

Susan Richardson
Urban Garden Coordinator
3365 W. Brewster Street
Appleton, WI 54914-1602



920-832-5119
TTY: 920-832-1688
FAX: 920-832-4783
suzan.richardson@ces.uwex.edu

November 3, 2005

TO: Resource Management Team

RE: Eastern District Funding For Community Garden Partnership


Final Report

The Community Garden Partnership has, over the past two years, been active in responding to the needs of the Fox Valley community as requests for garden development, innovation and education have been received. The 2005 growing season was particularly challenging in that respect.

There is and will continue to be a need to respond to our communities in ways that are far-sighted, creative and ambitious. The Eastern District Resource Management team's faith in that process is deeply appreciated by myself and others who have reached out beyond their comfort zone to move projects that challenge the known and strive to develop new ways to make "civic green space via community gardening" a true arena for education and relevancy in our communities.


I am personally proud of these accomplishments and am hopeful that the 2005 Community Garden initiatives represent for the team a solid framework for continued support and participation with the Community Garden Partnership.

Sincerely,



SUSAN RICHARDSON
Community Garden Partnership



A program of Goodwill NCW 

PROJECT ONE

The initiative for families and individuals, referred by Goodwill Industries NCW and Salvation Army, to receive free garden sites and basic education was quite successful. WNEP educator Darlene Kramer and myself provided two educational events that offered basics of gardening and food preparation for 22 adults and children. Of that group, eight received free garden sites. I provided follow-up and on-going support to gardeners who needed further assistance, education and resources.

PROJECT TWO

The development of the perennial/annual demonstration site (at the UW-Fox Community Garden) is continuing in the development stage. Winnebago County Highway Department and the City of Appleton's Park and Recreation Department provided an in-kind donation of topsoil. Additionally, a local landscaper was, at a much-discounted rate, partnered to deliver the Park and Recreation Department's donation. That bill was paid by UW-Fox administration. Perennial/annual seed was supplied by the America the Beautiful donation from 2004. The mulching/composting site at the garden was given a huge boost by the addition of wood chips from the site clearing for the perennial/annual bed. That cost was also covered by UW-Fox administration.

PROJECT THREE

The development of a Community Garden site in Sherwood and a rainwater garden in Calumet County was hampered by several unexpected developments. Initially, both sites were to be developed with the expectation that they would be used as educational models to address a groundwater contamination problem (using environmental stewardship and conservation practices) in the Calumet County area. Dual funding was sought through WEEB (Wisconsin Environmental Education Board) and the Resource Management funding initiative. (THE LATER WAS, OF COURSE, BROADER WITH RESPECT TO THE WHOLE OF THE COMMUNITY GARDEN PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM). WEEB funding did not materialize. All garden supplies (for both sites) and plantings were purchased with Resource Management funding.

Partnerships were sought (in conjunction with UW-Extension Calumet County) with Calumet County Master Gardeners, Calumet County Groundwater Guardians and various businesses and individuals who expressed an interest in the project. Those partnerships only partially developed and the results were reflective of a multitude of issues. Those include, communication, relevancy and general development issues that may need to be addressed in the future if these types of collaborations are to take hold in areas that may have a disconnect with the broader picture of capacity building in and for rural communities. Nonetheless, a small Community Garden and rainwater garden were developed at two sites in Calumet County. A private landowner on County Road "S" in Sherwood donated one site and the other site was developed at the Depot on Vogt Lane in Chilton. One meeting of Calumet County Groundwater Guardians, Calumet County Master Gardeners, UW-Extension CRD agent, Calumet County Land Conservation ground water specialist and myself occurred at the Community Garden site late in the summer to discuss the future of Community Gardens in Calumet County. Additional meetings followed with UW-Extension Calumet County staff, Calumet County Groundwater Specialist and Community Gardens Partnership (myself) to extend that discussion into the practical needs of the Calumet County community. As mentioned, Community Garden Partnership initiatives in Calumet County have met with a relevancy issue...the future of this type of collaboration is to be blunt "iffy".

FOOD COOPERATIVE

Directions for the future of this initiative remain fluid...multiple partnerships may emerge. Partners may include Appleton Downtown Inc.'s Farm Market, Appleton's Winter Farm Market and Bridges Healthy Cooking School. The Community Garden Partnership is committed to the full breadth of developing multiple means for civic green spaces that offer opportunities for collaborations that strengthen a community's infrastructure and response to local food security and self-sufficiency.

The gardens are increasingly becoming a source of support for community events that feature food but provide an arena for dialogue, education and inclusion. Multiple garden donations were made to area food pantries, emergency shelters, Salvation Army, Bridges Healthy Cooking School and ABC program in Appleton. Food donations were made to Fox Cities Multicultural Center's FOOD OF ALL NATIONS gathering early this fall. Garden floral appeared at that event and at multiple other community events when requested with total vegetable donations in excess of 3000 pounds.

Appleton Downtown Farm Market sponsored a booth for a Community gardener to showcase and sell produce she and her family raised in their garden site at GV/Casaloma. This resulted in a net profit of \$600.00 additional dollars to her; and, of course, a huge savings in her weekly grocery bill.

As a result of the work of the 2005 season new collaborations are emerging and "blossoming" into exciting potentials for the coming years. That is the litmus test for all the work and risks.

The continued challenge is to remain committed to development and ultimately to sustainability rooted in relevancy. By this definition, any educational partnership requires the participation of multiple organizations and multiple decision makers and a willingness to place these collaborative efforts in the public arena with pride and resolve.

I trust this.

Attachments

1. Project # 1-WNEP Questionnaire & responses handouts
2. Project # 2-CalumetCounty Pre/Post Questionnaire
3. Hmong recipe handouts distributed at ADI Farm Market during 2005 season
4. Outagamie County Report Center Fund Raiser
5. Financial Sheet
6. UW-Fox Community Gardens