



# HEALTHY FOOD HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

*A Decade of  
Community Food  
Projects in Action*

March 2007





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Community Food Projects 10th Anniversary Production Team gratefully acknowledges the U.S. Congress for its leadership and foresight in authorizing the Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program in Section 25 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 and for re-authorizing the program in the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002.

The Community Food Security Coalition and World Hunger Year also acknowledge the outstanding professionalism and commitment shown by the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture in the implementation of the first 10 years of the peer-reviewed Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program.

And lastly, to the more than 240 program grant recipients since 1996, we are forever indebted to you for your spirit of innovation, passion for food security for all people, and your community leadership.

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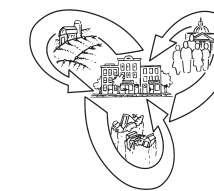
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# CREDITS



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*Community Food Security Coalition (CFSC) is a national alliance dedicated to building strong, sustainable, local and regional food systems that ensure access to affordable, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food to all people at all times.*

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### **Healthy Food, Healthy Communities Production Team:**

- |                       |                 |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Elizabeth Tuckermanty | Kami Pothukuchi |
| Dionne Toombs         | Katherine Hanks |
| Zy Weinberg           | Steph Larsen    |
| Kelly Morrison        | Andy Fisher     |
| Noreen Springstead    | Hugh Joseph     |
| Christina Schiavoni   | Rebecca Mann    |
| Jeanette Abi-Nader    | Mark Winne      |
| Scott Elliott         |                 |

### **For additional copies contact:**

- |                       |                                                                                |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Elizabeth Tuckermanty | <a href="mailto:etuckermanty@csrees.usda.gov">etuckermanty@csrees.usda.gov</a> |
| Andy Fisher           | <a href="mailto:andy@foodsecurity.org">andy@foodsecurity.org</a>               |

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# FOREWORD

Over a decade ago, the Office of then-Secretary Dan Glickman asked the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) to take over the administration of a small, competitive grants program in support of community organizations fighting hunger in America. The primary recipients of awards would be nonprofit, community-based organizations that design and implement innovative, sustainable approaches to alleviating hunger. Our responsibility would be to listen to this community, develop a Request for Applications (RFA), solicit and merit-review proposals, and provide programmatic and fiduciary oversight of the awardees. But we wanted to do more: we wanted to ensure that the sum of the projects was greater than the program. We wanted to ensure that, collectively, the individual projects had a meaningful impact on ensuring access to food in all communities. We hoped that project directors would benefit from one another's work and experiences and share what they learned with others in the hunger community.

We were apprehensive about taking on a program that was not part of our established missions in research, education, extension and international programs. The project applicants and organizations were not people we knew; the review panels would need to be comprised of "experts" we had not met; and, although there was meaningful overlap among some clients of extension, by and large CSREES had little experience with the citizens to be served by the Community Food Program (CFP). And, as it turned out, the CFP community was apprehensive about us. Within a few weeks of the announcement that CSREES would administer the CFP, concerns reached a zenith in the hunger community about the agency's ability to manage a social assistance program. Although we had little previous experience with potential grantees, the agency is very deft at running fair, expeditious, and clearly defined grants programs—and listening to program constituents.

CSREES was also fortunate to have on staff Elizabeth Tuckermanty, an expert in community nutrition and public health, who eagerly accepted the challenge of program manager and recruited Zy Weinberg to serve as panel manager. Liz and Zy became well versed not only in community food programs, but also in community gardens and farms, public/private partnerships, and in coalitions linking professionals in these fields. They have listened to those committed to fighting hunger and have creatively designed the program to expand that which works and eliminate that which fails. By its 10th anniversary, the CFP had made almost 200 grants to nonprofit and community-based organizations to innovate and test approaches to feeding the hungry. The Decade Report highlights a number of successful projects supported by the CFP and lays forth a history of discovery, information sharing, and progress for the future.

Thanks to a caring partnership who has worked with CSREES, the program has grown and continues to seek new cost-effective ways to help communities ensure that all citizens have access to healthy food, year round.

*Colien Hefferan*  
*Administrator*

# INTRODUCTION

## *The Community Food Projects (CFP) Competitive Grants Program—10 Years of Progress*

From the Sonoran Desert in southern Arizona to the densely populated neighborhoods of East New York, Community Food Projects (CFP) grantees are reaching back into the past and ahead into the future to develop new ways to produce and distribute healthy food. On the Tohono O’odham Reservation, along the Mexico and Arizona border, tribal members are battling the devastating effects of a diabetes epidemic by restoring the cultivation of traditional drought-resistant crops. New farming operations devoted to traditional foods, such as tepary beans, are developing new jobs, increasing the tribe’s food security and self-sufficiency, and leading the way to healthier diets.



Facing similar concerns caused by the limited availability of healthy food, East New York’s 200,000 residents are using CFP funds to grow vegetables on small urban farms and to distribute fresh fruits and vegetables through new farmers’ markets. The community’s young people are learning important gardening skills, and the region’s farmers and neighborhood vendors have new markets for their goods. Best of all, residents are taking charge of their local food economies and their physical health.

Since 1996, when Congress first authorized the Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program, more than 240 projects have harnessed local resources and knowledge to build food security within local communities. CFPs grow from the ethic of community self-reliance, which has always been a prominent cornerstone of the American tradition. The principles of helping one’s neighbor and of mutual aid are among the time-honored values that communities have drawn upon to maintain control over their own destinies. But, just as the old-fashioned bucket brigade soon reached the limits of its ability to put out fires, the size and complexity of today’s social and economic challenges are often too great for communities to tackle on their own.

This is certainly the case when it comes to hunger and food insecurity, nutrition and health, and farms and farmland, all of which make up what we call the food system. Today in the United States, more than 12.9 million American households, an estimated 35 million people—a population equal to that of California—are unable to purchase enough food on a regular basis (1). More than 60 percent of Americans are either obese or overweight and, nationally, we spend about \$117 billion annually on illnesses associated with obesity (2). While we can still take pride in having the most productive agricultural economy on earth, the United States loses 1.2 million acres of farmland a year, an area nearly the size of Delaware (3). Taken together, these food system concerns represent the loss of important human and natural legacies.

Since it was enacted as part of the 1996 farm bill, the CFP has provided 243 grants to private nonprofit organizations in 45 states, the District of Columbia, and 1 U.S. territory. Those grants, which have ranged in size from \$10,400 to \$300,000, have fostered innovative responses to the challenges facing local and state food systems. They have been essential in bringing together many diverse partners who, by sharing their knowledge, skills, and resources, have created local networks of enterprising solutions to some of the nation’s most intransigent food and hunger problems.

In July 1995, Texas Representative Eligio “Kika” de la Garza introduced the Community Food Security Act of 1995, the bill that would later become the Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program. He was joined at the time by a bipartisan group of 17 Congressional co-sponsors. The bill was referred to the House Committee on Agriculture and

**“The concept of community food security is a comprehensive strategy for feeding hungry people, one that incorporates the participation of the community and encourages a greater role for the entire food system, including local agriculture. There is a need to develop innovative approaches to providing food to low-income families, particularly approaches that foster local solutions and that deliver multiple benefits to communities.”**

*– Former Congressman Eligio “Kika” de la Garza as stated in the Congressional Record upon introducing the legislation that created the CFP*

food system.” Indeed, the CFP is founded on the principle of community food security, a condition in which all community residents obtain a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes community self-reliance and social justice (4).

This kind of systems thinking guides the 10-year-old program and is evident in the projects that have received funds. In places as different as Lubbock, TX, and Green Bay, WI, the CFP has played a key role in building comprehensive approaches to multiple problems. The South Plains Food Bank of Lubbock uses its 5 1/2 acre farm to produce food for the food bank. But that’s not all; the farm also serves as a demonstration site for sustainable farming practices, a youth training and job site, and a community-supported agriculture facility. In Green Bay, the Brown County Task Force on Hunger identified the region’s large Hmong population as the group most at risk for food insecurity. The Hmong benefit from small business and enterprise mentoring that allows them to develop farm- and food-related micro-businesses. Again, self-sufficiency and self-help are putting people on the road to food security.

### ***Goals and Objectives of Community Food Projects***

Congress established CFP as a program to help nonprofit, community-based organizations develop projects that require a one-time infusion of federal assistance to become self-sustaining. The programs:

- Meet the food needs of low-income people;
- Increase the self-reliance of communities in providing for their own food needs; and
- Promote comprehensive responses to food, farm, and nutrition issues.

It is interesting to note, however, that the CFP’s broad mandate in terms of food issues and its careful focus on low-income and community concerns enable the program to use its limited resources to maximum effect. By allowing the

to its Subcommittee on Department Operations, Nutrition and Foreign Agriculture, whose chairman, Bill Emerson, of Missouri, was also one of the bill’s sponsors. An additional 15 House members joined their colleagues to bring the number of co-sponsors to 33.

At the time of the bill’s introduction, Congressman de la Garza said, “The concept of community food security is a comprehensive strategy for feeding hungry people, one that incorporates the participation of the community and encourages a greater role for the entire





projects and the communities they represent to determine their priority food needs, grant funding generally has flowed to the areas where it is needed the most. For instance, at the time of CFP's initial authorization, the awareness of diet-related health problems had not reached the level that it has today. However, a significant number of grants made over the past 5 years have allowed communities to address issues such as access to healthy food, community nutrition programs, and nutrition education.

A good example of how health and diet awareness, local innovation, and CFP funding can make a difference is the Lower East Side Girls Club of New York. Building on relationships among the Girls Club, a family farm, and a community health center, a 2002 CFP grant enabled the Girls Club to set up "Juice Joints," after-school venues for healthy food. When coupled with food purchased from regional farms, job training, and business management classes, this entrepreneurial approach enabled youth participants not only to eat better, but also to earn money. In the words of Adrianna Pezzuli, the project director, "The 2002 CFP grant enabled us to expand the highly replicable Juice and Muffin Bars to reach 2,000 teens per week. [They have] increased girls' energy, resulting in increased class participation and enthusiasm in school, positively affected girls' eating habits, and enabled better self-esteem through a sense of personal bodily health."

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*– Adrianna Pezzuli, Project Director, Lower East Side Girls Club of New York*



Since its inception in 1996, the CFP Program has earned a reputation as a dynamic and adaptable force within the changing circumstances of community food needs. This was especially apparent in 2002 when Congress re-authorized the program as part of the 2002 farm bill. This legislation not only doubled the funding for the program, it added some important new revisions that allowed grants for food system infrastructure development and food policy councils. By making these amendments to the program, Congress acknowledged CFP's expanding role as a supporter of community food system innovation and recognized the need for civil society to participate in the shaping of food and agriculture policies.

One of the first groups to receive a CFP grant under the new language was San Francisco Food Systems (SFFS), a public-private partnership that works closely with the

city's Department of Public Health. Like many cities across the country, San Francisco city government recognized that it could do more to promote waste recycling, urban agriculture, the purchase of locally grown food, and better use of the Food Stamp Program. However, without the right people and skills, it was unlikely that these ideas would succeed. The CFP grant enabled SFFS to work within the structure of city government to attract more grocery stores to underserved neighborhoods, increase the use of food stamps at farmers' markets, and increase the use of regionally grown food in the city's schools. As it has done countless times across the nation, the CFP brought together stakeholders and forged partnerships to promote a healthier and more responsive food system.

As you read project profiles and review other materials in this decade report, place in your mind's eye a familiar community, organization, or local setting where people have worked together to improve the quality of their lives. At the outset the challenges may have been large and complex, the resources few, and the organizational capacity weak. But, when a spirit of innovation was encouraged, when uncommon connections between seemingly disparate elements were forged, and when a modest amount of outside support was secured, things began to change. One small success led to another and, with patience and persistence, big problems became manageable.

This has been the story of the Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program over the past 10 years. Modest grants for communities across the nation have given people the incentive they need to join arms, put their noses to the grindstone, and start the difficult task of change. It may start with a community garden on vacant land or a farmers' market in a church parking lot. These projects may lead to a youth farming business, a new food store, or a food policy council. As one success points the way to the next, more people will have access to affordable and healthy food, fewer children will go to bed hungry, and farms and farmland will stop their spiral downward. This is the goal of the Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program, to build the capacity of communities across America, in partnership with the federal government, to achieve food security for all citizens.



# COMMUNITY FOOD PROJECT PROFILES

## New York, New York Lower East Side Girls Club of New York's "Growing Girls, Growing Communities"



It is possible to make fresh, healthy food popular among urban youth, even in the heart of New York City, and the Lower East Side Girls Club of New York can prove it. You just have to make it cool, tasty, profitable, and empowering. The Girls Club received a CFP grant in 2002 for a "Growing Girls, Growing Communities" project to establish and operate "Juice Joints," after-school venues to serve healthy foods, such as smoothies and muffins.

### *Background*

Girls Club Executive Director Lyn Pentacost noticed in her visits to the local farmers' market that baked goods were always a top seller. She founded the organization's first earned-income venture, the Sweet Things Bake Shop, which yielded profits, jobs, and training for the participating girls. The Juice Joints operation was conceived as an adjunct to stress healthier foods. "We can change preferences and behavior if there's availability," claimed Pentacost.

### *Success*

The project offered job training, entrepreneurial development, and business management classes to provide high

school girls the skills to successfully run the Juice Joints independently, with business profits shared among all participants. Using locally grown produce, the girls developed their own products and menu selections and sold items from the Bake Shop.

The first Juice Joint was located in a public high school 1 day a week. Within a year, four Juice Joints were operating 5 days a week in four different schools, supplemented by a community farmers' market that improved access to fresh fruits and vegetables. Kiosks and the distribution of multilingual materials at the market promoted healthy nutrition.

The Girls Club also operates a retail Café and Juice Bar in a commercial storefront near two public high schools, a settlement house, and a number of public housing developments. The Café specializes in coffee, tea, juices, products from the Bake Shop, and other nutritious snacks and sells crafts from women's art collectives around the world. An art gallery adjoining the Café displays the work of professional artists as well as work produced in Girls Club art and photography classes.

**"The incidence of obesity among youth is what got us started. The grant enabled us to expand the highly replicable Juice and Muffin Bars, reaching [more than] 2,000 teens per week."**

*– Adrianna Pezzuli*

The Bake Shop, housed in the Girls Club kitchen, began producing healthy added-value products, such as dried fruit, granola bars, organic baby food, and more, to be sold onsite. The kitchen is open to members and their parents, who may receive training in product development, marketing, and advertising for value-added products made for household use or sale at the farmers' market.

### *Impact*

"The incidence of obesity among youth is what got us started," stated Project Director Adrianna Pezzuli. "The



grant enabled us to expand the highly replicable Juice and Muffin Bars, reaching [more than] 2,000 teens per week. In an immediate sense, the Girls Club has: increased girls' energy, class participation, and enthusiasm in school; positively affected eating habits due to increased familiarity with healthy foods and produce; made available personal health and nutrition group sessions to girls most at-risk; and enabled better self-esteem through a sense of personal bodily health.

“The Girls Club participant retention rate is extremely high—93 percent,” added Pezzuli. “In the long-term, the Girls Club will help lower the incidence of obesity, decrease the likelihood that girls will develop Type II diabetes, diminish the chances that girls will develop cardiovascular disease as they become adults, and open girls' minds to the many ways in which they can integrate physical activity into their daily lives.”

### *Vision for the Future*

The Girls Club was awarded another CFP grant in 2006 to open “The Intersn@ck Cafe,” a 5-day per week after-school and weekend healthy food Internet café for low-income youth and their families, serving food prepared with New York State and regional produce. The Intersn@ck Cafe features an entrepreneurial training program for young adults ages 18-25 transitioning out of foster care or enrolled in college part-time. This café, being constructed with New York City Council funding, opened in the fall of 2006 in the heart of an inner-city neighborhood, and will feature various teen-run programs, including: “Fit 4 Life” health and nutrition workshops for teenagers; “Tech Girls” Web design and pod-casting classes; and “First Fridays” family environmental film festivals.

## Green Bay, Wisconsin Brown County Task Force on Hunger’s “Community Garden Outreach Program”



Yia Yang emigrated from Laos in the mid-1970s, where she worked as a migrant worker in agriculture. She often reflected on the animals, rice, and vegetables she had raised before her family emigrated, so when an opportunity presented itself to use a small patch of land for gardening, Yia seized it. The garden provided healthy food for her family of eight while Yia and her husband looked for work.

With assistance from the Community Garden Outreach Program, Yia was able to expand her garden plot to one-half acre. The additional space allowed Yia and her children to raise produce for the family's needs and to sell at the Green Bay Farmers' Market. She also used the cold storage facility on the grounds to keep her produce fresh for market and improve the profitability of her operation. “Without use of this land, I would not be able to do this and help support my family,” Yia said as her daughter May Lin Yang translated.

### *Background*

Brown County has an Asian population of more than 5,700, or 2.4 percent of the population. Most Asians in the county are Hmong. Traditionally, the Hmong have agrarian roots and many of the immigrants had back-

grounds in agriculture before moving to America. While children of these immigrants are largely bilingual in Hmong and English, language is a significant barrier for many older Hmong who immigrated as adults. Other challenges faced by this community include access to farmland, lack of bilingual adult education that could help them utilize existing agricultural skills, and lack of access to business connections.

**“Without use of this land, I would not be able to [garden] and help support my family.”**

*– Yia Yang, Laotian immigrant*

The Brown County Task Force on Hunger, along with the University of Wisconsin (UW) Extension in eastern Wisconsin, completed a study on food insecurity in their community. From the study, the Hmong emerged as the population most in danger of hunger and malnutrition. Because of this study, the Brown County Task Force on Hunger partnered with UW Extension and the United Hmong Community Center for a 3-year CSREES Community Food Projects grant. The collaboration added to the residents’ skill set by increasing their proficiency in direct marketing and food safety and sanitation, and expanded the Hmong Community Center to include a shared community kitchen and micro-enterprise development.

### *Success*

Initially, project organizers planned to focus on improving food security by overcoming business challenges faced by the Hmong community. The organizers planned to coordinate bilingual education in direct marketing and mediate rented land opportunities for Hmong farmers outside the city of Green Bay. As the relationship between the Hmong and the organizers developed, it became clear that a shared community kitchen was a much higher priority to the community. Using grant funds, the community center installed a fully functional kitchen with ample storage space. In addition, 60 Hmong residents received food safety and sanitation certification, allowing the Hmong to “support community events that are the basis of their cultural beliefs and rituals,” said Project Director Karen Early with UW Cooperative Extension.

### *Impact*

Project partners continue to work together to improve the well-being of Hmong residents. To date, 40 people have participated in a small-business mentoring program that motivated more Hmong to develop micro-enterprises, such as cut flowers, greenhouses, and an egg roll business. The groups collaborated to organize an entrepreneur banquet with guests from area businesses, helping to forge connections and build bridges to span cultural gaps. With assistance from the program, 19 Hmong farmers now own land and/or livestock, and they have begun to work cooperatively to improve their own community. As the Hmong become a more visible part of the larger regional community, there is greater understanding and appreciation between cultures, leading to increases in economic and cultural opportunities for everyone.

### *Vision for the Future*

Brown County extension agents Karen Early and Cathy Huntowski report that additional opportunities for continuing bilingual adult education are in progress. Those opportunities include culinary education, direct marketing, wholesale marketing, agricultural planning, and cooperative development for beef farmers and produce growers. Hmong farmers are working with local buyers to sell their produce wholesale. As partners continue to work together, the Hmong community becomes less stigmatized and, more importantly, increasingly food-secure.



## Berkeley, California Center for Ecoliteracy's "Rethinking School Lunch"



"It's lunch hour on a luminous spring day at Berkeley High School's open campus—the perfect time to stroll to Extreme Pizza on nearby Shattuck Avenue, grab a Coke, order some pizza heaped with sausage, and sit in the California sun. But in Berkeley High's lunchroom, lines of students are waiting patiently for—get this—cafeteria food. The longest line—now, get this—is for salad." This report from the June 12, 2006, issue of *Time* reflects the revolution occurring in school lunch programs.

### *Background*

"Our goal was . . . not just to change the food on the plate, but to change the hearts and minds of young people to understand and appreciate where their food comes from," said Zenobia Barlow, executive director of the Center for Ecoliteracy in Berkeley, which received a 1998 CSREES Community Food Projects grant to tackle school food issues. The center mobilized a network of organizations and individuals interested in improving the local

food system, with the goal of enhancing food security for school-age children. They would accomplish this goal through a major transformation of the Berkeley Unified School District (BUSD) food service and by providing access to healthy school meals to the 9,400 students in the district's 15 schools.

### *Success*

In 1999, BUSD was the first school district in the United States to adopt a district-wide school food policy that encourages food purchases from sustainable local farms to the greatest extent possible, initiates instructional gardens at every school, and implements a curriculum that draws connections between the cafeteria, gardens, and classrooms. BUSD focused on food quality and freshness by altering food procurement practices to emphasize locally grown, organic produce, half of which would come from local sources by the end of the 3-year project.

BUSD actions included: eliminating the "reduced price" category of meals making free meals available to all low-income children; initiating breakfast and after-school snack programs at all schools; offering salad bars on seven campuses; serving organic fruit at breakfast and lunch in all schools; providing organic snacks for all after-school programs; offering vegetarian options for lunch; and establishing school gardens at 14 of its 15 campuses to deliver experiential education and provide greens for the salad bars. Within 3 years, 90 percent of the district's suppliers were located in the Bay Area, and local and organic food purchases constituted 44 percent of the district's total food spending.

**O**ur goal was . . . not just to change the food on the plate, but to change the hearts and minds of young people to understand and appreciate where their food comes from.

– Zenobia Barlow

In contrast to national school food trends of kitchen consolidation and outsourcing of meals, BUSD renovated and built kitchens to bring food preparation closer to the students. In early 2000, the BUSD Board unanimously proposed a \$116 million bond issue to include \$7 million



for the construction of 3 new kitchens and the renovation of 12 others; it passed in November 2000 by a margin of 83 percent.

Shortly thereafter, the Center for Ecoliteracy received a \$300,000 foundation grant to help BUSD devise a new business plan for food service operations. To enhance student education, the center held curriculum development institutes at five schools, helped plan an environmental studies program at Berkeley High School, and hired a nutritionist to assist BUSD develop a hands-on food education curriculum to be integrated into other classroom subjects.

### *Impact*

The Community Food Projects grant succeeded in boosting food security initiatives not only in BUSD, but in the city as a whole. “It’s taken 10 years to make these internal changes,” said Barlow, “but by taking a whole-systems approach, the goals of the project have become part of civic life.” The Rethinking School Lunch project has gained national exposure by providing materials through the center’s Web site at [www.ecoliteracy.org](http://www.ecoliteracy.org).

### *Vision for the Future*

“Our vision, which was supported by the Community Food Projects grant and continues today, is to make our community and region an inspiration and a model that migrates around the country and the world,” stated Barlow. “As we reclaim the authority and responsibility for the well being of our school-age population, we are reweaving connections that can be replicated everywhere—family farms with schools, health with education, and

meals with culture. As difficult as it is to change the food on the plate, it is insufficient without changing children’s knowledge and understanding.”

## Sells, Arizona Tohono O’odham Community Action’s “Traditional Foods Project”



When Tristan Reader speaks, his language is often peppered with unfamiliar words. Tristan works with the people of the Tohono O’odham Tribe, and the form of agriculture they have practiced for generations is called ak chin. Ak chin is centered on the Sonoran Desert climate system, where inhabitants cultivate crops that have adapted to absorb water quickly from the annual monsoon rains and have a short growing season. Not only have the

## GROWING FOOD, GROWING YOUTH –

In 1992, The Food Project (TFP) in Lincoln and Boston, MA, started teaching urban and suburban youth in the Boston area how to garden, with 24 young people working 2 1/2 acres of land. Today, TFP farms about 25 acres from suburban Lincoln to inner-city Roxbury, producing a quarter-million pounds of food a year. A full-time staff of 25 offers paying jobs to hundreds of students annually, and oversees the work of nearly 2,000 volunteers. Two CFP grants have turned toxic vacant city lots into income-producing gardens and generated more than \$200,000 a year from sales of salsa that uses TFP’s garden-grown ingredients.

The Food Project is featured in a 4-minute segment in video magazine format at: [http://www.csrees.usda.gov/newsroom/partners/partners\\_17.html](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/newsroom/partners/partners_17.html)

crops adapted to the unique desert climate, but over generations the O’odham people also adapted to the food they grow. Some of their staple foods, such as tepary beans, actually work to regulate blood sugar. Because of this, the members of the O’odham Tribe have developed lowered pancreatic functions.

### *Background*

Beginning in the 1930s, the traditional Tohono O’odham diet succumbed to national trends, transitioning to higher amounts of processed, sugar-laden foods. This transition harmed the health of the O’odham people because their bodies were not accustomed to having to regulate so much sugar in the blood. In the 1960s, the tribe reported zero cases of Type II diabetes. Today, the extent of cases has skyrocketed to approximately 70 percent of tribe members over age 35, the highest rate of any ethnic group in the world.

Recognizing the important role that diet played in the downturn in both the health and cultural sustainability of the tribe, Tohono O’odham Community Action (TOCA) used two Community Food Projects grants to reintroduce traditional foods to members of their community and to renew their own food self-sufficiency. They faced an uphill battle. Unemployment rates reached nearly 70 percent and the high school dropout rate was close to 50 percent. Young people were losing their sense of cultural identity and tradition, often because many of the ceremonies focused on forgotten traditional foods.

### *Success*

TOCA’s vision for this program followed three goals: increase availability of traditional foods for tribal members; promote health and cultural awareness; and bring elders together with youth. Beginning in 1998, the first CFP grant brought ak chin agriculture back to the reservation. At that time, only one elder was cultivating 1 acre of traditional food. TOCA increased the acreage and brought elders and youth together to learn more about their culture. Hampered by a 10-year drought, participants had difficulty harvesting even 500 pounds of tepary beans per acre. TOCA addressed this problem by adding irrigation to their farming practices. Although their ancestors would have relied more heavily on wild food collection and hunting during this time of drought, TOCA

believed that irrigation was the best way to make traditional foods widely available to all O’odham people.

### *Impact*

Although the reintroduction of traditional agriculture has not overcome all these challenges, it has had a positive impact on tribal members. Traditional foods are now available on a daily basis and are increasing food security and self-sufficiency, which had been absent for two generations. Work on the more than 80 acres of TOCA farmland is also providing steady jobs, which will increase the food security for those residents. Tribal members are better educated about the causes of diabetes, which prompted them to shift their discussion from mediating the disease to preventing it. The program has increased interest in the overall health of tribal members. TOCA is even assisting in organizing a coalition to promote healthy food and wellness across the reservation.

**R**ecognizing the important role that diet played in the downturn in both the health and cultural sustainability of the tribe, Tohono O’odham Community Action (TOCA) used two Community Food Projects grants to reintroduce traditional foods to members of their community.

### *Vision for the Future*

Three years after the end of the second grant, the program’s commitment to its original goals remains strong. TOCA continues to scale up agricultural production and is currently in negotiations for a long-term lease for 1,100 acres of prime agricultural land. They also plan to grow their marketing and distribution capacity both on and off the Reservation and increase education about traditional foods and health. TOCA looks forward to the day when every member of the Tohono O’odham Tribe will be able to enjoy both the cultural and positive health effects of a traditional O’odham diet.

## Bowdoinham, Maine Friends of the Bowdoinham Public Library's "Food Freaks"



Every Wednesday, the "Food Freaks," a self-named group of two dozen students ranging from kindergarten through 5th grade, dress in aprons they designed themselves and meet in the hallway just outside the Bowdoinham School kitchen. They take their job seriously, as they prepare to plant, plan, cook, or serve their latest project.

A small CSREES CFP grant, awarded in 2001 to the Friends of the Bowdoinham Public Library, supports the projects. The group, working in conjunction with the University of Maine Cooperative Extension, implemented a broad array of activities that touched the lives of a majority of the town's 2,612 residents.

### *Background*

For the Friends of the Library, who raise \$10,000 annually from plant sales to keep the community's library alive, taking steps to integrate food and education was a logical progression. The town tradition of starting school an hour late every Wednesday morning to foster community-based education activities abetted the development of the Food Freaks, according to Kathy Savoie, an extension educator and Bowdoinham resident with three children of her own in the group.

### *Success*

The project sought to reach both adults and children with educational activities centered at the community school. Extension staff adapted the state-approved Food, Land, and People (FLP) curriculum for the local system. Ten Bowdoinham teachers received training on the FLP, and Cooperative Extension created a "Teacher Toolbox" with materials for 15 lessons that were delivered to first, third, and fourth graders.

Local food producers, including a vegetable farmer, a poultry farmer, a maple syrup producer, and a beekeeper, were invited to school to speak. Schoolchildren took field trips to learn first-hand about farm environments. The project extended into the wider community by using grant funds to purchase 47 new books for the library's permanent collection on such topics as gardening, food preservation, raising animals, and nutrition.

## TURNING LIVES AROUND –

In Lubbock, TX, where one in four children is hungry or food insecure, the South Plains Food Bank received a CFP grant to engage youth, provide job training, conduct leadership development, and produce food at its 5 1/2 acre urban farm. The results have been impressive. More than 100 youth participants are pursuing healthier lifestyles by staying away from drugs, alcohol, and tobacco, while increasing their consumption of fresh produce. And, through its gardening efforts, the Food Bank has more fresh produce to distribute to hungry families.



Food production was an important aspect of the project. The library offered gardening classes covering water conservation, composting, and landscape design. The project initiated and expanded a children's gardening program. A 6-week "Greenhouse Fun" course, taught for children ages 8 to 10, included growing lettuce, developing interactive displays, and starting seedlings for outdoor planting and container gardens for seniors at the low-income, elderly housing complex. The project promoted a "Plant-A-Row" program to grow food for donation to the local emergency food pantry.

**The project started seedlings for outdoor planting and container gardens for seniors at the low-income, elderly housing complex. The project promoted a "Plant-A-Row" program to grow food for donation to the local emergency food pantry.**

Two annual community events—a Spring Brunch and a Fall Harvest Festival—involved local foods, children, and a healthy share of the community. The Spring Brunch regularly attracts more than 300 residents—more than 10 percent of the town's population. The Food Freaks, in conjunction with parents and teachers, plan the Spring Brunch and serve spelt (wheat) pancakes, ham, honey, eggs, and maple syrup. The Food Freaks and other students plant seeds each spring before school closes and use the crops for a Fall Harvest Supper, free to more than 200 town residents. The menu, featuring foods grown and prepared by the Food Freaks, includes coleslaw, pesto sauce, and apple crisp.

### *Impact*

The annual Harvest Supper, now a 6-year tradition, com-

bines with the school's open house to cement further the relationship between education and local foods. "People understand the concept, for sure," asserted Savoie. And the Food Freaks program, which has become very popular and offers positive rewards for children through the school, will definitely continue, Savoie said.

### *Vision for the Future*

School land used for the garden and greenhouse has become "an attractive focal point for the school," noted Savoie. With a strong sense of community food ingrained in kids' minds, Bowdoinham leaders plan to shift their future focus to adult education. Bolstered by a new director of parks and recreation, about a dozen master gardeners in residence, and a statewide initiative for home gardening (spearheaded by the governor's wife), the future of community food security in Bowdoinham is looking brighter and greener.

## **Sneedville, Tennessee Jubilee Project's "Clinch Powell Community Kitchens"**



### **MORE THAN A MARKET –**

East New York is a densely populated urban neighborhood where the high poverty rate has discouraged supermarkets and other high-quality retailers from doing business. The Local Development Corporation of East New York established East New York Farms! in 1998 to tackle nutrition-related illnesses by improving access to healthy food and better job opportunities. A farmers' market and a youth garden brought much-needed fresh produce to the community and new job and market opportunities for young people and farmers. Efforts are now underway to establish a storefront food cooperative.

Bill Davidson, a third generation farmer from Tennessee, began growing tobacco at an early age. “I grew my first tobacco crop when I was 12,” Bill remembers. “In those days you could pay off your debts and have a little money to start again next year. Now you go from paying debts [at the end of the year] to borrowing again for next year.”

To keep the farm, Bill started raising cattle and growing fruits and vegetables to sell directly to consumers. Upon learning about the Jubilee Project’s Clinch Powell Community Kitchens, he began bringing leftover strawberries to make jam and, later, making pickles, relishes, soup starter, salsa, and a variety of value-added products. He sells the products both from his renovated country store on the farm and through the marketing efforts of the Appalachian Spring Cooperative, organized by Jubilee Project of Sneedville.

### *Background*

Poverty and food insecurity can affect people for a variety of reasons. Steve Hodges, executive director of the Jubilee Project, noted that it is difficult for residents in Appalachia to break the cycle of generational poverty while living in one of the most economically depressed counties in the country. Before the 1930s, most of the region relied on subsistence agriculture until burley tobacco was introduced as the mainstay for most farmers in this area. The rapid decline of demand for tobacco meant that already impoverished farmers had to find alternatives in order to improve their food security.

**To date, more than 30 small businesses have used the kitchen to test their products in a low-risk environment, creating jobs in the community and much-needed income for residents.**

### *Success*

In 1999, the Jubilee Project received funding through the CSREES Community Food Projects program to establish a shared-use community kitchen. This grant funded the creation of a small-scale processing facility that enabled the local community to produce jams, jellies, and salsa. Farmers now produce their own value-added products and have the opportunity to sell their crops to another entre-

preneur for processing. The presence of a processing facility in the community allows project organizers to attract urban entrepreneurs, bringing an influx of capital and creating additional jobs.

Residents in the community continue to use traditional knowledge, such as canning, quilting, and gardening techniques, which are fast disappearing from the American experience. The CFP project brought additional skills to the community, including marketing knowledge for the value-added products. As time progressed, residents became more empowered with their new knowledge. In an effort to build on this momentum, the Jubilee Project used a second infusion of CSREES Community Food Projects funding in 2002 to organize an agricultural cooperative to market items produced in the shared-use kitchen. Members of the co-op began selling their products online and marketing gift baskets to churches and local businesses. This new marketing avenue allowed the residents to expand their customer base. To date, more than 30 small businesses have used the kitchen to test their products in a low-risk environment, creating jobs in the community and much-needed income for residents.

### *Impact*

Change occurs slowly in the mountainous region of east Tennessee, but the Jubilee Project’s positive effects are rippling through the community. The increased income and self-sufficiency have emboldened residents to challenge some of the entrenched inequalities in their community. The community is beginning to diversify, not only economically, but also in determining the future direction of growth. One small project revitalized a community that was on the brink of economic disaster and unified its residents to set their sights on a prosperous future.

### *Vision for the Future*

Building on the success of the shared-use kitchen and marketing co-op, the Jubilee Project also plans to open a retail store selling only local foods and products, develop the kitchen, and expand the Farm-to-Cafeteria project that supplies schools with locally produced food and food for people with special dietary needs. As ideas become reality, new economic opportunities for farmers and workers will emerge.

## Holyoke, Massachusetts Nuestras Raices's "Centro Agrícola"



Growing up in Salinas, Puerto Rico, Fermin Galarza's father taught him how to raise chickens and grow a variety of fruits and vegetables. Fermin brought these skills with him when he immigrated to the United States as a migrant farm worker. He settled in Holyoke, MA, 25 years ago and was one of the first to obtain a plot of land to farm from the Nuestras Raices ("Our Roots") program.

Like his father and grandfather, Fermin planted vegetables and raised chickens. He sold his products directly to the public from the farm site and at a stand at the Holyoke Farmers' Market. At the end of his first year, Fermin said,

"This year I made a bit of money, but next year, I'll know what to do better and I'll have more land. This is what my father taught me, what I teach my son, and what I love."

### *Background*

The City of Holyoke has a population of nearly 40,000. Almost half the population is of Latino decent, emigrating primarily from Puerto Rico. Many of the immigrants worked as migrant agricultural laborers, but unlike in their homeland, many of the immigrants had difficulty finding places to raise culturally important crops for their families. Nuestras Raices was formed to help residents of the community access adequate land to farm in an urban setting. The group successfully obtained and completed three CSREES Community Food Projects grants, beginning in 1996.

### *Success*

The first project, Centro Agrícola ("Agricultural Center"), converted vacant lots and abandoned buildings into a community center grounded in agriculture. The organizers also developed a model for sustainable inner-city revitalization and used funds from the first grant to build a greenhouse, restaurant, shared-use community kitchen, meeting space, library, and an outdoor plaza that has become a landmark in Holyoke. Since then, seven new small businesses have formed and have created sustainable food and farming jobs for community members.

In 2002, the food policy council expanded to organize the community around food justice and access issues. The group completed a market assessment to understand better how to develop enterprises in the city center, supported the growth of the Holyoke Food Policy Council, and looked for ways to use inner-city land for urban agriculture.

## A NEW DIRECTION SPAWNED BY DISASTER –

Hurricane Iniki devastated the Hawaiian island of Kauai in 1992, leaving one-third of the population homeless and all residents with only a 3-day food supply. A CFP grant to the Kauai Food Bank allowed them to teach emergency food recipients to grow their own food on land donated by a former plantation. This effort, now known as "Kauai Fresh," led the way to increasing the island's self-sufficiency and helping 57 local growers develop produce markets worth \$2 million in retail outlets, restaurants, and hotels.



Another project of Nuestras Raices, called Tierra de Oportunidades (“Land of Opportunities”), teaches beginning farmers and at-risk youth on its 30-acre riverfront site. The project develops value-added and direct marketing skills, as well as agro-tourism enterprises, to help farms grow and become profitable. Tierra de Oportunidades also provides access to affordable, healthful, and culturally appropriate food that may not be currently available in local supermarkets in the Holyoke region. Besides addressing the economic needs of the Latino community, Tierra de Oportunidades provides an outlet for cultural expression. The meeting space at Nuestras Raices acts as a learning center in which community members can utilize educational services, exhibit crafts, and share their culture.

**“**This year I made a bit of money, but next year, I’ll know what to do better and I’ll have more land. This is what my father taught me, what I teach my son, and what I love.”

– Fermin Galarza

### *Impact*

Nuestras Raices builds community spirit by focusing on agriculture as a shared cultural component. “The Community Food Projects program has had a very profound impact on Nuestras Raices,” said Daniel Ross, executive director. “It has been central to organizational growth each year in capacity, programs, and reach.” More importantly, Nuestras Raices is building community leadership and a stronger sense of community. Ross notes that each funded project is planned, implemented, and evaluated by the low-income people most affected by the project activities. “We have evolved a unique model that is about combining food and community development with cultural development,” Ross concluded.

### *Vision for the Future*

Plans are underway to expand the Tierra de Oportunidades compound to include a petting zoo, nature trails, a music venue, and a horse stable. Educational exhibits are being developed on such topics as environmental restoration. Not only will Tierra de Oportunidades continue to grow and be a model for

sustainable community development and revitalization, but Ross believes it will become a destination for Latinos in the Northeast who have similar ties to the land and agriculture. This program will engage and inspire others to form food and farming projects in their own communities.

## San Francisco, California San Francisco Food System’s San Francisco Food Alliance



Bringing a diverse group together and reaching consensus on an issue is a particularly challenging aspect of organizing community projects. In San Francisco, many public and private groups address issues concerning food systems and develop policy to alleviate food insecurity. One of the first goals of San Francisco Food Systems (SFFS) was to create a public-private partnership to work on common projects.

Using CSREES Community Food Projects funding, SFFS formed the San Francisco Food Alliance and opened a dialogue between nonprofits, organizations, residents, and various branches of city government, including the Departments of Public Health (DPH); Human Services; Children, Youth, and Their Families; and the Redevelopment Agency.

### *Background*

The San Francisco County Board of Supervisors passed a sustainability plan in 1997 that included a chapter on food and agriculture, dealing with such elements as

organic waste recycling, promotion of urban agriculture, institutional purchases of local foods, and increased food stamp participation among low-income residents. Most provisions of the plan languished until 2002, when the leadership of DPH took steps to implement these ideas. From the outset, DPH gave wholehearted support to SFFS and the concept of a coordinated local food system that encompasses sustainable agriculture, the environment, health, and nutrition education. The health department not only provided office space and logistical support for SFFS, but also signed a 10-year contract to ensure that SFFS will have the long-term foundation needed to carry out its mission.

### *Success*

In an effort to understand the food system better within San Francisco, the San Francisco Food Alliance brought together more than 150 people from throughout the city to assess the city's food security. They incorporated their findings into a guidebook to assist organizations performing similar assessments and to aid government officials when drafting food system policy. As a direct result of the guidebook, the Redevelopment Agency created food enterprise zones to attract grocery stores to food-insecure sections of the metropolitan area. Newly developed policies supported the use of food stamp benefits at farmers' markets, and a new citywide purchasing initiative examined how the city obtains food.

San Francisco Food Systems developed the Farm-to-Cafeteria project, which began working with the school district to examine its purchasing practices. Working together to meet the changing needs of schools and children alike, an interagency group formed to investigate local procurement possibilities. A salad bar supplied by local farmers was exceptionally popular at the pilot school. This program is now a model for schools around the country and provides input on how to educate kids, both in the classroom and the cafeteria, about healthy eating.

### *Impact*

At the project's inception, little was known about how to work within San Francisco's food system. This project developed tools to assess a situation and implement change. The resulting dialogue increased both institutional

and individual awareness of local food issues. SFFS also served as a bridge between policy and on-the-ground implementation to ensure that the intentions of a given policy were fully realized. SFFS director Paula Jones notes that San Francisco is now poised to invest even more in its food system and can serve as a model for other cities around the country.

**A**s a direct result of the [Project], the [City of San Francisco] Redevelopment Agency created food enterprise zones to attract grocery stores to food-insecure... areas. Newly developed policies supported the use of food stamp benefits at farmers' markets, and a new citywide purchasing initiative examined how the city obtains food.

### *Vision for the Future*

In the coming years, organizations will continue to work together as a part of the San Francisco Food Alliance, and there is interest in creating an Office of Food Security within city government to maintain the momentum of the program. Interest among elected officials about food systems issues remains very high.

Further action includes solidifying food system gains and making new advances. Public institutions that serve food, including hospitals, jails, youth facilities, and schools, are reworking their policies to emphasize local and sustainable sources. Community-based organizations are working together to avoid duplication. Even the city's Real Estate Department is re-examining its contracts involving vendors that sell food in city-owned buildings. "After 5 years, it's all starting to blossom," Jones said.

# EVALUATION & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Among the many values that distinguish the Community Food Projects program is its emphasis on evaluation and technical assistance. Although most of the funding for more than 10 years has supported local projects in low-income communities, 14 grants have funded national and regional training and technical assistance projects and 2 have funded evaluation. The reasons for this emphasis are logical and straightforward. If the federal government is going to be a responsible manager of the taxpayers' money, then it should seek assurance that its investment brings a reasonable return. Equally as important, communities should have the opportunity to learn from each other, to share their knowledge about what works and what does not, and how to increase their capacity to deliver the most effective services possible.

To these ends, the Community Food Projects program provided significant support to develop comprehensive evaluation resources for grantees to build their evaluation capacity. The Community Food Security Coalition (CFSC), with the help of a training and technical assistance grant, worked with grantees to assess their evaluation needs and resources to develop an integrated evaluation program. This program provides grantees with evaluation materials, training, technical assistance, tools, and results tracking. All CFP grantees receive a detailed, step-by-step evaluation manual (*Community Food Projects Evaluation Handbook*) that provides guidance and information on developing program evaluations. They also receive a companion toolkit (*Community Food Projects Evaluation Toolkit*) that contains more than 50 specific tools and templates that grantees can modify and use in their evaluations.

Perhaps the most innovative element of the evaluation support is the involvement of CFP grantees in developing the tools and their involvement as peer trainers. All of the tools in the *CFP Evaluation Toolkit* were created and pilot-tested

“ I was inspired by the way Tera (of Janus Youth Programs, in Portland, OR) empowered the youth in her program to develop the evaluation component of their project—even to develop the logic model and evaluation questions. This type of participatory evaluation shows deep respect for community members and will have a long-lasting impact. I hope to do something similar with the projects where I am working.”

– CFP Evaluation Workshop Participant, March 2004

with grantees and were designed specifically for their needs and projects. Each year, selected grantees act as grantee trainers, sharing their evaluation experiences, tools, and successes with other grantees.

Building the evaluation capacity of grantees in these ways has helped cultivate a greater culture of inquiry and accountability among community food project practitioners. With the tools and resources to ask questions about what is and isn't working with the various projects around the country, and the support of CSREES staff to modify program activities in response to evaluation results, community food project have become stronger and better able to reach their goals.

Additionally, CSREES has developed a state-of-the-art evaluation process that enables all CFP grantees to chart their projects' outputs in a group database. Compiling results from





multiple projects enables CSREES to monitor and understand the broader impacts of CFP work, to compare results across projects, and to adapt CFP grant guidelines and program operations accordingly.

**“The evaluation training and resources provided by CSREES have had a profound impact on the process of carrying out program objectives in the Navajo Nation Traditional Agricultural Outreach project. Both the method and purpose of evaluation techniques provided through CSREES trainings have guided our subsequent evaluation activities. We are particularly grateful for the consistent support of CSREES evaluation trainers in helping us establish specific benchmarks and data collection tools for carrying out our evaluation process; it has been a significant benefit to our program.”**

*– Kyril Calsoyas, Navajo Nation Traditional Agricultural Outreach, Flagstaff, AZ*

2000 to 2003, catalogued their activities, and elicited themes related to successes and challenges faced by community food projects. Some conclusions of her research follow.

### ***Community Food Projects Build Local Food Systems***

Community Food Projects adopt a systems approach to food, farming, nutrition, and hunger problems. This approach represents a significant departure from traditional approaches that treat these issues as separate domains within community and policy arenas.

CFPs offer a variety of activities, from farm and garden production, processing, waste management, distribution and marketing, and related training, policy development, and planning. Some CFPs focus intensively on a select set of activities to meet local needs, while others seek to develop entire systems by creating linkages and related policy infrastructure. Community food projects help link the health of individuals to that of farms, communities, and the environment.

This analysis documents 42 activity groups related to

The same can be said for the grants made to organizations for training and technical assistance. Since the inception of CFP grants, literally hundreds of workshops, seminars, one-on-one sessions, and other training activities have met the needs of thousands of grant recipients, project staff, and community members. The strength of training and technical assistance is that it builds a community of practice that supports shared learning and avoids the traps and pitfalls of repeating the same mistakes. The winners inevitably are the projects that deliver the services, the communities that are struggling to improve their food security, and taxpayers who are paying for this work.

### ***Understanding the Many Contributions of Community Food Projects***

In addition to improving the skills and evaluation capabilities of its grantees, CFP has been gathering data that shed light on the breadth of project activities and their lessons for communities. Dr. Kami Pothukuchi, of Wayne State University, studied 43 projects that received grants from



production, 48 in sales, 16 involving donation of product to food assistance sources, and 15 in food processing. An extraordinary 76 activities were related to curriculum development and training provided to different age and population groups, and an additional 19 activities included technical assistance. Thirty-one projects mentioned activities in raising public awareness, six included community food assessments, and five engaged in systematic community food policy development and planning.

Together, these activities paint a picture of increased community and regional food system capacity, closer links between local producers and consumers, greater integration of food systems into aspects of community life, and greater community awareness of local food issues.



### *Community Food Projects Address Significant Community Needs*

In addition to increasing access to healthy foods in at least 55 activities, study projects also contributed to local economies through business development, job training and preparedness, and employment generation in 31 activities, and native and ethnic food heritage programs in another 7 activities. In 10 projects, activities helped qualified participants enroll in government nutrition programs, and at least 4 projects developed permanent food infrastructure in the form of greenhouses and grocery stores. At least five projects focused specifically on developing youth leadership in community food issues, and seven projects showcased specific sustainability practices, such as organic production or composting.

### *Community Food Projects Build the Capacity of Communities To Help Themselves*

In addition to the activities discussed above, Community Food Projects develop and employ a variety of community improvement strategies. These include community education (39 activities), community organizing (30 activities), food policy development and organization (5 activities), and neighborhood or community planning (3 activities). In shaping community-based partnerships to deliver programs (51 nonprofit collaborations and public-private partnerships), these projects demonstrate a community systems approach to problem solving. These partnerships contribute to wider and deeper organizational networks within communities, win-win solutions, and increased civic and social capital through greater interdependence, reciprocity, and coordination.

### *Community Food Projects Develop Knowledge and Networks Nationally*

CFPs provide ways to integrate previously isolated sectors in food assistance, nutrition, sustainable agriculture, and community and economic development. Project leaders routinely share experiences in national and regional forums related to food security, local agriculture, and public health. They trade tips and analyses, create affinity groups to enhance particular areas of practice (such as urban agriculture, farm-to-cafeteria projects, or food policy councils), and engage in efforts to coordinate their interests.

The growth of CFPs has fueled the recent surge of interest in farm-to-cafeteria projects, farmers' markets, grocery stores in underserved neighborhoods, community gardening and urban agriculture projects, community-supported agriculture farms, local food guides, and food policy councils. Successful projects are providing training and technical assistance on a range of issues as well as leadership in project replication.

# A VISION FOR THE NEXT 10 YEARS

Over the past 10 years, the CFP has proven that modest-size federal grants, when combined with local resources and know-how, can galvanize the hearts and minds of citizens and give struggling communities new hope. These grants have played a major role in forging a national network of community food system practitioners who are eager to learn from each other, respect the need for evaluation and research, and know how to put good ideas into action.

There are many aspects of the CFP that are noteworthy, but its major advantage may simply be food. Since everybody eats, everybody has a stake in the food system. The CFP has given the diverse group of food system stakeholders that exists in every community, a chance to develop and implement ideas, projects, and, ultimately, solutions. These new and exciting linkages are seen every day as local planners work with food program advocates, as public health officials engage community development groups, and as farmers see their futures increasingly tied to local markets. The silos that held narrowly defined interest groups captive for so long are now crumbling, which opens up an infinite number of opportunities for creative and dynamic problem solving.

What might the next 10 years look like for the CFP and the community-based solutions it fosters? Based on its performance to date, we expect that the CFP will be in the vanguard of an ever-expanding universe of solutions that are bringing healthful food to all Americans, restoring the economic prosperity of communities, and ensuring the viability and sustainability of local agriculture. Increasingly, we expect to see more people of all ages and backgrounds first becoming educated food consumers, and then becoming engaged food citizens. As healthful food and healthy eating become the norm, we anticipate that more people will look for broader regional and policy-based answers to the problems that continue to beset their communities. Knowledgeable eaters are more likely to roll up their sleeves and work with a variety of groups to tackle their food systems' tough problems.

We also believe that a reinvigorated local agriculture sector is a part of the future. Whether farming in cities, at the city's edge, or in rural areas, local agriculture will make an ever-growing contribution to the health, food security, and general well-being of America's communities. This vision extends as well to the ability of all people, regardless of economic status or residency, to secure for themselves healthful and affordable food. As nonprofit organizations, local and state governments, and their federal partners increase their capacity to support community economic development, easily accessible and affordable food outlets will be available to all.

For those who have seen the promise of the Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program become a reality in places both large and small, in every corner of America, the next 10 years look exceedingly bright.





# COMMUNITY FOOD PROJECTS PROGRAM GRANTEES BY STATE & YEAR(S) FUNDED

## ALABAMA

Upper Sand Mountain Methodist Larger Parish, Sylvania (1998)  
Alabama Rural Heritage Foundation, Thomaston (2001)  
Jones Valley Urban Farm, Birmingham (2006)

## ALASKA

Nome Community Center, Nome (2005)

## AMERICAN SAMOA

Native Resources Developer, Pago Pago (2002)

## ARIZONA

Tohono O'odham Community Action, Sells (1997) (2001)  
Seba Dalkai School Board, Winslow (1998)  
Tucson Audubon Society, Tucson (1998)  
Arizona-Mexico Border Health Foundation, Tucson (1999)  
Hopi Pu'tavi Project, Second Mesa (2001)  
Developing Innovations in Navajo Education, Flagstaff (2002)  
Northern Arizona University Foundation, Flagstaff (2003)  
Natwani Coalition, Hotevilla (2004)

## ARKANSAS

Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group, Elkins (2003)

## CALIFORNIA

Community Alliance with Family Farmers Foundation, Davis (1996) (2005)  
Southland Farmers Market Association, Los Angeles (1996)  
Community Food Security Coalition, Venice (1997) (2000) (2002) (2003) (2004)  
San Francisco League of Urban Gardeners, San Francisco (1998) (2001)  
Center for Ecoliteracy, Berkeley (1998)  
Rural California Housing Corporation, Sacramento (1998)  
Escondido Community Health Center, Escondido (1998)  
Occidental College, Los Angeles (1999) (2004)  
United Indian Health Services, Trinidad (1999)  
BOSS Urban Gardening Institute, Berkeley (2000)  
Mercy Foundation/CA State University, Sacramento (2000)  
Compton Community College Development Foundation, Compton (2001)\*  
Center for Urban Agriculture at Fairview Gardens, Goleta (2002)  
San Francisco Food Systems, San Francisco (2002)  
Environmental Justice Institute/Tides Center, Oakland (2003)  
Los Angeles Leadership Academy, Los Angeles (2003)  
Fresno Metropolitan Ministry, Fresno (2003)  
Ecology Center, Berkeley (2003)  
Downtown El Cajon Community Development Corporation, El Cajon (2004)  
Life Learning Academy/Delancy Street Foundation, San Francisco (2004)  
Sustainable Economic Enterprises of Los Angeles, Los Angeles (2004)  
AnewAmerica Community Corporation, Berkeley (2004)  
Thai Community Development Center, Los Angeles (2006)  
Whittier Area First Day Coalition, Whittier (2006)  
Girls 2000, San Francisco (2006)

## COLORADO

Denver Urban Gardens, Denver (1996)  
Growing Gardens of Boulder, Boulder (2000)  
Rocky Mountain Farmers' Union Cooperative Development Center, Aurora (2002)  
National Conference of State Legislatures, Denver (2005)  
Southern Ute Community Action Program, Durango (2005)

## CONNECTICUT

Hartford Food System, Hartford (2003)

## DELAWARE

Food Bank of Delaware, Newark (2001)

## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Association for Community-Based Education (1997)  
Community Harvest (2002)

## FLORIDA

Florida Certified Organic Growers and Consumers, Gainesville (2000) (2003)  
Florida Educational Development Corporation, Gretna (2001)

## GEORGIA

Five Loaves and Two Fish Food Pantry, Griffin (1997)  
Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund, East Point (2003)  
Rolling Hills RC&D Council, Dallas (2004)

## HAWAII

Kauai Food Bank, Lihue (1996)  
Zen Center of Hawaii, Kamuela (1999)  
Wai'anai Community Re-Development Corporation, Wai'anai (2001)  
Na Po'e Hoa 'Aina, Pahoehoe (2001)

## IDAHO

Rural Roots, Moscow (2005)

## ILLINOIS

Centro San Bonifacio, Chicago (2001)  
Center for Neighborhood Technology, Chicago (2002)  
Illinois Stewardship Alliance, Rochester (2003)  
Seven Generations Ahead, Oak Park (2005)

## INDIANA

Community Kitchen of Monroe County, Bloomington (1996)  
Mid-North Food Pantry, Indianapolis (2006)  
Middle Way House, Bloomington (2006)

## IOWA

Practical Farmers of Iowa, Ames (1997) (2003)

## KANSAS

Kansas Rural Center, Whiting (1998) (1999) (2005)  
Stardusters Crime Prevention, Topeka (2000)  
Kansas Center for Urban Agriculture, Kansas City (2005)

## LOUISIANA

ECOnomics Institute, Loyola University, New Orleans (1996)  
Beauregard Community Action Association, DeRidder (1997)  
Parkway Partners Program, New Orleans (1999)  
New Orleans Food and Farm Network, New Orleans (2006)

## MAINE

Coastal Enterprises, Wiscasset (1996) (1997) (2003)  
Maine Coalition for Food Security, Portland (1998)  
Friends of the Bowdoinham Public Library, Bowdoinham (2001)  
Cultivating Community, Portland (2002) (2005)  
Unity Barn Raisers, Unity (2004)

## MARYLAND

Garden Harvest, Glyndon (1998) (2004)  
Civic Works, Baltimore (1999)  
Red Wiggler Community Farm, Clarksburg (2006)

## MASSACHUSETTS

Nuestras Raices, Holyoke (1996) (2002) (2005)  
The Food Project, Lincoln (1996) (2000) (2004)  
Community Teamwork, Lowell (2000) (2003)  
Re-Vision House, Dorchester (2002)  
The "X" Main Street Corporation, Springfield (2002)  
Red Tomato, Canton (2003)  
Seeds of Solidarity Education Center, Orange (2003)  
Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture, South Deerfield (2004)  
Cambridge Health Alliance, Cambridge (2005)  
Tufts University (2005)  
Groundwork Lawrence, Lawrence (2006)  
United Teen Equity Center, Lowell (2006)  
Somerville Community Corporation, Somerville (2006)

## MICHIGAN

Hunger Action Coalition of Michigan, Detroit (1997)  
Neighborhood Renewal Services of Saginaw, Saginaw (1999)  
Michigan Integrated Food and Farming Systems, East Lansing (2002)  
Capuchin Soup Kitchen, Detroit (2003)  
West Michigan Environmental Action Council, Grand Rapids (2006)

Allen Neighborhood Center, Lansing (2006)  
Warren/Conner Development Coalition, Detroit (2006)

## MINNESOTA

Youth Farm and Market Project, Minneapolis (1997) (2001) (2006)  
Community Design Center of Minnesota, St. Paul (1999)  
East Side Neighborhood Development Company, St. Paul (1999)  
Land Stewardship Project, Montevideo (2003)  
White Earth Land Recovery Project, Ponsford (2003)

## MISSISSIPPI

Mississippi Food Network, Jackson (2000)  
Mid-Delta Community Center, Cleveland (2001)  
Mississippi Association of Cooperatives, Jackson (2001)

## MISSOURI

Missouri Rural Crisis Center, Columbia (1998) (2000) (2006)  
Putnam County Foundation, Unionville (2001)  
Saint Louis University, St. Louis (2004)  
Gateway Greening, St. Louis (2005)

## MONTANA

Missoula Nutrition Resources, Missoula (1996) (1997)  
Little Big Horn College, Crow Agency (1998)  
Lake County Development Corporation, Ronan (2002)  
Missoula Food Bank, Missoula (2005)

## NEBRASKA

City Sprouts, Omaha (1999)  
Lincoln Action Program, Lincoln (2002)  
United Methodists for Mission and Justice, Omaha (2005)  
Open Harvest Natural Foods Cooperative, Lincoln (2006)

## NEW JERSEY

Isles, Inc., Trenton (1997)  
Rutgers University Foundation, New Brunswick (2002)  
The Food Bank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties, Neptune Township (2002)

## NEW MEXICO

New Farms, Rociada (1999)  
Rio Grande Community Farms, Albuquerque (2000)  
Friends of the Santa Fe Farmers' Market (2001)  
Farm to Table, Santa Fe (2001) (2003) (2006)  
Taos County Economic Development Corporation, Taos (2002) (2006)  
Dixon Cooperative Market, Dixon (2004)  
Pueblo de Pojoaque, Santa Fe (2005)

## NEW YORK

Community Food Resource Center, New York City (1997)  
Just Food, New York City (1997) (2003)  
North East Block Club Alliance, Rochester (1999)  
Bounty of the County, Hudson (2000)  
Council on the Environment, New York City (2002)  
Local Development Corporation of East New York, New York City (2002) (2006)  
Lower East Side Girls Club of New York, New York City (2002)  
Massachusetts Avenue Project, Buffalo (2004)  
American Community Gardening Association, New York City (2005)  
Rochester Roots, Rochester (2005)  
Broadway Market Management Corporation, Buffalo (2006)  
City Harvest, New York City (2006)

## NORTH CAROLINA

Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina, Kinston (2006)

## NORTH DAKOTA

Parshall Resource Center, New Town (2003)\*

## OHIO

Rural Action, Athens (1999)  
Stratford Ecological Center, Delaware (2002)  
Appalachian Center for Economic Networks, Athens (2003) (2005) (2006)  
Ecological Design Center, Oberlin (2004)  
American Community Gardening Association, Columbus (2006)  
Toledo Area Ministries, Toledo (2006)

## OKLAHOMA

Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture, Poteau (2004)  
Legacy Cultural Learning Community, Muskogee (2006)

## OREGON

Janus Youth Program, Portland (2001) (2005)  
Food for Lane County, Eugene (2002)  
Community Action Resource Enterprises, Tillamook (2003)  
Ecotrust, Portland (2003)  
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, Portland (2005)

## PENNSYLVANIA

Black United Fund of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia (1998)  
Farmers' Market Trust, Philadelphia (1998)  
West Philadelphia Partnership, Philadelphia (1999)  
Southwest Pennsylvania Food System Council, Homestead (1999)  
Norris Square Civic Association, Philadelphia (1999)  
South Central Community Action Program, Gettysburg (2002)  
Greensgrow Philadelphia Project, Philadelphia (2002)

## RHODE ISLAND

Southside Community Land Trust, Providence (2002) (2004)  
Rhode Island Association of Conservation Districts, Warwick (2003)

## SOUTH CAROLINA

Lowcountry Food Bank, North Charleston (2005)

## SOUTH DAKOTA

Center for Permaculture as Native Science, Mission (2000)\*

## TENNESSEE

Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee, Knoxville (1996) (1998)  
Narrow Ridge Center, Washburn (1997) (1998)  
Jubilee Project, Sneedville (1999) (2002)  
Rural Resources, Greenville (2004)

## TEXAS

Urban Harvest, Houston (1997)  
Sustainable Food Center, Austin (1997) (2004)  
South Plains Food Bank, Lubbock (2000)  
Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group, Fredericksburg (2006)

## VERMONT

Vermont Campaign to End Childhood Hunger, South Burlington (1997)  
Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont, Richmond (2000) (2004)  
Shelburne Farms, Shelburne (2003)

## VIRGINIA

Washington Area Gleaning Network, Alexandria/Lorton (1998) (2004)  
American Community Gardening Association, Blacksburg (2003)  
First Nations Development Institute, Fredericksburg (2004)  
Appalachian Sustainable Development, Abingdon (2005)  
Lynchburg Grows, Lynchburg (2006)

## WASHINGTON

Institute for Washington's Future, Seattle (1996)  
Tahoma Food System, Tacoma (1997)  
Church Council of Greater Seattle, Seattle (1998)  
Lopez Community Land Trust, Lopez (1999)  
South Puget Intertribal Planning Agency, Shelton (2000)  
Sunfield Education Association, Port Hadlock (2005)  
Cascade Land Conservancy, Seattle (2006)  
Garden-Raised Bounty, Olympia (2006)

## WEST VIRGINIA

Lightstone Foundation, Moyers (1996)

## WISCONSIN

West Central Wisconsin Community Action Agency, Glenwood City (1999)  
Brown County Task Force on Hunger, Green Bay (2001)  
Council for the Spanish Speaking/Loyola Academy, Milwaukee (2001)  
Hunger Task Force of Milwaukee, Milwaukee (2002)  
Cooperative Development Services, Madison (2002)  
Growing Power, Milwaukee (2004) (2005) (2006)

\*Funding awarded but project never implemented.

# Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program Funding Request & Grant History

	# Proposals received	# Proposals funded	Total \$\$ requested*	Total \$\$ funded
FY96	122	13	17,826,541	1,110,000
FY97	120 regular 3 training and technical assistance (T&TA)	16	17,181,685 310,400	2,198,675 195,400
FY98	71	18	12,071,311	2,400,000
FY99	109	20	19,553,632	2,400,000
FY00	113 regular 4 T&TA	15	21,536,503 944,169	2,154,000 246,000
FY01	117	19	20,620,778	2,400,000
FY02	101	28	16,826,419	4,336,900
	1 Evaluation	1	220,000	220,000
FY03	124 regular 17 T&TA	25	26,244,337** 3,426,515**	4,100,000 500,000
FY04	109 regular 14 T&TA	20	22,657,834 3,031,484	3,995,022 604,978
FY05	146 regular 16 T&TA	21	32,623,843 3,358,402	3,950,000 650,000
FY06	122 regular 18 T&TA 46 Planning	16 4 12	28,032,454 3,710,296 1,052,971	3,850,000 500,000 250,000
TOTAL		243	251,229,574	36,060,975

\*Individual applicant requests over the maximum were reduced before totaling.  
\*\*Maximum funding request level raised from \$250,000 to \$300,000.

## Application Information for the Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program

The Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program is a unique government initiative that fosters leadership among community organizations in developing and improving local food systems. By statute, only private, nonprofit organizations are eligible to apply for standard project funds. However, a competitive application often includes collaborations with public institutions and private, for-profit entities that bring in outside expertise and enhance local support to construct a project that will truly benefit low-income people, enhance the community, and coincide with regional priorities.

Application requirements and evaluation criteria are subject to annual adjustments. Individuals and organizations interested in applying for CFP funds are advised to review program guidelines at:

<http://www.csrees.usda.gov/fo/fundview.cfm?fonum=1080>

For additional information about Community Food Projects, including information about past and currently funded projects, contact the World Hunger Year Food Security Learning Center at: [www.worldhungeryear.org/fslc](http://www.worldhungeryear.org/fslc).

### References

1. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, Household Food Security in the United States, 2005, Washington, D.C. Economic Research Report 29, November 2006.
2. Institute of Medicine. Preventing Childhood Obesity. National Academies Press, Washington, D.C., 2005.
3. American Farmland Trust, Washington, D.C., 2006.
4. As defined by Dr. Mike Hamm, Michigan State University, and Dr. Anne Bellows, Rutgers University, on the World Hunger Year Food Security Learning Center Web site, [http://www.worldhungeryear.org/fslc/faqs/ria\\_061c.asp?section=1&click=1](http://www.worldhungeryear.org/fslc/faqs/ria_061c.asp?section=1&click=1).