

CSAs and Organic Farmers Markets: Strengthening Producer Capacity and Consumer Linkages around Kansas

Kansas State University of Manhattan, KS received \$62,372 to support Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) farms in the Kansas City area. The program trained farmers to run CSA operations, surveyed local consumers to assess interest in CSA's, and educated and organized consumers. The project's emphasis was towards organic farmers and consumers.

Final Report

Final Report for FMPP 2008 project
**“CSAs and Organic Farmers Markets:
Strengthening Producer Capacity and Consumer Linkages around Kansas City”**
November 1, 2008 through September 28, 2010.

This project sought to strengthen producer capacity and consumer linkages to market farmers through community supported agriculture (CSA) and organic farmers markets in and around Kansas City. During this 23-month project, we aimed to a) expand the number of CSA farms serving consumers in Kansas City and surrounding regions through farmer training; b) enhance and facilitate the development of community groups to support CSA farms and organic farmers markets, through consumer education and organization, particularly in the Kansas City metropolitan area, and c) determine size and characteristics of consumer demand for CSAs in the target area. Kansas State University Extension partnered with the Kansas City Food Circle, primarily under the auspices of ongoing programs to train new market farmers (the Growing Growers Training Program) and the Food Circle’s efforts to strengthen linkages between consumers and organic producers.

I. Organize educational activities for farmers about CSAs, including CSA mini-schools and workshops and farmer-to-farmer mentoring.

a. CSA mini-schools

As proposed, two CSA mini-schools were held with attendance close to our target class size of 35 each year. The programs are included in the Appendix.

The first CSA mini-school was held at the Great Vegetable Growers Conference on January 8, 2009, with 28 growers in attendance. Of 23 returned evaluation forms (82%), all strongly agreed and agreed that they learned valuable information by participating in the workshop. All indicated that they would seriously consider starting a CSA farm in the future, with 62.5% strongly agreeing. 85% indicated that they will use the knowledge gained to improve their CSA.

The second CSA mini-school at the Great Plains Vegetable Growers Conference was held on January 7, 2010, with 30 growers in attendance. The CSA workshop (mini-school) was well received with 84 percent of those returning evaluation forms (n=25) strongly agreeing or agreeing that they learned valuable information by participating in the workshop. 85% will seriously consider starting a CSA and 69% (11 of 16 responders) will use the information to start a CSA and 40% will use the information to expand their current CSAs. Participants commented that they appreciated the different models of CSAs that the speakers represented and the different perspectives that were presented. There was good rotation among the speakers on each topic without anyone being judgmental, in other words, that there is no one way to have or operate a CSA. Other favorite aspects of the workshop were the hands-on examples of planning and mapping tools that were included. The absence of the speaker who conducted the survey of CSAs in the Kansas City area was noted and that although a substitute covered the material, it was not as helpful as if the original speaker had been able to present the information. As for the future, participants want to keep the diversity and balance among the speakers that they experienced in 2010. More information on post-harvest handling and storage and equipment are additional suggestions.

- b. Include apprenticeship on CSA farms and a workshop on CSA farming in the curriculum of the Growing Growers Training Program.

The Growing Growers program is an established, new farmer training program, which combines on-farm apprenticeships with monthly workshops conducted over the course of the growing season. Complete information about the program, including host farms and a schedule of workshop conducted are listed on the website at <http://www.growinggrowers.org/>. During the project period, 19 apprentices started the growing season on 11 host farms, exceeding our estimate of 10-15 apprentices. Apprentices trained in all aspects of crop production and marketing on their host farms, all of which are either certified organic or use organic/sustainable practices, and also market directly to consumers in the Kansas City metropolitan area. Six of the host farms market partially or exclusively (Fair Share Farm) through CSAs. Hoyland Farm and Sandheron Farm participate in the Rolling Prairie Farmers Alliance (www.rollingprairie.net) a long-established, Lawrence-based cooperative CSA. Apprentices are provided with one-on-one training by their host farmers (who are compensated for their time under the program), and are provided with a selection of books and other written resources related to core competency areas. Application and registration fees paid by apprentices helped to partially defray the costs of the program.

During the project period, 14 workshops were held covering various core competency areas for market farmers. These workshops typically involved lectures by extension specialists and by farmers and included a farm tour. Apprentices attended the workshops, and they were also open to a wider audience of producers and would-be producers. The CSA workshop was held at Fair Share Farm in Kearney, MO in July 2009. A total of 303 people attended the workshops, with 25 attending the workshop on CSAs. The workshops held are listed below. For the 2009 workshops, links to the workshop flyers on the Growing Growers website are provided. For the 2010 workshops, the flyers are included in the Appendix.

[Soil Building with Organic Practices](#)

(attendance - 28)

Saturday, March 21, 2009 10 AM - 3:30 PM

Location: Leavenworth County Extension Office,
Leavenworth, KS

Farm tour: Conway's Produce

[Pests, Disease and Weeds in Fruits and Vegetables](#)

(attendance – 26)

Saturday, April 11, 2009, 10 AM to 3:30 PM

Location: Drumm Farm, Independence, MO
Farm tour: East Wind Gardens

[Plant Propagation and Production Planning](#)

(attendance – 25)

Monday, April 20, 2009, 4 PM to 7 PM

Location: Master's Community Church, Kansas
City, KS

Farm tour: Kansas City Community Farm

[Equipment for Fruit and Vegetable Growers](#)

(attendance – 15)

Monday, May 4, 2009, 4 PM to 7 PM

Location: K-State Research and Extension Station,
Olathe, KS

Farm tour: K-State Research and Extension Station

[Post Harvest Handling for Quality and Safety](#)

(attendance – 27)

Monday, June 8, 2009, 4:30 PM to 7 PM

Location: Lexington, MO

Farm tour: Fahrmeier Farms

[Starting and Managing a CSA Program](#)

(attendance – 25)

Monday, July 13, 2009, 4 PM to 7 PM

Location: Kearney, MO

Farm tour: Fair Share Farm

Taste and Nutrition

(attendance – 18)

Monday, August 10, 2009, 4 to 7 PM

Location: Lawrence, KS

Farm tour: Spring Creek Farm

Fruit Production

(attendance – 27)

Monday, September 14, 2009

4 to 7 PM

Location: Kearney, MO

Farm tour: Prairie Birthday

First Steps in Planning a Farm Business

Saturday, October 17, 2009, 10 AM to 4 PM

Location: K-State Research and Extension Station,
Olathe, KS

*Organic Certification: Practical Guidelines, Advice
and How-To*

Saturday, November 7, 2009, 9 AM to 5 PM

Location: K-State Research and Extension Station,
Olathe, KS

Soil Building with Organic Practices

(attendance – 25)

Saturday, March 27th, 2010, 10 AM to 3:30 PM

Location: Leavenworth, KS

Farm tour: Conway's Produce

Plant Propagation and Production Planning

(attendance – 19)

April 20, 2010

Location: Merriam, KS

Farm tour: Kansas City Community Farm

Equipment for Vegetable and Fruit Growers

(attendance – 28)

May 14, 2010

Location: Olathe, KS

Farm tour: Olathe Research Station/JCCC Student
Farm

Post Harvest Handling for Quality and Safety

(attendance – 17)

June 14, 2010

Location: Olathe, KS

Farm tour: Spring Creek Farm

Introduction to Livestock

(attendance – 15)

August 10, 2010

Location: Weston, MO

Farm tour: Green Dirt Farm

Pest, Disease and Weed Management

(attendance – 8)

September 25, 2010

Location Independence, MO

Farm tour: Drumm Farm

- c. Assist new CSA farmers through mentorship by experienced growers.

Setting up formal mentorship agreements proved challenging. Farmers were often hesitant to commit to a certain number of mentoring hours. But, one mentorship connection was successfully made. Jill Elmers of Moon on the Meadow Farm in Lawrence, KS, mentored the [Pioneer Bluffs organization](#), which started a CSA program serving Matfield Green, Kansas and surrounding areas. Jill and Pioneer Bluffs developed a learning plan that outlined Pioneer Bluffs' needs and questions, and ways for Jill to help with these. Jill traveled to Matfield Green for a full day workshop to help them get started, and followed up via email and phone to assist them with production planning, planting schedules and equipment questions. Pioneer Bluffs CSA had 20 members in their inaugural 2010 CSA and plans to grow next year.

- d. Provide scholarships for resource-poor trainees.

Apprentices Brandon Baltzell on Spring Creek Farm and Liberty Hunter and Kim Crowley on Kansas City Community Farm were provided full or partial scholarships to cover the \$300 cost of registration in the Growing Growers apprenticeship program. All completed the program. Brandon is still working as a part time, seasonal employee for his host farmer while he completes high school. Kim Crowley has taken time off from farming to care for a new child. Liberty Hunter is working with a farmer near Columbia, MO.

II. Educate consumers about CSAs, developing core groups, local food buying clubs, using both direct instruction and web-based tools (Implementing Partner – Kansas City Food Circle, (KCFC)).

During the reporting period, work carried out primarily by two individuals as contractors, Season Burnett, hired as a consumer organizer, who manages the CSA Coalition and its website, and Dave Lawrence, manager of the KCFC website.

A major annual event of the KCFC is to organize the Eat Local! Exhibition of Farmers at two locations in the KC metro area, Shawnee and Independence in spring. The attendance at the events saw an increase during the project period. The Shawnee event was attended by 1,468 people in 2010, compared to 1,118 in 2008 (the 2009 event was poorly attended due to inclement weather). The Independence event was attended by 1,048 members of the public (up from 890 in 2009 and 686 in 2008).

Project partners participated actively in consumer education aimed at helping consumers find and purchase more local organic food direct from producers. Advertisements promoting organic farmers markets were placed in area publications (see attached). Details are provided in the KCFC's final report in the Appendix.

- a. Compile and maintain a listing of area CSA farms, and track number of shares offered.

Results of this ongoing task are primarily maintained the Kansas City CSA Coalition website (<http://www.kc-csac.org/>), and on the CSA page of the Kansas City Food Circle website (<http://www.kcfoodcircle.org/csa/>). Both sites were actively maintained and updated during the project period. The listing at the two sites fluctuated during the project period between 20 and 30 CSAs, but declined in 2010, when the Kansas City CSA Coalition began requiring CSA farmers to pay annual membership dues in accordance with the size of their CSA. The total number of CSA shares within the membership, however, increased from about 950 in 2009 to 1,200 in 2010.

- b. Compile and develop in cooperation with project partners, resources for consumers on CSA organization.

A CSA tool kit for eaters who are thinking about starting a group of corporate CSA was developed, including CSA education powerpoint and handouts. Individual materials were prepared, modified and updated on a continuing basis to present to consumers at various events in and around Kansas City. They were also made available on the Kansas City CSA Coalition website.

- c. Educate and provide assistance to groups that want to form CSAs.

Various presentations were made to community leadership groups and other public venues. The team consulted with individuals to help them identify CSA farms. Kansas City CSA Coalition worked with three corporate CSAs during the project period.

- d. Research and publish health regulations and jurisdictions to help buying clubs and value added producers stay within compliance for their activities.

In retrospect, this objective proved to be somewhat less practical and relevant than we had anticipated. To further the objective of supporting local food buying clubs, website support was given (see below).

- e. Promote local organic farmers markets (four which already exist in the KC metro area for those who do not wish to participate in CSA's).

This was done on an ongoing basis through the KCFC website and through advertising.

Specific tasks to be conducted under the project related to KCFC website development and maintenance in support of CSAs, organic farmers markets and local food buying clubs were as follows:

- f. Develop and maintain the KCFC website as a go-to place for linking consumers looking for local, organic food with farmers.

Active ongoing website development and maintenance of www.kcfoodcircle.org was done by the exceptionally active Dave Lawrence (webminion), and of www.kc-csac.org by Season Burnett. The website enhanced networking systems through Facebook, Twitter, and Blogspot. At the end of the project period, the KCFC website had about 2,500 Facebook Group members, about 2,250 "friends of the WebMinion KCFoodCircle", and a growing number of blog readers. The effort resulted in increased web traffic and attendance at the Eat Local Expos. At the 2010 event, 229 attendees reported they have heard about the event through the KCFC website, compared to 51 in 2009.

III. Survey consumers to help quantify size and characteristics of demand for CSAs around Kansas City.

The survey was conducted online in December 2009, and 304 completed responses were collected. Preliminary results were prepared for presentation during the CSA mini-school at the Great Plains Vegetable Growers Conference in Jan 2010 in St. Joseph, MO. Due to inclement weather, neither Peterson nor the grad student conducting the analysis was able to attend the conference, and Carey presented the results in their place. Farmers in attendance had many questions, primarily in terms of the validity of the population size interested in food directly marketed by farmers. In order to ensure that their concerns were addressed, it was decided to do a follow-up study in a comparative region in France. The French version was conducted in April 2010, with 317 completed responses. The entire survey work was completed as an MS thesis at Kansas State University "Consumer Demand for Community Support Agriculture: A Comparative Study of the Kansas City (USA) and Midi-Pyrenees (France) Regions" by Quentin Baudouin, available online at <http://hdl.handle.net/2097/7047>.

Regarding the size of the population knowing about CSAs, the consumers' familiarity with direct market institutions was very high for farmers' markets in the US; it was lower in France. Most people (about

90% in the US and more than 50% in France) know where they can access them where they live. However, the familiarity and knowledge about other direct marketing institutions are very low in both countries. Particularly concerning CSAs, only about 18% of the US population is familiar with them and 29% in France. About 15% to 20% in the US and about 40% in France were ready to become CSA members. The undecided persons account for about 30% of the population in both cases.

When directly asking people how much they would pay to join a typical CSA, about 37% in the US and 26% in France were not willing to pay anything. Thus, the majority of the population remained ready to pay something to join a CSA. Regression results suggested that people under 40, with fewer children, were willing to pay more to join a CSA than other demographic groups. The income level was not appearing as a determining factor in consumers WTP. The education level had a positive impact on the WTP to join a CSA, particularly in France.

Motivations and barriers to becoming CSA members were complex and involved various elements. The results clearly show that consumers in both countries were buying perishable groceries regularly, so an institution that offered perishable foods on a regular basis can be proposed to consumers. Concerning the current purchase of these perishable food products, origin was a concern for about 50% of the French sample and 25% of the US sample.

It is obvious that direct market institutions cannot replace other shopping outlets for most consumers; they can only complement them. Indeed, one cannot purchase all his grocery needs directly from farmers. Results showed that supermarkets and supercenters were the main outlets used by respondents in both countries. In addition to these main outlets, consumers use various other stores which have different properties in terms of convenience or specialties. Direct farmer-to-consumer institutions enter into this category, but the properties that lead consumers to purchase from them are not easily identified or are perceived differently by heterogeneous people. A small portion of the population (about a quarter) is using direct marketing institutions regularly, but most consumers are using them on an irregular basis. This is inconvenient for farmers because they cannot anticipate the demand for their products or adjust their offerings on short notice. This leads to a conclusion that the development of consumer loyalty would be helpful and welcomed by farmers to deal with fluctuations in quantities marketed.

More practically, it was found that most US consumers are willing to travel less than 15 minutes from their regular route to purchase directly from farmers if they are not driving. They would be willing to travel a bit further, about 20 minutes, if driving. This suggests that CSA farmers in the US need to find a way to deliver their products to consumers within 15 or 20 minutes from the consumers' living environment. In France, the conclusion is not that clear, because there is more divergence among respondents: some are very time constrained when others are willing to travel more than 30 minutes. So, French farmers should discuss the delivery location issue with their members and find a compromise between consumers that are really time constrained and those who are willing to travel and would actually like to come to the farm regularly, even if it is a bit far away from their home.

Attributes people are looking at when buying perishables groceries are mainly the price, product safety, appearance and taste. Next, US consumers put weight on convenience, while French consumers are more looking for attributes that are related to their beliefs. So, one can say that US CSA farmers would have to focus on the practical advantages of their offer where French farmers would have to understand what consumers' beliefs are and try to integrate these beliefs into the farm practices as well as possible in order to supply a fitted offer.

Food-related activities preferred by consumers were linked to the food itself. Secondly, people like to support their community; which can be used to help convince consumers to join a CSA. Finally, activities related to environment or education were less appreciated on average but remain enjoyable to many consumers. Note that for the French case some educational activities are well enjoyed, such as discovering what crops are in season, but it is still closely related to the food itself. If consumers know the harvest time for various products, they will buy them at this particular time in order to cook and eat them at the time they will taste the best.

Consumer desire to purchase locally produced food through a CSA is not very high (less than 50% of the population like it) compared to consumers who find farmers' markets or grocery stores with local food offerings appealing (more than 80% like it). This leads to the conclusion that convenience is very important for consumers (particularly in the US); they can go to farmers markets' and grocery stores when they want and will find a large variety of products there. But it also shows that people are poorly informed about CSAs: how can they like them if they do not know anything about them. So communication seems again a priority to inform the public about CSAs. Given the level of familiarity with CSAs, it is logical to find that consumers are not used to purchasing directly from farmers on a regular basis. They are more likely to buy directly from farmers "sometimes", when they have the opportunity to go to a farmers' market or a roadside or farm stand. Currently, CSAs remain very marginally used.

Results also show that consumers are exigent and pay much attention to products' variety, quality, and quantity, but also to convenience and, finally, give most consideration to price. The findings are consistent with the stated assumption that each individual is interested in maximizing his utility as much as possible. Results from the models show that the price is considered but is not found to be the final determinant to join a CSA, neither is the delivery location, which is more related to convenience. The factor which is found to have the greatest impact is variety, which is another aspect of convenience. More variety is offered, more people are willing to join a CSA and to pay for the share. The opportunity to have a say in the products that will be grown during the season is also appreciated and lead consumers to have a higher WTP. Inversely, people are not looking forward to working on the farm, their WTP decreases significantly if they are required to work on the CSA. People who know and appreciate the concept of CSA are more likely to join one, as are people who currently use direct from farmers marketing institutions of all kinds, including farmers markets.



Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Mini-School Schedule

January 8, 2009
St. Joseph, Missouri

Fulkerson Center, Classroom 216
Missouri Western State University campus, St. Joseph, MO

Speakers:

Tom Ruggieri and Rebecca Graff – Fair Share Farm, Kearney, MO
Bob Muth – Muth Family Farm, Pitman, NJ
Henry Brockman, Henry's Farm, Congerville, IL

- 8:00 **Registration**
- 8:30 **Opening Remarks**
- 8:45 **Introductions**
- 9:45 **The CSA Model – What is it? And is one right for you?**
 The assessment process; CSA as an alternative marketing approach; CSA failures;
 Scale and getting started.
- 10:15 **Break**
- 10:30 **Getting started** – Finding land, finding members, establishing a core group, legal structures
 and insurance, keeping members connected, distribution
- 12:00 **Lunch** (provided with registration fee)
- 1:00 **Growing the Food** – Crop planning: what to grow and how much; Succession planting;
 Harvest and postharvest handling; Apprentices; Employees
- 2:00 **Break**
- 2:15 **The Share** – What is a share; Pricing and Budgets; Cooperating with other farms; Other
 Markets
- 3:00 **Questions and Answers.**
- 3:30 **Closing and Inaugural Meeting of the area CSA coalition**
- 4:30 **Mini-school adjourns**



New this Year! Come enjoy refreshments and snacks
in the Trade Show Area from 4-6:30 pm.



GREAT PLAINS VEGETABLE GROWERS CONFERENCE

St. Joseph, Missouri

January 7, 2010

Community Supported Agriculture(CSA) Mini-School
Fulkerson Center, Spratt Hall Classroom 205

- 8:30 **Welcome**
Introduction - Tom Ruggieri
Opening Remarks - Rusty Lee
Introductions from Panel Participants (all)
- 9:30 **The CSA Model – Is it Right For You?**
- The assessment process - Emily & Mike
 - CSA as an alternative marketing approach - Rusty
 - CSA & risk - Tom
 - Scale and getting started - Emily & Mike
- 10:00 **Break**
- 10:15 **Getting Started**
- Finding land - Emily & Mike
 - Finding members - Rusty
 - Organizational structure & core group - Rebecca
 - Legal structures & insurance - Emily & Mike
- 11:00 **‘Preliminary Findings from Consumer Survey in the KC Area’** – Dr. Hikaru Peterson
- 11:15 Keeping members connected: online, newsletters, events - Rebecca & Tom
Distribution (all)
- 12:00 **Lunch**
- 1:00 **Growing the Food**
- Crop planning: what to grow and how much – Emily & Mike
 - Succession planting - Rebecca
 - Harvest, post-harvest handling - Rusty
 - Apprentices – Rebecca & Tom
 - Employees - Rusty
- 2:00 **Break**
- 2:15 **The Share**
- What is a share? (all)
 - Pricing & budgets – Emily & Mike
 - Cooperating with other farms - Rusty
 - Other markets, institutions - Rusty
- 3:00 **Closing**
- 3:10 **Questions & Answers**
- 4:00 **Minischool adjourns**

WORKSHOP INSTRUCTORS/FACILITATORS:
Rebecca Graff & Tom Ruggieri established Fair Share Farm , Kearney, MO, in 2003 after apprenticing on CSA farms in the northeast and Midwest. Situated on Graff family land, the farm grows a wide variety of vegetable, herbs, flowers and small fruit for its CSA members.

Mike Appel & Emily Oakley own and operate Three Springs Farm, a diversified, certified-organic vegetable, fruit, and herb farm in Cherokee County, OK. They cultivate over fifty different crops and more than 150 individual varieties on five acres of land. Their goal is to maintain a two-person operation not dependent on hired labor that demonstrates the economic viability of small-scale farming. Emily and Mike sell their produce directly to their customers through two area farmers' markets and a 100-member Community Supported Agriculture program.

Rusty Lee is a conventional vegetable grower who uses sustainable methods on his farm east of St. Louis near Truxton, MO. He wholesales a diversity of produce to supermarkets and restaurants in eastern Missouri.

Hikaru Hanawa Peterson, Agriculture Economist with Kansas State University. Hikaru earned her M.S. and Ph. D. degrees in Ag. Econ. from Cornell University. She is interested in local food and just completed a survey measuring the demand for CSAs in Kansas City area.

Come enjoy refreshments & snacks in the Trade Show Area during breaks and also a special wine reception from 4-6:30 pm.



Soil Building with Organic Practices

Kansas City, Kansas Community College, Leavenworth Center, Room 17
225 Cherokee
Leavenworth, KS

Farm tour: Conway's Produce

Saturday, March 27th
10:00 am - 3:30 pm
Lunch provided

A workshop to introduce basic knowledge of soil, nutrient management, composting, cover cropping and how they can increase the health and productivity of your farm and garden.

- 10:00-Noon The Basics of Soil**
Soil is a complex system, and management requires an understanding of soil structure, nutrients and fertility, soil biology, water infiltration, and more. This will introduce you to these concepts and how they interact. We'll discuss simple ways to calculate the nutrient needs of crops, understand soil tests and manage your soil.
Presenter: Rhonda Janke, K-State Research & Extension and Owner, Parideaza Farm, Wamego, KS
- Noon-12:30 Lunch (provided)**
- 12:30-2:00 Composting**
Midwestern soils are often low in organic matter. Compost can be a great way to add not only organic matter, but beneficial bacteria, fungi and nutrients to your soils. Through presentations and hands-on demonstrations, we'll learn about composting and how to get started.
Presenter: Hwei-Yiing Johnson, State Agronomy Specialist, Lincoln Univ. Cooperative Research and Extension
- 2:00-2:30 Cover Cropping at Conway's Produce**
Cover cropping can improve soil structure, fertility and organic matter content. Paul Conway is one of the most knowledgeable farmers in this region when it comes to soil building. He'll discuss his successful soil building plan and extensive use of cover cropping, then follow up with a tour of his farm.
- 2:30-3:30 Farm tour, Conway's Produce.**

For more information call Laura Christensen at (816) 805-0362 or email growers@ksu.edu

**** You may pay at the door, but please call or email to pre-register so we can plan lunches ****

Registration

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Email: _____ Telephone: _____

No. Registering	Workshop	Cost Per Person	Total Enclosed
	Soils	\$30	

Make checks payable to and mail to: Growing Growers Training Program, 35230 W. 135th Street, Olathe, KS 66061



Plant Propagation and Production Planning

Irene B. French Community Center
5701 Merriam Dr.
Merriam, KS

Farm tour: Kansas City Community Farm, Kansas City, KS

Monday, April 12th
4:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Seed catalogs may seduce you with their green-filled centerfolds, but it takes a lot to turn those tiny seeds into healthy, productive plants. We will cover the science and the practice behind production of transplants and direct-seeded crops. Next, we'll describe the production planning process, which will help you decide how much to plant, when and where to plant it, when to harvest and what yields you can expect.

4:00 – 5:00 Introduction to Plant Propagation

Marlin Bates, Horticulture Specialist with University of Missouri Extension, will present information about producing vegetable transplants, direct seeding, and how to get your plants off to a good start.

5:00 – 7:00 Farm tour and Production Planning, Kansas City Community Farm (KCCF)

KCCF is an urban, 2 acre, organic vegetable farm that has a heated greenhouse and numerous high tunnels. KCCF produces vegetables for sale at a farmers' market and through a CSA. Their smaller acreage demands intensive, well-managed production.

Daniel Dermitzel of KCCF will walk us through the basics of production planning, which allows KCCF to plan what they will grow, order appropriate seed amounts, keep their crop rotation and succession plantings in order and provide a continuous supply of vegetables throughout the season. Then we will have a chance to tour their farm and see the results of their planning.

Directions to the Community Center: From I-35, take the Johnson Dr. exit and turn west on to Johnson Dr. At the first light, turn right onto Merriam Dr. Community Center will be on right after approximately 1/4 mile. Entrance is at rear (east side) of building. Directions to Farm tour available at workshop (10 minute drive from Community Center).

**** You may pay at the door, but please call or email to pre-register ****

To pre-register, or if you have questions, contact Laura Christensen at (816) 805-0362 or growers@ksu.edu

Registration

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Email: _____ Telephone: _____

No. Registering	Workshop	Cost Per Person	Total Enclosed
	Plant Propagation	\$15	

Make checks payable to and mail to: Growing Growers Training Program, 35230 W. 135th Street, Olathe, KS 66061

Equipment for Vegetable Growers

**K-State Research and Extension Station
35230 W. 135th St, Olathe, KS 66061**

**Monday, May 4th
4:00 pm – 7:00 pm**

Choosing the right set of equipment and using it correctly can keep both you and your farm on track and healthy. Join us for an afternoon of information about equipment options, safety and demonstrations.

We'll focus on equipment appropriate for small and mid scale growers – from hand tools, to tractors, to high tunnels. The research station includes a large section devoted to research on vegetable production.

3:00 – 3:30 Drip Irrigation Basics

Drip Irrigation is a basic, efficient way to deliver water directly to your crops. It keeps foliage dry to minimize disease, lessens water loss through evaporation and makes irrigating your field quick and easy. Norm Kilmer of Morgan County Seed will describe how to set up drip irrigation systems for small or large fields.

3:30- 4:15 Introduction to High Tunnels

High tunnels are a simple technology that can have a large impact on farm productivity. They come in many forms and can be used for a variety of crops to increase marketable yield and extend the season. This overview will describe different high tunnel forms, uses, potential problems and cropping systems. The station has 4 types of high tunnels that can be seen during the field demonstrations.

4:30 – 5:30 Tractor Safety

Every year improper use of tractors kills or injures many farmers. This presentation by Mitch Ricketts, Health, Safety & Environmental Quality Coordinator with K-State Research and Extension, will help you stay safe and productive on your tractor.

5:30 – 7:00 Field Demonstrations

A chance for hands-on learning and questions. Equipment will be available to view and in some cases try for yourself. The following equipment will be available:

Hand/push tools:

- broad fork - various types of hoes - high wheel cultivator - wheel hoe with attachments
- various types of push and precision seeders - jab planter - power drill driven tilter
- greens harvester (from Johnnys) - other misc. tools

Walk Behind Tillers/Tractors:

- Toro Dingo walk-behind tractor with multiple attachments (rototiller, bucket loader, plastic mulch layer and more)
- BCS walk-behind tractor/rototiller
- "Horse" model rototiller

Tractor implements/tools:

- Waterwheel transplanter (courtesy of Morgan County Seed) - Ortolan "Stone Burier" rotavator - seed drill
- flex tine cultivator - plastic mulch layer - single row sweet-potato digger - single-row, chain potato digger
- spike tooth harrow - Perfecta S-tine cultivator - sub-soiler - flail mower - brush hog - various discs, plows and toolbar implements.

Other:

- Irrigation pump with sand filtration and irrigation system including layflat line, sprinklers and drip tape.
- Haygrove, Zimmerman and Stuppy brand high tunnels.

Cost to attend this workshop is \$15.00 (cash or checks payable to Growing Growers Training Program). You are welcome to pay at the door, but please contact Laura Christensen at growers@ksu.edu or (816) 805-0362 to pre-register or if you have questions.



Post Harvest Handling

K-State Research and Extension Station
 35230 W. 135th St.
 Olathe, KS

Farm tour: Spring Creek Farm
 Monday, May 24th
 4:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Growing great vegetables is only half the battle. You also need to get them to your customers looking fresh, tasting great and safe to eat. This workshop will cover how to harvest, handle and store your produce.

4:00 – 4:45 An Introduction to GAPs (Good Agricultural Practices)

Pete Garfinkel, Kansas Rural Center

GAPs is a system developed to review growers food safety practices and help correct any problems. Growers considering selling produce to institutions such as schools, to grocery stores or to wholesalers may be required by some buyers to become GAPs certified. For any size grower, understanding GAPs can provide a great way to consider their food safety practices.

4:45 - 5:30 Keeping it Fresh

Laura Christensen, Growing Growers

Local food is known for being fresh, but to keep it that way until it reaches your customers produce needs to be stored correctly. Your broccoli will stay tasty at one temperature, your tomatoes at another. We'll review the handling and storage requirements of different vegetables, and basic cooler and storage options for small growers.

5:45 – 7:00 Farm tour, Spring Creek Farm

Spring Creek is a 2 acre diversified vegetable farm in Baldwin City, KS. They use sustainable and organic practices to produce a variety of crops, specializing in heirloom melons, tomatoes and root crops. We'll see their great variety of crops, their self designed high tunnels and a new vegetable washing and storage building.

Registration

Name): _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Email: _____ Telephone: _____

No. Registering	Workshop	Cost Per Person	Total Enclosed
	Post Harvest Handling	\$15.00 If paying at door, please call Laura at (816) 805-0362 to pre-register.	



Livestock Options for Small Farms

19935 Mount Bethel Rd
Weston, MO

Monday, August 23rd
4:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Livestock comes in many shapes and sizes and can add value to your farm. Come learn how two area farms successfully manage their livestock. We'll focus on the basics of livestock care, including simple start-up considerations. Then we'll hear more about the specifics of these farms.

- 4:00- 5:15** **Livestock Management and Pasture “Stacking” at Bauman’s Cedar Valley Farms**
Rosanna Bauman of Cedar Valley Farms will cover basic care of the farm’s livestock, then discuss how different livestock is integrated into a multi-species pasture-stacking system that allows poultry, beef, goats and sheep to be raised simultaneously on this diversified family farm.
- 5:30 – 6:00** **Flock and Pasture Management at Green Dirt Farm**
Green Dirt Farm produces farmstead sheep milk cheese and grass-fed lamb in Weston, MO. They consider themselves first and foremost “grass farmers” and focus on pasture management to keep their flock healthy and happy. Farm Manager Jacque Smith will discuss their rotational grazing systems and general care of the flock.
- 6:00 – 7:00** **Farm tour, Green Dirt Farm**
Jacque will continue her discussion while she shows us around Green Dirt Farm. Green Dirt’s award-winning sheep cheeses are sold at many area markets and groceries. The tour will include a tour of the dairy barn and cheese kitchen.

**Cost to attend this workshop is \$15.00 (cash or checks payable to Growing Growers Training Program).
You are welcome to pay at the door, but please contact Laura Christensen at:
growers@ksu.edu or (816) 805-0362 to pre-register or if you have questions.**

Directions to the workshop: Take I-29 North past KCI and Platte City to Exit 20 (Weston); at end of exit, turn right (north) onto 273/45 Hwy. Follow 273/45, which has several turns, and at 4-way stop with light turn right (north) onto 45 (There will be a sign that says “Welcome to Weston”). Follow 45 out of Weston. **DO NOT FOLLOW DETOUR SIGNS.** Continue north on 45 to Dye Store Road and turn right (east). Go one tenth of a mile to Mount Bethel Road and turn left (northwest). Go up a large hill, then look for two mailboxes at bottom of hill. Driveway to workshop location at farm is on right at bottom of hill. Signs will be posted.

Pest, Disease and Weed Management

Saturday, September 25th

10 am to 3 pm

**Andrew Drumm Institute
3210 Lee's Summit Road
Independence, MO**

Farm tour: Drumm Farm

Cost for this workshop is \$30.00, lunch is provided

If you've never struggled with cucumber beetles, blight, foxtail grass or any other pest, disease or weed then this isn't the workshop for you. For the rest of us, this workshop will cover basic identification and sustainable control strategies to help vegetable growers manage some of our biggest challenges.

The focus of this workshop will be on organic and sustainable practices.

10:00 – 11:00 Weed Management

Tim Walters, Agronomist/Farmer, Drumm Farm

Weeds can quickly turn a beautiful field into an unproductive mess. Managing weeds sustainably requires both long-term strategies and everyday vigilance. Tim Walters will help us identify and stay on top of weeds in the field.

11:15 – 12:15 Plant Disease ID and Management

Wendy Johnson, Kansas State University

Weeds and insects are often easier to see and understand than mysterious spots, rots and wilts. Wendy Johnson will demystify common plant diseases and help us understand how to control them.

12:15 - 1:00 Lunch (provided)

1:00 – 2:00 Insects in the Field

Mary Roduner, Kansas City Community Gardens

Thousands of insects interact in our fields. Mary Roduner will discuss the ones we love to hate, the ones we should learn to love, and how they interact. We'll cover basic identification and organically approved control measures.

2:15 - 3:30 Farm tour, Drumm Farm

Drumm farm is a certified organic vegetable and flower farm growing on two different locations. We'll tour their site and greenhouse at the Drumm Institute.

You may pay at the door, but please pre-register by calling or emailing [Laura Christensen at \(816\) 805-0362 or \[growers@ksu.edu\]\(mailto:growers@ksu.edu\)](mailto:Laura.Christensen@ksu.edu).

Directions to Andrew Drumm Institute: From I-70 (east of I-435), take Lee's Summit Road (Exit 14) and drive north. Drive 1.2 miles (go *past* the golf course) and turn left into the driveway of Andrew Drumm Institute/Drumm Farm. Follow the signs to park.

The Kansas City Food Circle
A Project of Heart of America Action Linkage
P. O. Box 45195
Kansas City, Missouri 64171

October 20, 2010

Final Report
FMMP grant Subaward No. S09056

Introduction. The Kansas City Food Circle's (KCFC) participation in the FMMP grant project was intended to help organize and promote CSA's and organic farmers markets. Secondly, these would be supplemented by local buying clubs in the off-season. Administratively, the KCFC organized this project along three lines. First we contracted with a consumer organizer to work on CSA's through the Kansas City CSA Coalition (KCCSAC). Second, the KCFC directly promoted organic farmers markets in a number of ways: as featured markets on our website, in our printed *Directory of Local Organic and Free Range Food Producers*, through a series of print ads in local food and environment-oriented media, and through our annual *Eat Local! Exhibition of Farmers (Expo)*. Third we helped organize and promote the formation of local food buying clubs to provide a venue for eaters to access some local and organic/free range food products during the off-season.

To assist in this effort KCFC also contracted with our website administrator to beef up our web presence in support of the organic farmers markets and local buying clubs. The CSA organizer already had a website set up for KCCSAC, so our website administrator set up a link to it on the KCFC website while maintaining certain back-up features. That website is www.kc-csac.org

Much of our effort was directed toward staging a successful *Eat Local Expo* because that is a proven and economical way to reach a large number of people new to the community food system concept. Both the 2009 and 2010 expos included a well attended workshop entitled "How to Eat Local in Kansas City," produced by our consumer organizer, which featured opportunities for CSA's and organic farmers markets. The timing of the grant was fortuitous in that it supplemented the resources we could apply to both our 11th and 12 annual *Eat Local Expos*.

CSA Promotional Efforts. We contracted directly with Season Burnett who is also the Executive Director of the Kansas City CSA Coalition. Where appropriate she was asked to help promote organic farmers markets as well. This work was carried out along a number of lines.

Public Outreach. In order to promote CSA's and organic farmers markets Season developed a Powerpoint presentation called "How to Eat Local in Kansas City." Either Season or a volunteer, Emily Aiken, who is also on the coordinating committee of KCFC, gave this presentation 21 times during the term of our contract with Season. This was done at both *Eat Local Expos* to large audiences (50 – 70 people) as well as to smaller audiences at public libraries. Other venues, for example were the Environmental Club at Hallmark Cards and at the National Association of Insurance Commissioners whose headquarters is in Kansas City, Mo. Copies of this presentation, as it was continually improved, were provided to KSU with KCFC invoices.

In addition KCCSAC hosted tables or booths at 11 events including one that was 3 days long and required considerable coordination of volunteers. Most people who were contacted at these venues were not familiar with the CSA concept, so this work was useful in community education. For this purpose Season created displays and numerous fliers and brochures including, in 2010, a popular “flip book” showing the distribution points for member CSAs.

Website Improvements. KCCSAC continued to update its website during our contract with Season. These improvements included an interactive map for CSA distribution points, photos for each CSA farm page and links to the farms’ fliers and sign-up sheets. KCCSAC also created a Facebook page primarily for eaters and a Google list-serve for member-farmers.

Group/corporate CSAs. KCCSAC is helping with three corporate CSAs in 2010 but the process is more complicated than originally expected due to lack of experience among the fledgling core eater groups and learning issues in interacting with farmers. It is anticipated that this effort will be smoothed out by 2011.

New CSA models. KCCSAC is also serving as a clearinghouse of new ideas for operating CSAs. For example, two farms offered fall/winter programs in 2009. One of these introduced a “market CSA” which allows eaters to utilize both a farmers market stand and regular pickups within their CSA contract. This encourages eaters to get to know more local producers and to enjoy greater variety of produce.

CSA toolkits. An important task required under the contract was the development of a generic “tool kit” that would assist in the development new CSAs. Season developed two such kits, one for farmers who are substantially managing the CSA and one for eaters who are thinking about starting a group or corporate CSA. These provide extensive detail that will allow users to fashion a program that works best for them. Both toolkits are on the KCCSAC website, in the Resources Section.

Developing the KCCSAC organization. The original plan under the grant was for KCCSAC to transfer ownership of their website to KCFC and work essentially as a division of KCFC. However volunteers working with KCCSAC decided to form their own board of directors and to incorporate as a separate 501c3 not-for-profit corporation. It was mutually agreed between the two groups that the ownership of the KCCSAC website would remain with KCCSAC and that KCCSAC could best focus their efforts on promoting the CSA concept as a separate organization. However, KCCSAC Director, Season Barnett, remains on the KCFC Coordinating Committee, so it is anticipated that the two groups will maintain close ties.

KCCSAC requires that each CSA farmer fill out a detailed application that spells out details of the farm operation and CSA plan, such as crops anticipated, growing methods, distribution location, days and times. More recently they have been required to spell out how many CSA shares they will be servicing and to identify other venues where they may sell their produce and or meat. This gives prospective clients a sense of how stretched out the producer is in delivering on her or his promises.

In 2010 KCCSAC began requiring CSA farmers to pay annual membership dues in accordance with the size of their CSA. A couple of members did not renew their membership for the 2010

season for that reason. KCCSAC had 24 member farms in 2009 and 20 member farms in 2010. However the total number of CSA shares within the membership increased from about 950 in 2009 to about 1200 shares in 2010. The full report from our consumer organizer in fulfillment of the terms of her contract with KCFC is available upon request.

KCFC Website Enhancements. The KCFC Website Administrator, David Lawrence, spent much of his time updating our website to be commensurate with rapidly growing social networking systems such as Facebook, Twitter and Blogspot. At the beginning of the project we had essentially no following in these venues. At present we have about 2500 Facebook Group members, about 2250 “friends of the WebMinion KCFoodCircle” and a growing number of blog readers. The website is www.kcfoodcircle.org.

Promotional gains. Since the beginning, David has designed the KCFC’s website to achieve maximum exposure through search engines and other online mechanisms (public calendars, related web sites, etc.). This effort produces real results, and we can easily track and analyze visits (hits) to our website. For example accompanying this report is a series of snapshots of traffic occurring during the Mar 3, 2010 to April 2, 2010 run-up to our two *Eat Local Expo* events (March 27 & April 3).

Most of our web site traffic is generated by individuals using search engines (like Google, Yahoo!, Ask, and Bing), but 40% of our traffic in the past year has come from a combination of (A) Direct Traffic (people type in our web address themselves or use their own bookmarks) and (B) Referring Sites (people who "click-in" from links to the KCFC website which are located on other web sites).

Specific occasions (like our multi-media Expo promotions, all of which featured our website address) produce additional online “buzz,” as evidenced by our daily hit-count which soared to 483 on Friday, March 26th, 2010, just prior to our Expo on March 27th. The daily maximum hit-rate in 2009 (same time-frame) was 307. More importantly, our average daily hit count has nearly doubled this year, notably and consistently since March of this year, as our ongoing use of Facebook, Twitter and Blogspot entries keep our pages fresh in peoples minds. The most popular pages on the KCFC website are /CSA, /markets, /restaurants and our text version of the KCFC Producers Directory.

This work paid off in helping to generate record attendance at our 2010 *Eat Local Expo*. Attendance at our 2010 Shawnee Expo event was estimated to be 1468 people, compared to the previous high of 1118 in 2008 (the 2009 Shawnee Expo attendance was significantly reduced by snow and sleet). Attendance at our 2010 Independence event was 1048, compared to 890 in 2009. Overall 2010 Expo attendance was up 25% from previous records.

Two hundred twenty nine attendees reported at the KCFC greeting table that they had heard of the 2010 events through the KCFC website and related social media versus only 51 in 2009. Our ability to afford the production of beautiful color ads and fliers, and to redistribute them online, also contributed to improving attendance. Although we ran significantly fewer newspaper ads in 2010 than in 2009, Two hundred twenty seven attendees learned of the events from these ads in 2010 compared to 219 in 2009. A star volunteer, Cheri LeBlond, headed up this part of the project.

Promoting organic markets. David also had primary responsibility for maintaining contact with the managers of KCFC’s featured organic markets, to ensure that accurate information was

included in our printed Directory, on our featured markets webpage, and elsewhere on the website. He also regularly passes-on online market notices and e-newsletters, as they are provided by proactive market managers. David helped with the organization and management of a couple of these markets (and other markets where our Grower Members sell their food products), and he regularly consults with businesses and organizations who express interest in starting-up their own local farmers' markets.

David is also working on a year-around, organic market in Merriam, Ks that would provide a west-side (JoCo/WyCo, KS) focal point for local “foodies,” participating KCFC member growers and the Squash Blossom Food Co-op much like the Bad Seed Market provides for the downtown & mid-town areas of Kansas City.

Redesigning the KCFC Website. A new WordPress software conversion has been initiated to make it easier for other volunteers to contribute directly to maintenance of the website and to provide a consistent framework for all the pages. This process is still ongoing as old pages are switched over from the old software.

In addition, \$1000 was made available in the grant to seek expert opinion on the re-design of the website. The KCFC decided to split this amount into two contracts... one to a commercial website designer and one to a designer who specializes in websites of social activist organizations. The common elements from these two can be summarized as follows:

- Re-arrange the home page to greatly reduce the number of headings and the space taken up by same.
- Reduce the excessive number of links on the left side and move material to sub-pages.
- Finish the transfer to the new WordPress design system and eliminate material that is old and not directly applicable to the KCFC mission;
- Shorten pages by transforming lengthy texts to bullet points and installing links to sub-pages.
- Improve the appearance with consistent logo, color, font etc..

The major changes have been made, but some of this work is still ongoing.

There is a clear need to become more efficient and consistent in our information collection and distribution system. The use of single-entry maintenance of grower membership information by way of relational database software is now underway, and this will eventually extend to the regular cataloging and promotion of other local food resources.

Organic Farmers Markets. The number of organic farmers markets in the KC metro area increased from six in 2008 to seven in 2009. In 2010 the number remained at seven. The KCFC does not manage these markets; rather the KCFC makes a special effort to promote them to KCFC membership and to the public at large. The formation of these markets is dependent on the individual initiative of community food system enthusiasts. However, in a few cases, they

are sponsored by owners of shopping centers hoping to attract more people to their developments.

Aside from promotion through our website and printed directory, almost all of our grant funds in this category were used to place ads in focused media. The one exception was a banner ad on the *Kansas City Star* website.

Since KCFC does not manage these markets, it was not practical to get detailed attendance information. However KCFC could get some measure of the effectiveness of our ads by looking at hits to the organic markets page on our website. We are certain that many of these hits result from our ads because our ads did not contain all the info the public would need. Rather it directed them to our website for additional information.

Accompanying this report is a graph showing results of ads placed in 2009. We placed ads in the *KC Star* on June 17 and on June 24 and an ad in the June issue of *Tastebud Magazine*, which comes out the first of the month. "Hits" on our markets page clearly reflects increased interest from the public. We placed another ad in *Evolving Magazine* which showed some response. We also placed a banner ad on the *KC Star* website in July, but statistics provided by the *Star* indicated limited impact. So we did not do more internet ads. We placed another print ad in the September issue of *Tastebud*, and an ad in the November issue featuring our winter farmers markets. These appeared to have some impact. Finally we placed ads in *Tastebud Magazine* for July and August of 2010, but the daily view counter was accidentally turned off during that period so we lack reliable hit data for that period.

Extending the Season & Promoting Local Buying Clubs. In 2008 the KCFC posted a local buying club *toolkit* on the website and promoted this concept at local workshops. This gave some impetus to the formation of the Squash Blossom Local Food Buying Club (LFBC). KCFC website administrator, David Lawrence, assisted in the construction of Squash Blossom website and in the initial setup of the co-op software for testing purposes. More recently the Squash Blossom LFBC has morphed into an officially incorporated food co-op. At present it is still operating primarily as an on-line ordering service. Their website is <http://squashblossomcoop.org/shop/>

In a parallel effort to extend off-season buying opportunities to eaters, two member farms of the KCCSAC offered *fall/winter CSAs* in 2009. These were the KC Community Farm and Plate Prairie Farm. Both farms plan to continue this effort in 2010.

The KCFC would like to thank Kansas State University and the USDA for this grant. The KCFC Coordinating Committee believes that these funds have been put to good use in providing citizens in the KC metro area more opportunities to buy healthy, local produce while, at the same, time increasing the markets for small farmers in our region.

Sincerely,

Craig Volland, Coordinator
FMMP grant project for the KCFC