Infrastructure, Access, And Community: A Plan To Support Beginning Farmers In Indiana

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Project Audience

• Beginning Farmers and Ranchers in Indiana
  - Small acreage farms, military veterans
  - Broad interests (fruit and vegetable, livestock, urban)
  - Exploring to established (under 10 years)

• Extension Educators
  - We will provide resources and training to help them work with beginning farmers and ranchers, particularly military veterans
Partners/Collaborators

**Extension Educators**
Roy Ballard*, Hancock County  
Kelly Heckaman, Kosciusko County  
Mike Hornbach, Dearborn County  
Michael O’Donnell*, Delaware County  
Maria Restrepo–Turner, Pike County  
Kathleen Sprouse, Madison County  
Emily Toner, Marion County  
Amy Thompson, Monroe County  
Miranda Ulery, Harrison County

**Campus– based Personnel**
Tamara Benjamin*, project coordinator  
Cindy Chastain, AgrAbility  
Bill Field*, AgrAbility  
Kevin Gibson*, lead PD  
Zhao Ma*, FNR (evaluator)

**Local Growers Guild**
Cheryl Carter Jones*, President

*Leadership team (PI or co–PI)
Key Approaches

- Provide support and training for Extension Educators
- Offer workshops and an annual short course
- Develop a “one-stop shopping” website
- Increase interactions among experienced and beginning farmers by establishing a series of themed farm tours, an online “Ask A Farmer” program, and farmer breakfasts
- Partner with AgrAbility to expand opportunities for Veterans
- Evaluate the effectiveness of our programs
Overall Target Outcome

- 440 people will participate in structured training activities (workshops, short courses, field trips)
  - 20 participants will begin a new farming or ranching enterprise
  - 160 participants will be better prepared to start farming
  - 260 participants will report improvements in farm management or profitability
- 60 Extension Educators will receive training related to working with military Veterans and beginning farmers and ranchers.
What will you have to share?

- Website highlighting Purdue resources
- Materials for Extension Educators to help them work with small-acreage beginning farmers and military veterans
- Content from workshops
What do you hope to learn from other projects?

- Experience integrating resources and efforts across multiple organizations (university, Extension, NRCS, non-profit, etc.).
- Ways to optimize use of existing content as we develop our online media.
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