Delta Farming Start

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Presentation Agenda

Project Overview..........................3 min
Project Accomplishments..............2 min
Impacts and Evaluation...............5 min
What We’re Learning..................5 min
Next Year and After....................5 min
BFRDP Project Overview

WHO we are and WHERE we work

- African-American limited-resource farmers & seasonal farmworkers (100%)
- Vegetable farming and poultry
- Mississippi Delta
WHAT we do

• In this 3-year BFRP project:

• Activities:
  + Basic business training + technical assistance
  + Mini-grants ($500 to start farming or increase income)
  + Access to land and capital (IDAs and micro-loans)

• Objective: 75 beginning farmer-ranchers
WHY it matters

1. Short-term: Opportunity to increase incomes for individuals.
2. Long-term: Stronger local economy rooted in community assets and traditions.
Project Accomplishments

Highlights in first year:
- 45 participants in 2 cohorts
  - 20 started in February 2016
  - 25 started in August 2016
- Technical assistance and support provided
- IDAs with Southern Bancorp
- 44 acres farmland donated for participants’ use
Preliminary Example of Micro-grant Return on Investment:

- Heat rupturing tomatoes in hoop house – farmer lost initial yield with no income to reinvest.
- Micro-grant provided $500.00 → $356.00 shade cloth for hoop house, $144.00 to purchase 72 additional tomato plants.
- Anticipated yield is 100 bushels, to be sold at $34 to $42.50 per bushel
- Anticipated **sustainable/recurring** Return on $500 Investment: $3,400 - $4,250 per season

*ROI data for each micro-grant at the end of the initial season.*
Training and Support

February 2-day workshop

August on farm site workshop with partners
Sales Opportunities

• Crossroads Farmers Market
• Market in Marks
• Other markets in the area
• Value-added bizs

Plus

• Aggregated produce contracts with leading grocery chains and schools
Access to Capital

• At $640 in savings, bank will match 3 to 1 up to $3000

• Savings may be used in farm businesses
Access to Land

44 acres in 3 donated parcels:

• 25 acres in Quitman County
• 5 acres in Coahoma County
• 14.5 elsewhere
Impacts and Evaluation

Measurable Impacts So Far:
45 participants in year 1
Income data to be calculated
Anecdotes of change for individuals

Evaluation Plan:
• Continued monitoring and counting
• Outside evaluation team site visits (2-3x/year)
• Analyze for
  - changes in farm income,
  - increase knowledge, skills, and
  - readiness to own or operate a farm or ranch
  or to become self-employed in agriculture
The Youngs + Sweet Magnolia Gelato
Lessons to Share


• Alcorn State U processing facility
• SRBWI
• Tougaloo College extension
• AARP MS
• local businesses, churches
• USDA programs
• school food service
• agri & tech high schools
• and more…
Next Year and After

Looking forward over the next two years:

• New cohorts
• Maybe: more land!
• Participants to use IDAs and apply for bank loans and Farm Service Agency
• Youth programming

And after the project funding ends?
- This funding is helping us deliver on vision and mission. No stopping us now!
Connect with us.

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