsorship?

• Provide community-based conservation education
  – “A food forest for every neighborhood”
Thank You Partners:

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