Sustainable Farms for Urban Markets (SFUM)

Bao Vang
Hmong American Partnership
Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program Award No [2015-70017-22870]
Project Audience

- Who are you aiming to help?
  - Region
    - Twin Cities (Greater Minneapolis/Saint Paul metropolitan area in Minnesota)
  - Populations serving
    - New Americans, Immigrants and Refugees, primarily Southeast Asians (Hmong, Burmese/Karen, and Bhutanese)
  - What are they farming?
    - Farmers grow crops (vegetables, fruits) in small-scale farming
  - Stage of farming
    - Mainly start-up, 5 years or less
Partners/Collaborators

Key Project Members:

- Hmong American Partnership (HAP)
  - Bao Vang, Project Director, Organizational leadership and department oversight
  - Mai Moua, Co-Project Director, Organizational leadership and department oversight
  - Hli Xiong, Program management and oversight
  - Moua Meng Yang, Program coordinator

- Farmers Legal Action Group, Inc. (FLAG)
  - Stephen Carpenter, Attorney, provide technical assistance related to contracts, policies, and other legal matters and risks

- Interfaith Action of Greater Saint Paul (formerly known as Saint Paul Area Council of Churches)
  - Sara Goodall, Program Coordinator – Obtain leased church properties for clients; increase technical assistance time for clients in legal issues and matters; and provide resources and networks.
Key Approaches

➢ Workshops/Curriculum Components:
  • Entrepreneur leadership skills
  • Business planning
  • Legal issues
  • Marketing strategies
  • Financial information (grants, loans, insurance, etc.)

➢ Technical Assistance
  • One-to-one coaching including, but not limited to accounting, financial counseling, business expansion, credit loans, marketing plans.

➢ Mentoring Services
  • Provide group mentoring from peer mentors identified from the farming community.
  • Entrepreneurial Farmer Network quarterly meetings.

➢ Support Services Services
  • Beginning farmers receive a one-time stipend for start-up costs.
Overall Target Outcome

By the end of this project, we will have helped:

Impact 1:
• 37 beginning Southeast Asian Farmers start a new market opportunity or expand the size of their current farm.
• 300 farmers educated with new marketing strategies.

Impact 2:
• 37 beginning Southeast Asian Farmers increase the value of their sales by a minimum of 15%.
What do you have to share?

- Organizations that have shared-perspectives and visions make the best partnerships to achieve your long-term vision and goals.
- Policy and advocacy work in agricultural will make institutional changes.
- Promoting diversity and cultural awareness in staff and in the organization overall.
What do you hope to learn from other projects?

- Resources and networks
- Urban farming tools and successes
- Community engagement in agriculture
Keep in touch!

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