

Northeast District Funding for Innovative Programs

Project Title: Reducing Food Insecurity in the Hmong Population through Oriental Vegetable Trials

Project Lead and Collaborators

- **Judy Knudsen**, Family Living Educator/Department Head, Brown County UW-Extension, (920) 391-4651 (LEAD)
- **Bill Wright**, Community Garden Coordinator, Brown County UW-Extension/Brown County Food and Hunger Network, (920) 391-4658
- **Lee Meyer**, Brown County Food and Hunger Network, (920) 336-3716
- **Paul Hartman**, Horticulture Agent, Brown County UW-Extension, (920) 391-4611

Situation Statement

Research shows that the Hmong population suffers the highest level of food insecurity of all ethnic groups in Green Bay. Of all households surveyed, Hmong indicated the greatest interest of all ethnic groups in community gardens as an initiative that would help them get the food they needed. Hmong gardeners have difficulty in locating preferred seed varieties at reasonable prices and in desired quantities. Conversations with Hmong populations in California, Minnesota and Wisconsin have revealed little information on identifying cultivars of vegetables grown and obtaining seeds at a reasonable cost. This cross divisional proposal will incorporate a research component as well as the development of educational materials to address this need. The Brown County UW-Extension Office will partner with Brown County Food and Hunger Network, Northeast Wisconsin Master Gardeners, and volunteer Hmong gardeners to identify specific cultivars of culturally appropriate vegetables that can be grown successfully. Seeds will be gathered from successfully producing cultivars, and a seed saver exchange will be created to ensure Hmong gardeners will have access to these seeds in future years. Educational materials will be disseminated to UW-Extension Nutrition Educators, Community Garden Coordinators, faculty and staff providing information about culturally appropriate vegetables that successfully grow in Northeast Wisconsin as well as the preparation of these vegetables.

Project Goal(s)

Reducing food insecurity of the Hmong population through the identification of specific cultivars of vegetable species that can be grown successfully in Northeast Wisconsin, thus ensuring access to high quality, culturally appropriate foods.

Outcomes

- 1) Through research, to determine specific cultivars of culturally appropriate vegetable species that can be grown successfully in Wisconsin.
- 2) Create an opportunity for Hmong gardeners to participate in a gardening project that will increase the variety and amount of seeds available for planting in future years.
- 3) To locate culturally appropriate cultivars that when grown can help reduce the incidence of food insecurity.
- 4) Through the development of educational materials, UW-Extension Nutrition Educators, Community Garden Coordinators and other faculty and staff will learn about the specific cultivars of vegetable species grown by the Hmong population that can be raised successfully as well as how to utilize these cultivars in preparing culturally appropriate foods.
- 5) Expose a potential employee (summer intern) to UWEX.

Northeast District Funding for Innovative Programs

Timeline

2003

January	Determine varieties to be trialed Order seeds Divide seeds into individual packets Develop information sheet for participants (English and Hmong) Develop presentation for various groups
February	Recruit volunteers to grow seeds Recruit and interview intern candidate
March	Orientation meeting for all volunteers
March-April	Start seeds indoors at appropriate times
April	Site prep Acquire miscellaneous materials
May	Plant control garden
May-September	On-going monitoring of control and volunteer plots
August	Class for volunteers on the proper methods of saving seeds
September-October	Harvest dinner/taste trials
October-November	Summarize results and develop educational materials

Evaluation Plan

Information will be collected on the cultivars grown in the control garden as well as by individual Hmong gardeners. Information collected on each cultivar will include susceptibility to insects and diseases, yield, and taste. Individual gardeners will also participate in a follow-up telephone survey (translated into Hmong when necessary.) An evaluation will be developed for use with the training materials and video.

Proposed Budget and Funding Request

A request of \$5,080 is being made for this project. An explanation of how the money will be used follows.

Salaries

Bill Wright, Community Garden Coordinator 6 hrs./wk. x \$15/hr. x 18 wks.	\$1,620
Hmong Translation 12 hrs. x \$25/hr.	300
Intern 20 hrs./wk. x \$7.75/hr. x 12 wks.	1,860
Supplies & Expenses	
Travel	300
Garden Supplies Mulch, Fertilizer, Etc.	500
Educational Materials Printing and Distribution of Materials	500

Outside Funding

Seeds \$125 – provided by USDA Hmong Food Security Grant
Plowing \$390 – provided by USDA Hmong Food Security Grant

The Brown County UW-Extension Office and Brown County Food and Hunger Network will provide in-kind contributions to this project.

Past Resource Management Funds

This project has not been previously submitted.