

**Brown County
RM Report
Organic Methods and Certification Education for Hmong Clients**

Situation Statement:

While nationwide the market for certified organic products is growing 18-20% annually, there still is a great deal of confusion as to what organic means and what is required for growers to be certified organic. The Brown County UW-Extension Community Gardens Program has encouraged organic methods for many years. However, the Community Garden site located on Hwy. 54 in Brown County is owned by the Oneida Tribe of Wisconsin and carries the stipulation that gardeners must use organic methods on this site.

Response:

M.O.S.E.S. (Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service) had received a grant to conduct seminars at four locations in the state to educate market growers about organic production and the basics of certification. They agreed to conduct a session in Green Bay for Hmong gardeners and growers with the use of an interpreter. During the two-hour Hmong presentation, participants were instructed in the use of floating row covers and given 12-foot pieces to use in their own gardens.

Results:

Twenty-nine Hmong gardeners, including a family from Wausau, attended the seminar which was conducted by Jody Padgham of M.O.S.E.S. Each gardener was given a piece of floating row cover to use. Follow-up interviews yielded the following results:

17 families utilized the row cover

3 families did not use the row cover

Note: 2 families could not be located due to disconnected phone service

All families who used the row cover said they would use it again.

Evidence:

The program was evaluated using the results of follow-up interviews as well as the number of people who attended the program.