REFUGFEE AGRICULTURAL PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM
The Refugee Agricultural Partnership Program (RAPP) through public and private partnerships provides agricultural and food related resources and technical information to refugee families that are consistent with their agrarian backgrounds, and results in rural and urban farming projects that supports increased incomes, access to quality and familiar foods, better physical and mental health, and enhanced integration into this society.
KEY ELEMENTS

- 10 Grantees
- Refugee Agriculture Listserv w/160 subscribers
- Technical Assistance Contract with the Institute for Social and Economic Development (ISED)
- ISED Website w/Technical and Project Information ([http://www.ised.us](http://www.ised.us))
  - Technical Advisor – Dan Krotz – danielkrotz@gmail.com
- MOU between USDA & DHHS
KANSAS CITY, KS
RAPP PROJECT

- Grantee – Catholic Charities,  Sub-grantee – Kansas City Center for Urban Agriculture
- 7 acres of land next to a Public Housing complex
- 2008 – 8 market gardeners & 6 family gardeners
- 2009 – 11 market gardeners, 8 family gardeners & 40 community gardeners
BROAD OBJECTIVES

- Precursor to becoming independent farmers
- Better food, nutrition and health
- Supplemental income
- Enhance integration into the community
OTHER DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Broader community impact – encourage other members of the community to plant gardens
- Create better mutual understanding and reduce community tensions
CHALLENGES

- Soil is difficult because of debris & drainage
- Less production
- Participants wed to this location and are reluctant to move to another site.
- Language & literacy limitations and cultural differences mean extra time and work for the grantee and volunteers particularly in support of production and marketing
- Preparation of produce and transportation
- Community acceptance
- Deciding on how and when to reduce dependency
SOLUTIONS TO THE ABOVE

- Find better land & provide up front orientation
- Language classes and on-site help with especially production & marketing
- On-site technical assistance & bi-weekly field tours
- Staff and volunteer help in preparation of produce and at 2 farmers markets in terms of counting change, interacting with customers, etc.
- Broad network of agencies that include Cooperative Extension, city government, neighborhood organization and area health organizations
- 20% of market proceeds goes into a bank account for purchasing seeds and other supplies for the next year
- Establishment of a seed bank that participants can purchase from
- Partnerships are essential
OUTCOMES

- Better food & nutrition and supplemental income
- Learning of new skills related to finance, marketing & interacting with others
- Client satisfaction?
- Increased community interest in gardens
- “Salt of the Earth” Youth Farming Project (Third Street Church of God)
- Oak Grove Neighborhood Association & the Walnut Boulevard Neighborhood Association are actively promoting gardens
- CSA tied to the Brookside Farmers Market
- Greater interest in the utilization of EBT machines for SNAP and WIC Coupons at farmers markets
- Partnerships that include many community organizations.
OVERALL LESSONS/UNDERSTANDINGS

- Great interest by many organizations in sustainable agriculture
- Holistic approach that needs to be concerned with production, financing, accessing land, marketing, impact of culture and language, partnerships, etc.
- Up front client assessment is important
- Agriculture is more important than just achieving more income
- Other market outlets offer profit potential but have greater requirements (i.e. proper harvesting, transportation, cold storage, consistency of quality and quantity)
OVERALL LESSONS/UNDERSTANDINGS

- Greater demand for locally grown and fresh food
- Urban growth (sprawl) has negative impact
- Micro-loans for the purchase of supplies, equipment are not readily available.
- Community gardens serve multiple purposes particularly in “food desert” areas
- Food & Nutrition Service Programs (SNAP, WIC, Seniors Coupons) are under-utilized at farmers markets and other locations
Interest in community gardens has increased because of the economy & lower educational and literacy levels of refugee arrivals compared to 5 or 10 years ago.

Refugees live predominantly in urban areas because of ethnic enclaves & the availability of social services.

Most have off farm income in part because of medical coverage.

Some newly arrived refugees are moving to small towns with meat processing companies.

Promoting institutional change is sometimes the best way to obtain better services.

Project effectiveness can be limited by organizational mission and capacity.

OVERALL LESSONS/UNDERSTANDINGS
REFUGEE AGRICULTURAL PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

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