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Growing Local: Training New and Beginning Urban Farmers in New Orleans, LA (and beyond)

Emily Posner

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Recirculating Farms Coalition

Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development
Program Award No **2015-70017-22880**



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Project Audience

- We work with a wide range of community members, with an extra focus on:
 - Women
 - Vets
 - Historically low income, underserved neighborhoods/individuals
- Come from mainly LA, but also elsewhere – Tenn, Miss, AL, AR
 - Hydroponics, aquaponics, honey bees, fruit orchards, greens, community programs (vets, at risk youth, seniors)
 - All beginning, under 10 years experience – new wave of growers!



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Partners/Collaborators

- Who are the key people on your team?
 - Marianne Cufone, RFC, Project Director
 - Emily Posner, RFC, Policy/Legislation Asst Project Director
 - Tracy Koy, RFC, Surveys, Monitoring, Data collection
 - Micheal Crumpler, RFC, Administration and Operations
 - Growing Local NOLA volunteers
- Regular Community Partners
 - New Orleans Food and Farm Network
 - NOLA Fruit Tree Project
 - Capstone 118
 - LA Master Gardeners Program
 - Universities (Xavier, UNO, Delgado, Loyola, Tulane)
 - USDA (FSA, NRCS, LSU Extension)



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Key Approach(es)

- How are we helping?
- Workshops/courses/demonstrations
- Community farm
- Internships
- Mentorship program
- Technical assistance
- Legal assistance
- Policy/legislative changes



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Overall Target Outcome

By the end of this project, we will (based on our data):

- Directly reach over 4000 people
- Host at least 500 people per year in person, in classes
 - 50% socially disadvantaged (including women)
 - 20% veterans
- We expect at least 150 of in-class or distance learning participants will start or improve a farm
- Early-stage farmers improve their operations by:
 - *expanding farms/practices*
 - *altering behaviors - resource use, organics, business*



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What do you have to share?

We are very successful with:

- Outreach/participation
- Expanding interest in and use of water-based growing (hydroponics/aquaponics)
- Baseline data collection/surveys and monitoring



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What do you hope to learn from other projects?

- Connecting our growers with other beginning farmers
- Expertise in certain topics – e.g.: economics of farming, best sales practices, solar
- Curriculum development



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Keep in touch!

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