The National Farmer Veteran Project

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Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development
Program Award No 2015-70017-22943
Project Audience

• Who are you aiming to help?
  – Where: National
  – Who: Veterans and Active Duty
  – Type of farming/ranching/forest management:
    • 18.91% vegetables
    • 17.97% livestock
    • 12.29% fruit
  – Stage of farming:
    • 37.78% less than a year,
    • 13.33% 1-2yrs,
    • 11.67% 2-3yrs,
    • 6.11% 3-4yrs,
    • 31.11% 4+ yrs.
Partners/Collaborators

• Who are the key people on your team?

  – Gary Matteson, The Farm Credit Council, Co-PD
  – Dr. Lisa Hightower, American Farm Bureau Federation, Co-PD
  – Cindy Chastain, The National AgrAbility Project, Co-PD
Key Approach(es)

- How are you helping? List key elements, any unusual features, e.g.
  - Veteran-to-Veteran Peer Network
  - Workshops/courses/demonstrations
  - Veteran Resource Guide
  - Mentoring
  - Technical assistance
Overall Target Outcome

By the end of this development grant project, we will have:

• Trained 175 beginning farmer veterans and ranchers.
• Increased agricultural capacity among 155 beginning farmer veterans and ranchers.
• Created 15 mentor and 250 organizational relationships between beginning farmer veterans, seasoned farmers and FVC.
• Disseminated 1,200 beginning farmer veteran resource guides.
What do you have to share?

Lessons learned:

• Beginning farmer veterans respond best to direct, peer-to-peer experiential training
  – Local setting
  – Small groups
  – One-on-one

• Best outcomes are achieved through a continuing supportive relationship
  – Training
  – Technical assistance
  – Advocacy
  – Mentoring

How to apply these lessons:

• Refined and improved service strategies,
  – Use peer-to-peer outreach and education components

• Revised case management strategy to
  – Provide individualized comprehensive development services
What do you hope to learn from other projects?

• Best practices in providing assistance to beginning farmer veterans
• Opportunities to collaborate to extend and enhance assistance to veterans transitioning into agriculture
Keep in touch!

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