



Nevada Department of Agriculture

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Revised-Final Performance Report

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Project Title:

University of Nevada Reno Farmers Distribution and Access Location

Project Summary:

The demand for fresh, organic, and local produce has continued to grow in Nevada. Before the project was awarded, the Nevada Small Business Center conducted a grocery store survey to 380 downtown residents. 94% of the respondents indicated that if a produce store was located downtown they would likely shop there. In efforts to encourage the consumption and purchase of local specialty crops, this project was awarded to establish a farmers distribution center and retail site in downtown Reno. Prior to this award, a centrally located distribution site wasn't available for farmers, restaurants, or consumers and was greatly needed in the Reno area. The goal of the distribution site was to serve as a regular delivery location for farmers to drop off produce and allow area restaurants and consumers a central point to pick up specialty crops.

Project Approach:

The original location that had been selected for the project had little parking, limited hours of operation, and by the start of the award, several businesses in the area had closed. To address this location concern, in January of 2011 the Great Basin Community Food Cooperative (GBCFC) was asked to take over the project and for the distribution center to be moved to the GBCFC. The GBCFC was centrally located in the Reno downtown area and had established relations with various Nevada specialty crop growers, was within walking distance for downtown residence, and easily accessible for local restaurants. The new location was also going to be open seven days a week, whereas the original location was only going to be open for two days per week.

The majority of GBCFC's products (approximately 80%) are specialty crops and SCBGP funds were used solely to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. A few growers in Nevada that sell to GBCFC have a diversified operation and grow specialty crops in addition to managing non-specialty crops. The GBCFC matched a considerable amount of staff time and resources in implementing this project to ensure that grant funds were only used for specialty crop products and growers.

The following activities were performed during the project:

Beginning December 9th, 2011 eight training sessions were held on the DROPP system. Trainings included a full computer navigation of the online DROPP system, a review of ordering/delivery dates for local products, and a demonstration on how to create local farmer bios. Over 30 local producers were in attendance. Restaurants and Chefs will also have access to this system to improve efficiency of the distribution site. The database system was funded by award 12-25-B-1241, however the training was incorporated into this award to benefit specialty crop producers participating in the distribution center.

Meetings were coordinated with individual producers to discuss the purpose of the system, how to use it, and information that was needed for new producers to be added. The DROPP manager created a marketing packet for the system which was mailed to all the farmers and restaurants on the GBCFC contact list. Those that responded received individual visits from the manager to

help them utilize the system and to verify that growers had required producer certification. Information was provided on how to upload inventory, place orders, and how to view GBCFC specialty crop inventory so farmers were able to plan future plantings.

Project staff marketed the distribution system to farmers and restaurants in order to increase participation. GBCFC staff made over a dozen direct visits with restaurants and discussed the benefits of participating in the DROPP system. A presentation on the system was also provided at the 2012 Nevada Small Farm Conference. Additional marketing activities included developing a DROPP brochure, the DROPP marketing packet, and a DROPP mixer was hosted downtown at Campo restaurant. Campo is a big supporter of local products and incorporates local specialty crops into their menu.

The GBCFC served as a pick-up and drop-off location for the Great Basin Basket, Community Supported Agriculture Program. The GBCFC was in a more accessible area for CSA subscribers than the original location at the West Street Market. By serving as a pick-up/drop-off location the 300 plus CSA subscribers had improved access to their baskets and were able to enter the GBCFC and pick-up additional needed produce, further increasing specialty crop sales. Several of the 14 Farmers participating in the Great Basin Basket program had also started selling their produce through the GBCFC's DROPP program. The distribution facility created improved transportation systems for small specialty crop producers and has helped establish multiple marketing channels for producers selling their produce through the Great Basin Basket and through the GBCFC-resulting in increased sales for participating farmers. The GBCFC website provided a list of CSA programs to promote local producers and posted pick-up/drop off locations.

Throughout the project the Slow Food Reno Program had an average of six restaurants participating in the Program. Though the Slow Food Program has not grown substantially in restaurant participation, the GBCFC managed to encourage 12-17 restaurants to participate in the distribution system which fulfills the goal of increasing restaurant involvement in purchasing locally grown specialty crops. The Slow Food Reno Program works with the GBCFC and local farmers to help create systems to enable more people to understand how to purchase local and/or organic foods. The GBCFC directly fulfilled this role and provided this information through their website, presentations at WNC, SCI events, and at the 2012/2013 Nevada Small Farm Conference. GBCFC also had staff dedicated to providing this information directly to consumers and restaurants.

The GBCFC location, like the original West Street Market site, is located in downtown Reno and is within walking distance of various condos, apartments, and houses in the downtown community. Unlike the original location there is also parking available for customers. The original West Street Market site was only going to be open.

Goals & Outcomes Achieved:

Throughout the project the Slow Food Reno Program had an average of six restaurants participating in the Program. Though the Slow Food Program has not grown substantially in restaurant participation, the GBCFC managed to encourage 12-17 restaurants to participate in the

distribution system which fulfilled the goal of increasing restaurant involvement in purchasing locally grown specialty crops.

Approximately two staff members received employment opportunities during this project. Staff helped established the distribution system, worked with farmers and restaurants to educate them on the distribution process, and coordinated trainings to participating farmers. Eight training sessions were held during the project period.

GBCFC memberships increased by more than 10% over the project period, an increase of 300 plus members. 46 producers participated in the DROPP system over the project period. Approximately \$65,000 was made in sales to specialty crop growers through the distribution system.

Beneficiaries:

46 producers that participated in the distribution system benefited from the project by having a centralized location to drop-off/sell their specialty crops. In addition, 12-17 restaurants and their consumers benefited from having the new ability to order and pick-up local specialty crops at a convenient location. Downtown residence had easier access to local fruits and vegetables within a short distance of their homes. Farmers participating in the Great Basin Basket CSA benefited by having an additional drop-off location for their members. In addition, this provided further opportunity for farmers to drop-off produce for sale through GBCFC.

Lessons Learned:

Farmers are often apprehensive about participating in new programs, particularly when technology is involved. By providing training to farmers on the DROPP system, farmers became more familiar with how the distribution center would benefit their operations, how they can use it, and the technical aspects of the DROPP system. The training encouraged farmers to participate in the distribution system and made them feel more comfortable with using the program. In addition, performing outreach to farmers and restaurants on the distribution system also increased participation. Farmers and restaurants are more responsive with one-on-one visits.

Having a centrally located distribution system allowed growers to increase their sales and broaden their customer base to restaurants, consumers seeking local produce, and CSA members.

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Project Title:

Specialty Crop Food Production and Farmers Market Distribution

Final Report

Project Summary:

This project was performed in a community that has limited access to fresh fruits and vegetables (Lovelock, Nevada). Funding was awarded to build upon previous efforts to perform the following; research hoop house production, increase awareness of specialty crop production through farmers markets, and increase participation in farmers markets through outreach and season extension practices. The project also served as a specialty crop production model for this region of Nevada in order to demonstrate that high-value production can be a viable means of farming in place of alfalfa crops.

Project Approach:

Two 30' x 60' hoop houses were established to research specialty crop season extension growth, and to provide a larger quantity and variety of specialty crops at the markets. During the final phase of the project, hoop house crop production had expanded to include potatoes and more varieties of peppers, tomatoes, flowers, squash, and cucumbers. To promote and increase specialty crop production in the Northern Nevada area, the project leads helped two new growers (in Fallon and Imlay) construct hoop houses. They also assisted the Imlay grower in developing a specialty crop production model.

In order to demonstrate season extension practices and increase awareness of Nevada specialty crops, field trips were provided to 2nd and 3rd grade students, special needs young adults, and the Northern Nevada Food Bank. Public tours were welcome throughout the project to help interested growers develop a production model and to demonstrate to consumers how their food is grown in Pershing County. An Open House “Chamber Mixer” was also held, with 255 people in attendance, to showcase hoop house construction and Nevada growing opportunities.

A Facebook page was created to provide outreach and schedules for seven Farmers Markets. A Farmers Market attendee email list was developed to provide market updates to participating consumers and producers. Farmers Market advertisements were also increased through the Lovelock Newspaper and market flyers. To increase participation in the markets, networking efforts were made with Fallon, Winnemucca, Imlay, and Lovelock growers through participating in NevadaGrown workshops and the Nevada Small Farm Conference.

During the final phase of the project new markets were added to Hawthorne and Sparks. Doubletree Ranch served as a drop-off location for growers so that more specialty crops, from various farms, were able to reach rural and urban markets. Project leads also picked up produce from farmers when heading to markets.

Regular employment was provided for a part-time employee (20-25 hours per week) and several seasonal employees during the project. Employees developed skills in planting, weeding, and hoop house construction.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved:

The Lovelock Farmers Market provided produce from twelve farms located throughout Northern Nevada. These farms include Alicia Craig in Imlay, Tom Lawler in Winnemucca; Lattin Farms, Workman’s Farm, Slanted Porch, Salicias Delicious, and NanaDew Farm in Fallon, and Steve MacDougall, Doubletree Ranch, and Bruce Luke in Lovelock. By promoting Northern Nevada

markets, producers have expanded their crop sales to areas with limited access to fresh food. By the end of the project, specialty crops from participating farmers were sold at 70 markets.

Pamphlets containing nutritional information and sample recipes were distributed at the Lovelock and Winnemucca Farmers Markets. These materials helped educate consumers regarding the benefits of buying fresh local products. The recipes provide various food preparation methods for seasonal crops so consumers were able to regularly prepare purchased products. This encouraged regular participation in the markets.

Produce from the market was supplied to three restaurants in the Lovelock area; including Sturgeons, La Casita, and Las Palmas. Continued development of the Farmers Market restaurant participation is anticipated to grow.

Doubletree Ranch provided produce donations to the Northern Nevada Food Bank and Senior Voucher Program in Pershing and Humboldt County. Approximately 650 pounds of tomatoes were provided in November 2011 to the Food Bank. The Food Bank distributes products throughout 80,000 square miles. Consumer response to locally grown produce continues to grow and a repeat customer base has been demonstrated.

A website and Facebook page were used to promote the Farmers Market, increase customer base, and to increase networking with other growers. The Lovelock and Winnemucca market schedules were also posted on the NevadaGrown website. Additionally, a weekly advertisement for the Lovelock Farmers Market was placed in the Lovelock Review-Miner and in the Humboldt Sun newspaper. <http://www.dbtreeranch.com/>

An open house was held October 1, 2011 at Doubletree Ranch to promote alternative growing methods and a green house heating project sponsored by a separate organization. Approximately 255 people were in attendance and toured the hoop houses. This helped demonstrate season extending methods for various specialty crops. The cold storage space provided to other producers for distribution was also toured. This was provided as in-kind match by the project lead and benefited producers by decreasing transportation expenses while increasing distribution of their products throughout Northern Nevada.

Prior to the first Battle Mountain Farmers Market this area didn't have access to fresh Nevada Grown produce. The response was so great by Battle Mountain residences that all produce was sold by the end of the market. By utilizing networking resources the project leads were able to reach out to growers in Imlay, Lovelock, Fallon, Battle Mountain, and Winnemucca.

During the 2011 growing season plants were transferred to hoop houses in May. Due to a cold spring and late freeze, tomatoes were slow to set. Armenian cucumbers, several varieties of tomatoes, peppers, strawberries, squashes, melons, and lemon cucumbers were successfully transplanted into the hoop house. The hoop house coverings protected crops from cold temperatures, insects, and wind damage which otherwise would have greatly reduced production. The added protection from the hoop house produced vibrant plants with less water required.

A half-time worker was able to assist in planting and weeding. The worker was beneficial in providing additional growing information to the project lead due to their production experience in Mexico. Several additional individuals volunteered in exchange for produce. Volunteers gained hoop house production knowledge while working with the project leads.

All goals were accomplished during the project with the exception of the 4-H education component. The Project leads did attend the 4-H Leadership conference and were trained on becoming a 4-H Leader. However, they were unable to provide outreach and education to 4-H groups due to the increase in markets attended and time spent picking-up and preparing Nevada specialty crops for market. Youth were still involved in the project through field trips and farm tours. Approximately 130 students toured DoubleTree Ranch and were informed on specialty crop production during the project.

Beneficiaries:

Twelve specialty crop producers in Northern Nevada benefited from this project. Producers gained access to a cold storage unit (matching contribution) where they were able to safely store their produce until market. The project leads networked with Nevada producers and industry stakeholders to identify those interested in participating in markets. This also allowed project participants to discuss methods for getting produce from various farms to market.

Approximately 130 students became informed on specialty crop production in Nevada in addition to the 255 individuals that attended the farm tour on hoop house production. Consumers in the Pershing county, Churchill county, Mineral county, and Reno/Sparks area benefitted by having increased access to Nevada specialty crops.

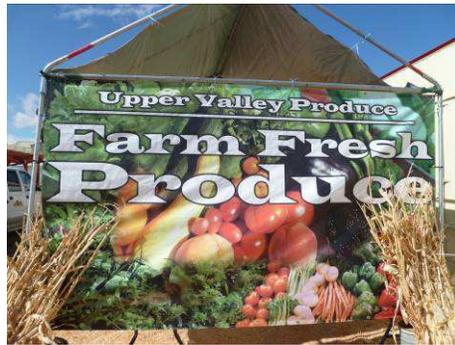
Lessons Learned:

Lessons learned include the following;

- How to propagate plants from seed and transplant.
- How to grow in a hoop house-best planting times and how to extend the growing season.
- How to advertise and promote the Farmers Market.
- Customer service skills and how to develop product presentation.
- Production skills involving soils, plant nutrients, and pest control- without pesticides or herbicides.
- How to develop long lasting mutually beneficial relationships with Northern Nevada growers.
- Sufficient assistance is crucial when it comes to setting up markets, planting, weeding, harvesting, and monitoring plant development.

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(Produce and advertising from Lovelock Farmers Market)

Project Title:

WNC Specialty Crop Institute Expansion Project

Project Summary:

This project was awarded in 2010 to continue and expand the program with emphasis on three components identified as critical to the success of specialty crop production in Nevada: recordkeeping and management, sales and marketing, and outreach to underserved rural sectors to develop sustainable farming systems. These components were identified through evaluations of previous workshops, staff assessments, site visits, and producer requests. An additional workshop on lavender production was added in mid-2013, as SCBGP funds were available.

Project Approach:

Listed below are the main components of this project and the activities performed:

Record Keeping and Business Management Workshop – 35 participants attended a two-day *QuickBooks Accounting for the Small Farm* workshop. Additionally, in cooperation with University of Nevada Cooperative Extension, the workshop was videocast to two rural areas, Caliente and Logandale with five participants at these sites. The workshop was originally planned for 20 attendees, but due to increased demand, it was expanded based upon the assurance of the instructor that the class could still be taught effectively.

Marketing & Sales Workshop - A *Subscription Farming for the Small Farm* workshop was held to fulfill the “marketing and sales workshop” component of the grant award. Due to the high number of requests for training on CSAs from previous workshop evaluations, the workshop focused on marketing and sales for subscription farms, also known as CSAs, rather than the general marketing workshop that was originally planned. CSAs are increasing at a substantial rate, and this workshop addressed the challenges specific to CSAs, Nevada’s economy, and high-desert climate. 68 participants attended the workshop, and it was also videocast to three rural sites, including Owyhee Indian Reservation with 12 attendees at these sites for a total of 80 attendees.

Tribal & Rural Outreach:

This component expanded efforts to introduce hoop house production and season extension practices to tribal reservations and remote rural regions. A *Hoop House Construction* workshop

was held at Smith Valley High School with 36 attendees. A majority were local residents that were unfamiliar with hoop house construction and production, and commercial producers interested in the low-cost hoop house model. The hands-on workshop demonstrated how to build a low-cost hoop house made from PVC tubing. The model for this workshop was developed in a previous SCBGP award and now is being used by WNC and UNCE in rural areas throughout the state. Smith Valley High School was chosen as the construction site for several reasons. It is in a rural location where little training is available; the school has a thriving FFA program with farm production and committed staff; the site is easily accessible and available for future training; and the site is within driving distance of six reservations for access to training. A majority of attendees knew little about hoop houses before attending the workshop. Eight tribal members from surrounding reservations attended.

Lavender Production Workshop:

The lavender workshop was held due to the high rate of attendance at three previous workshops and continued interest from specialty crop producers. Lavender grows well in the high desert region, and there is an established niche market for the product. Several producers have begun growing lavender commercially since the initial workshop in 2009. This workshop was held in August 2013 with 61 attendees. Each workshop has focused on different topics, progressing from production to marketing and value-added products. This workshop focused on distilling and creating value-added products to increase sales.

Significant Achievements:

- With the QuickBooks accounting workshop came the discovery of the instructor Marie Gibson of Gibson & Gale Consulting. With degrees in accounting and agriculture, Gibson has a thorough understanding of Nevada agriculture, and she has become a valuable resource for regional specialty crop producers. She continues to provide consultations and business planning training for the SCI and other agricultural organizations that recognize her value to the farming community.
- The marketing and sales workshop that focused on subscription farming, also known as CSAs, has resulted in several new CSAs across the state. Demand continues to be high for training on this topic, and additional workshops are planned with other funding. Several specialty crop producers now collaborate to diversify crop production that enables them to offer more variety to consumers.
- Collaboration between the SCI and UNCE has provided video casts to rural areas for several workshops.
- Tribal and rural outreach for specialty crop production continues to expand. As a result of collaboration between the SCI and UNCE on an earlier SCBGP award, the UNCE tribal coordinator now provides ongoing hoop house training to reservations across the state, including construction of a hoop house with follow-up training on crop production. To avoid duplication of services, the SCI no longer holds workshops on reservations, but focuses training on rural areas where producers have little access to training. Tribal members often attend these workshops for additional training. Specialty crop production in these areas provides a significant health benefits with increased access to fresh produce.
- Demand for training for lavender continues to increase, and the SCI has committed to produce annual workshops on this topic. Several specialty crop producers have planted

200 or more plants for commercial production as a result of these workshops. A Nevada lavender nursery that provides farm tours for SCI workshops reported 30% increased sales for the 2013 season.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved:

All goals were met and some were exceeded during this grant project:

Recordkeeping & Business Management Workshop – The original goal was for at least 10 of the 20 participants to implement their newly learned skills, including keeping more accurate business records and utilizing QuickBooks software. This goal was exceeded when 35 participants attended the workshop, and more than 50% indicated in later surveys that they were utilizing what they had learned. Of the workshop participants, a majority were familiar with QuickBooks, but wanted to maximize its benefit for their agricultural enterprises. At least 15 attendees participated in additional business planning workshops and consultations with instructor Marie Gibson. The later events were funded from non-SCBGP grant awards.

Marketing & Sales Workshop – The goal was for 50-75 participants to attend; at least 25 participants to implement new sales and marketing skills in their current operations; and 15 participants to enter new direct markets, including farmers markets, CSAs, farm stands, or restaurant and institutional sales. While committed to fulfilling the intent of the grant award to increase sales and marketing skills, the workshop topic was changed slightly due to producer demand and market trends. The workshop focused primarily on sales and marketing for CSAs as this enterprise is multi-faceted, and a full day was deemed necessary to cover the topic sufficiently. 68 participants attended the workshop with an additional 12 attending via compressed video. Post-workshop evaluations and surveys indicated that 26 participants (14 farms) had initiated new CSAs or improved their current CSA operations. Most of the other responses indicated the participant was still considering the enterprise or had decided it was not the best fit for their farm.

Tribal Outreach Expansion Project – The goal was for at least 20 participants to attend the workshop and five to construct a hoop house or implement season extension practices as a business enterprise or for personal consumption. 36 participants attended the workshop in addition to a dozen FFA students. Post event evaluations indicated that three commercial producers were implementing new hoop house production or expanding with the low-cost models; two reservations were planning to build hoop houses for community use; and 10 local residents were considering small-scale hoop house structures for personal consumption.

Beneficiaries:

Two groups were intended beneficiaries for this project:

Specialty crop producers in Northern Nevada benefited through training that is specific to the high-desert climate and the demographics of this region. The training was not available unless producers traveled hundreds of miles for training held in similar regions. Local workshops also provided networking opportunities for producers.

Underserved Indian reservations and remote rural communities benefited through the outreach and training that was brought directly to these communities. In addition to benefiting commercial production in these areas, this project brought health benefits to the communities as

home gardeners learned new growing methods to provide more fresh produce to these food deserts.

Lessons Learned:

As the SCI entered its third and fourth years of programming, flexibility was recognized as the key to success to meet both the goals of the grant award and the needs of the constantly changing specialty crop industry. Producer interest, changing market trends, new insights from previous workshops, and collaborative efforts with like-minded organizations created a need to adjust the originally planned activities to produce the best long term results. Flexibility in programming allowed the SCI to avoid duplication of efforts by other organizations and to provide current and relevant training for producers.

Additionally, the SCI gained a better understanding of the challenges faced by tribal reservations and remote rural areas including harsher climates, limited access to supplies and equipment, and land use policies. With this new knowledge, the SCI is able to adjust its programming to meet the needs of these communities.

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Project Title: NevadaGrown Know Your Farmer Know Your Food

Project Summary:

This project was awarded in 2010 to increase sales of specialty crop products for Nevada farmers by “putting a face to the farmer” to increase public awareness of the availability of Nevada’s specialty crops. This project expands upon the national USDA Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food Initiative designed to create new economic opportunities by better connecting consumers with local producers.

The project had three components: website and social media marketing development, farm branding, and promotion through underwriting and sponsorships.

The project is important and timely based on increased consumer demand for locally-grown, specialty crops and the competition that Nevada producers face from California farmers who have longer growing seasons and more marketing experience and resources.

Project Approach:

Listed below are the three main components of this project and the activities performed:

Website & social media marketing development

- A user-friendly WordPress website was created with the capacity to provide detailed information on specialty crop growers, including products, pictures and information about the farm. It also lists CSAs, farm stands, and u-pick operations that have specialty

crop production. A search engine was incorporated to enable consumers to easily find producers that sell specific specialty crops.

- The website provides interactive social media marketing as it links NevadaGrown, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube to the website. Producer posts shared on NevadaGrown social media will also appear on the website.
- The website provides opportunities for small specialty crop producers that do not have their own website. The NevadaGrown website allows small growers to have an interactive Web presence and social media capabilities.
- NevadaGrown collaborated with Western Nevada College Specialty Crop Institute, the College of Southern Nevada, and the Nevada Small Farm Conference for these organizations to provide training on social media. Training included four workshops through WNC and another training session at the Nevada Small Farm Conference. The College of Southern Nevada provided assistance in marketing and social media to interested producers.
- Farmers markets across the state were identified and encouraged to list their markets on the website. This provided additional exposure of specialty crop producers.

Farm branding

A unique farm logo was developed for six specialty crop growers that would improve their marketing efforts by providing a more professional appearance. The farms were chosen based on their needs and interest. Producers were actively involved in developing the logo and were provided additional individual training on how to use it to maximize their marketing efforts.

Promotional material, events and sponsorships – The project provided funds to continue developing effective marketing materials and to promote specialty crop growers through underwriting and sponsorships.

- Two new products – food-safe adhesive labels with the NevadaGrown logo and NevadaGrown rack cards were developed. Previously developed items including logo twist ties, plastic market bags and boxes are also available for specialty crop producers.
- NevadaGrown staff promoted specialty crop producers at more than a dozen events, including health and wellness fairs, Rotary breakfasts, Chamber mixers and breakfasts, home and garden shows, the Washoe County Obesity Forum, and the Nevada Small Farm Conference.
- Now in its second year, NevadaGrown staff produce a farmers market in Northern Nevada that promotes specialty crops and seasonal eating. The market is sponsored by a local restaurant and receives significant media attention.

Significant Achievements

- A new interactive website was developed and successfully launched in mid-2011. It was developed by the Nevada Small Business Development Center whose staff provide free ongoing assistance for updates and problems that might arise. This provides significant savings as NSBDC staff assist NevadaGrown staff on a continual basis to keep the site updated and problem-free. The site is user-friendly for both consumers and producers.

- Website hits increased dramatically, from approximately 26,000 in 2012 to 41,000 in 2013, an increase of 41%.
- Facebook followers have increased almost 150% from approximately 1,000 in 2011 to more than 2,500 in December 2013.
- 38 specialty crop producers have created Facebook pages and are linked to the NevadaGrown Facebook page and website for enhanced promotional opportunity. Increases in website and Facebook usage are attributed to the interactive website and social media platforms and training provided to producers.
- Collaborations with WNC Specialty Crop Institute, College of Southern Nevada and Nevada Small Farm Conference provided training opportunities to producers at no cost to NevadaGrown
- A database was established with contact information for specialty crop producers, farmers markets, restaurants, and retailers that sell or use specialty crops.
- U.S. Foods, a food distributor with more than 1,200 commercial customers, has become a partner to promote Nevada specialty crops. The company actively recruits specialty crop producers for sales and promotes NevadaGrown crops to its customers. The partnership developed when a U.S. Foods representative attended the 2011 Nevada Small Farm Conference.

Problems & Delays:

- Logos were developed for six specialty crop producers with mixed results. Three of the producers use their logos consistently and have expanded their marketing efforts. Unfortunately, one of these producers recently went out of business for financial reasons. The other three farms have made little use of the logo or expanded their marketing in spite of training opportunities. Logo development for individual farms will not be pursued in future projects as training “for the masses” has produced better results.
- Event promotions were successful in educating significant numbers of consumers about buying locally-grown specialty crops. However, farmer participation was challenging for some events due to busy schedules and long driving distances. This challenge is taken into consideration when planning future events.
- The new website has encountered minor problems, mainly from users adding new listings or updating old information. The problems are often due to user error and have been solved in a timely manner. More detailed instructions were added to the website and has alleviated most problems. The remainder are corrected by NevadaGrown staff.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved:

Goals were met and exceeded in this grant project:

- Membership listings increased from approximately 120 at the beginning of this grant period to 166 by December 2012, an increase of approximately 38% which exceeded the expected outcome of 25%.
- Website hits increased from app. 26,000 in 2012 to 41,000 in 2013, an increase of 41%. This is substantially higher than the goal of 15%.
- Sales for specialty crops are difficult to measure as producers are reluctant to report their earnings. However, increased visibility and sales are demonstrated by more Nevada farmers attending farmers markets, more new CSAs in the past two years, new wholesale

opportunities, and a substantial increase in the number of visitors to the website and social media.

Beneficiaries:

Nevada specialty crop producers – While quantitative sales numbers are difficult to obtain, benefits to producers are evidenced by increased interest from consumers on the website and social media sites. New CSAs and an increase in farmers markets across Nevada in the past two years also indicate more demand for Nevada specialty crops. U.S. Foods and the Great Basin Community Co-op DROPP program also provide producers additional wholesale sales opportunities.

Nevada’s residents receive both health and economic benefits. Sales contribute directly to Nevada’s economy, and consumers benefit from consumption of fresh, local produce.

Lessons Learned:

The main lesson learned in this project was the importance of the Internet and social media for promotion and marketing. While print materials and attendance at events are important and will be continued, the NevadaGrown program recognizes that staying abreast with social media trends is vital to continued success of promoting and increasing sales of specialty crops.

It is also recognized that assisting individual producers in their marketing efforts can be challenging and does not guarantee success. Producers can be reluctant to give up old practices, and their commitment may wane.

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(Lavender production workshop Spring 2012)



(Cut flower workshop 2012)

Project Title:

Community Value-Added Processing in Lincoln County, NV

Project Summary:

The goal of this project was to help farmers establish specialty crop value added products in the Lincoln County area in order to help them reduce crop waste and create additional/lasting products for sale. Not all produce arrives to the markets looking crisp or of high quality. This issue has resulted in approximately 10-40% of the produce grown in this area going to waste. In addition, the travel distance to major markets including Las Vegas (176 miles one-way), St. George, Utah (107 miles one way) makes it more challenging to deliver produce looking fresh and crisp, particularly in a climate that can hit daily averages of 110 degrees Fahrenheit during the summer months. To address this issue, a group of eight specialty crop producers worked together to create a processing facility that could help small producers and locals create value-added food products for commercial sale. The goals of the project were to rent a building and develop a processing kitchen that would allow participants to feasibly create specialty crop value-added products including baked goods, cut and packaged vegetables, dehydrated vegetables, acid or acidified water-bath canned products, fermented products, and refrigerated products. Supplies were purchased for processing and labeling safe products commercially.

To successfully create an approved processing facility, participants needed to learn and teach others how to navigate food regulations at the federal and state level. To achieve this, participants learned how to work with local authorities, experts from out of state, and a small processing business in California.

Project Approach:

During the beginning phases of the project, the primary goal was to determine what the local, state, and federal requirements were for creating safe and approved value-added products. Through the process of the grant several plans were altered due to unclear rules available for small food processing in Nevada and economic feasibility. Project participants studied the feasibility of various business paths, most of which were not economical, to find a solution that appeared to work for their first steps into commercial value added products. After researching various business plans and developing a processing plan for Nevada producers, the information was presented to over one hundred people state wide and will be written in help guides during the next year. The project has resulted in the sale of over 20 different products and more will be coming in the near future. During the project eight producers participated in the collaborative and nine value-added specialty crop products were created. Twelve additional products are still in the process of being developed and approved for sale.

Project activities included the following:

2011

The project was started by meeting with the local Nevada State Health inspector to discuss Nevada requirements for creating value-added products. The members of the cooperative had previously identified the general direction that was preferred for the processing facility and used the opportunity to ask the inspector about required Nevada procedures and licensing. The inspector urged the cooperative to identify all potential products to be created before a processing facility was selected. After discussing with the inspector the various products that were desired by cooperative members (salsa, vegetable juices, jams, syrups, dehydrated vegetables, herbs, and specialty oils), it became clear that several of the products were beyond

immediate reach, specifically due to the costs of equipment that would be required to address food safety requirements. It also became clear that there was not an existing statewide system that identified procedures required by the state to manufacture the items that had been discussed with the inspector. As a result, it was realized that for each of the products desired, research would have to be performed to identify each process. Then this information had to be presented to the inspector.

Processing experts were sought out to educate the members on developing a processing business. Experts all indicated that they could help in specific areas of experience, but none were familiar with the specific state of Nevada requirements for a processing kitchen. This barrier required project staff to perform additional research on how to proceed in Nevada.

Further discussions with the health inspector created more confusion on what processes were required for each product. The inspector insisted that a retort canning facility was needed. After performing research on the equipment and facilities required for retort canning, costs far exceeded the budget and were not cost-effective for the quantities that would be processed. In addition there was no facility in Lincoln County that could be transitioned into a retort canning operation. Small manufacturing facilities across the country that paralleled the scale and desired products for Lincoln County were researched in order to determine existing requirements in other states. Research showed simpler, cheaper processes that were accepted by state health inspectors. This information was later presented to the local health inspector. The 2009 Federal Food Code and several HASSP plans were reviewed as recommended by the health inspector. Research indicated that the 2009 Food Code was not applicable for canned processing and Good Manufacturing Processes are required. However, it was also determined that HASSP is not for low risk food products according to federal law.

June 4th & 5th, a project participant went for training at the Happy Girl Kitchen, a small independent processing plant in Pacific Grove, California. The owners of Happy Girl Kitchen gave a detailed account of licensing, processing practices, and the facility's internal systems to ensure safe manufacturing practices. On June 28th & 29th, the participant and project lead attended a Master Canner course in Logandale, Nevada to provide foundational information for safe canning practices. After dealing with several concerns from the health inspector, forms were received necessary for certifying the elementary school kitchen for processing. In anticipation, individual members of the cooperative started testing canning products from home. September 16, 2011 the Cooperative achieved approval for food processing in the Caliente elementary kitchen from State Health. Favorite canning recipes using local vegetables were made and stored to obtain equilibrium. Meter for reading pH were then acquired. Processing authorities were contacted to gain information on how to get product approval. On September 28th, a project participant met with a processing authority member in California, Keith Ito. Mr. Ito provided federal forms and beneficial information to help the cooperative gain initial product approval directly from the Federal Department of Health and Human Services.

A testing panel from the group reviewed a variety of canned products and selected four items to be the first products sent for FDA approval. Since FDA approval is only one process along the line, information was collected on the four products to be presented to the local health inspector. These packages included approved processes, both recipes and Good Manufacturing Processes,

as well as the appropriate labeling necessary to make the products legal for commercial sale. Information was also collected on other products including: fresh cleaned and packaged greens, herbs and cut vegetables; fresh salsas, sauces and dips; canned jams, preserves and jellies; canned acidified pickles, salsa, and sauces; fresh vegetables frozen; and dehydrated vegetables and herbs. Although the goal of achieving the two saleable products in the first year was not achieved, a relationship with the local health inspector was established and how to navigate state and federal food processing regulations. Understanding local regulations allowed members to begin creating their own version of value added products and to have more confidence in creating their own products.

2012

A group of five farmers researched options for kitchens that would function for commercial use. After experimenting with products in the school kitchen, it became apparent that the school kitchen was not going to function well for most of the targeted products. The kitchen's equipment, layout, and limited space for sharing restricted the collaborative's ability to access the kitchen at their convenience, since the school was still preparing food for school meals, and create the products they desired. In efforts to find an alternative facility, the producers researched options for existing buildings to be renovated or constructing a new building. In order to secure funding to renovate or construct a new building, three grants were submitted for low interest loan support of the project. None of the grants were funded due to competitiveness and the number of disadvantaged groups located in the Lincoln County area. A study including surveys of the population in Lincoln County and markets was performed under a separate grant to determine paths for creating a feasible kitchen. Results showed that to build a sustainable processing facility there would have to be multiple uses and markets located outside of Lincoln County. Ten buildings/businesses were identified as alternative locations, however after further research was conducted they were all found to be unfeasible. During this time, the collaborative continued to use the kitchen facility for processing until an alternative site was identified.

Holly Gatzke, Project Lead presented the lessons learned from the grant activities at the Nevada Small Farm Conference to over 20 participants on "Value Added Products-Steps to Success-What is the path in Nevada?" A website was launched to assist value added businesses in Nevada (www.nevadafoodbusiness.com). This was a collaborative project between Nevada Small Business Development Center and University of Nevada Cooperative Extension and Rural Development. Lessons learned during this project were used to guide content of the website.

Nevada Department of Health approved the procedure for packaged ready-to-eat salad greens (lettuce, arugula, spinach, etc.) for retail and wholesale sales by Blue Lizard Farm, a farmer participating in the collaborative. Blue Lizard Farm developed and gained approval for their vegetable washing and packaging facility, which was focused on greens. This farm/collaborative participant serves as a model for those interested in packaged greens. Blue Lizard Farm's facility was being researched as an alternative site for the collaborative's processing facility.

The collaborative held a sale of locally made goods at a craft fair from the test kitchen in December, where 42 meals were sold and numerous prepackaged greens. Income from the sale was reinvested in the project by continuing to produce value added products within the collaborative.

2013

Holly Gatzke provided three presentations through the year to educate others on the knowledge gained from the project. In February the presentation was on “Value-Added Products-Steps to Success” in a value added workshop at the Nevada Small Farm Conference to 27 participants. In May a presentation was given to 18 participants at the Farm Products to Food Products Workshop in Las Vegas. In November, a presentation was given on “Producing Value added Products in Nevada” at the Southern Nevada Agriculture Conference to approximately 35 participants. Blue Lizard Farm also presented at the conference on the project.

Blue Lizard Farm successfully washed and packaged mixed lettuce, spinach, kale, and micro-greens for sales locally and in Las Vegas to a number of chefs, Whole Foods and other businesses throughout 2013. Upon completion and use of their washing and packaging line in their processing building it became apparent that they had enough room for a small test processing kitchen to be added for community use.

A relationship was established with a processing authority contact from Utah State who helps small processors and has created a value-added guide in Utah. This contact was used to help review the processing procedures for zucchini relish, strawberry rhubarb jam, chutney, harissa, barbeque sauce, frozen vegetables, refrigerated kimchee/sauerkraut, refrigerated salsa, cut and packaged vegetable, and dehydrated vegetables.

A relationship was also developed with the new Health Inspector in the Lincoln County area. Once the State requirements were clearly identified, an application was sent out for a processing kitchen and ten new products. The processing test kitchen at Blue Lizard Farm is near getting approval for use from the state.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved:

Expected Measurable Objective 1:

The steps required to establish a small value added center for processing specialty crops into a commercially saleable products in Nevada will be outlined so that the information can be used by other groups.

Activities performed to achieve objective:

Four presentations were provided to over 100 participants on how to develop a value-added business. The knowledge gained throughout the project was used to establish a website so that others can benefit from the information gathered. Over the next year, the knowledge gained will be written into fact sheets that guide and clarify how to start producing commercial value-added products in the state of Nevada. The project lead will collaborate with the Nevada Health Department and the Utah State University in preparing the fact sheets. Eight farmers participated in the project and increased their knowledge regarding how to create value added products and navigate state/federal regulations.

The project lead is currently working on creating more publications than intended due to the vague confusion that was encountered during the project which demonstrated a great need for

writing up more areas. The publications that will be created for specialty crop value-added production in Nevada are:

- How to produce a jam, jelly or preserve product. Additional publications will also be created for each of the following types of items bread and cookies, dried produce, cut fresh produce, fermented products, etc.
- How to label your food product
- Steps required to create a processing facility

The publications have been delayed until spring of 2014 to ensure the publications are current. The State of Nevada has recently passed new processing facility rules (January 2014). The state will be releasing the final version of the approved regulations in the near future. The project lead will work directly with State Health in order to identify how these rules will impact the new facility and how to help others comply. The documents will be written according to these new regulations. LCAT has hired a designated person to complete documents by the end of July 2014. Project leads/participants have collaborative support from the Nevada Department of Health and a professor that is a processing authority from Utah State University to ensure that these new guides for Nevada meet the regulatory agency requirements. Project participants are excited that these guides will be the first for Nevada and establish much of the needed clarity to value-added specialty crops.

Expected Measurable Objective 2:

By year one of the project have two products created that are legal for commercial sale. By year 3 have 10-15 products created and sold from Lincoln County.

Activities performed to achieve objective:

By the end of the project, year-round sales of ready to eat mixed lettuce, kale, spinach, and mustard greens in addition to numerous types of microgreens were sold commercially with packaging and labels.

During the project a Cottage Law was passed in the state of Nevada (as of July 1, 2013). As a result of the project, the new law, and eligible small growers, a number of different baked goods were sold. Producers including Once Upon a Thyme Baked Goodness created a variety of baked goods and Canyon Gardens sold roasted chickpeas, candied angelica, and gluten free baked goods containing various specialty crops. In the next year when state approval is achieved for the test kitchen, there will be sales of dehydrated vegetables, canned goods, barbeque sauce, and other products. Nine value added products were created during the project and twelve are in the process of being approved.

Long-term Impact:

Producers in Lincoln County have started producing high quality, specialty crops for sale in local farmers markets, farm stands, and to high-end chefs/specialty grocery stores in Las Vegas. They have found that the opportunity for these sales are large but it provides more return for some of the crops if the product is washed and packaged. It has also been discovered that there is a substantial portion of the produce (10-40%) that goes to waste because it does not appear high quality or is too ripe to make it to the consumer in good condition. Produce that may not be as

appealing to consumers at the markets (perfect in shape or color) can become a dried specialty product or ingredient for another item to give it more flavor and nutrition.

Beneficiaries:

Sample products were tested by buyers of fresh produce to determine consumer demand. Buyers demonstrated excitement for the new products that will be coming out once all the paperwork is approved by State Health. The Eight participating producers have calculated the potential to increase profits and make their operations more sustainable by creating valuable products from the culled produce. Creating value-added products, offers the advantage of providing income to growers during the winter months and will allow producers to maintain local customers by offering year round products. Consumers have gained the opportunity to access local specialty crops not just in the production season but year round in Lincoln County and Las Vegas area.

Future and current producers have and will benefit from this project by learning about the process for creating value added products through UNCE staff, LCAT staff, the new website, and fact sheets that will be created and made available online. In addition, the project has created local job opportunities in the Lincoln County area. With time, jobs will develop in the value-added business to create a small-scale industry with great potential in Lincoln County.

Lessons Learned:

At the beginning of the project, the discussions with the local health inspector as well as experts in other agencies were often considered drawn out. Information was given that was often incomplete, conflicting and sometimes wrong. The greatest time delay was due to the lack of procedures for creating commercial products on a small scale within state regulation. These setbacks required the project lead and participants to research companies who are doing processes similar to the project goals. Having someone dedicated to overseeing the project activities and performing research in order to achieve the goals of the grant was crucial. Project participants feel that the delays and research performed provided a broader knowledge base from which to move forward in creating products in the future. The research and project activities performed allowed project participants to gain skills on how to work with local health authorities in achieving their goals and will help future producers achieve value-added processing goals. This project made it clear that any processing business will have to account time in their business plans for delays in getting products approved.

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(Holly presenting at the 2012 Small Farm Conference)

Project Title:

Fallon Convention and Tourism Authority, City of Fallon Tractors and Truffles
Final Report

Project Summary:

Tractors & Truffles (T&T) was a farm-to-plate dinner and arts event designed to showcase the small farm agriculture industry in Fallon, Nevada. This event capitalizes on growing trends toward the consumption of locally grown foods, healthy eating, farm visits, and fresh food flavors. Gourmet chefs, high quality produce, and the lively arts scene in Fallon will be key components to increasing consumer participation in purchasing Nevada grown produce.

This event made the direct connection between rural and local farming relative to the local specialty crops produced in Nevada. T&T will unite local and northern Nevada restaurants/chefs who seek out fresh, locally grown produce for their menus.

T&T combine farm tours, a gourmet dinner made from food grown in Northern Nevada, chef demonstrations, and a Churchill Arts Council performance in the Oats Park Art Center's Barkley Theatre. The combination of good food with the arts creates a synergy that can appeal across markets, demographics, and interests. This will enable the event to garner attention from a wide variety of media and other outreach efforts.

Project Approach:

T&T coordinated a website, marketing, public relations, menu collaboration, and collaboration with local farmers.

Marketing: An early relationship was established with Reno Tahoe Edible (RTE) magazine. Paid advertisements were complimented by stories about the event. The RTE magazine's web and newsletter features also promoted the event.

The T&T website (<http://www.tractorsandtruffles.com/>) was updated and a Facebook campaign was initiated. Outreach was made to food writers around the country.

A T&T website was updated and direct mailed to targeted audiences including members of the Great Basin Basket Company, Community Supported Agriculture members, NevadaGrown, local restaurants, and small farms. The brochure was distributed at several key locations including Nothing to it Culinary School and restaurants around the region.

A partnership with Whole Foods was cultivated which allowed for the distribution of T&T brochures at each checkout stand.

Closer to the event, press kits were distributed to media in the region as well as into Sacramento and San Francisco. A few additional paid ads were placed. T&T segments were lined up with local radio and TV networks.

Chef and Menu Collaboration: T&T retained world-renowned teacher, author and chef, John Ash, to promote the event. Mark Davis, the Chef Director at the International Culinary Institute with the Art Institute of California (San Francisco) was also brought on to work with lead chef Steve Hernandez. Steve Hernandez is also a local restaurant owner in Fallon.

The three chefs set about identifying local produce that would be available at the time of the dinner. Menu collaboration quickly followed. A concerted effort was made to use a wide range of ingredients to showcase the diversity of small farms in the area.

Collaboration with Local Farmers:

Local farms were contacted to determine what was being grown and the timing of crops. Eight different farms provided produce for the event.

Goals and Outcomes:

The primary goal of T&T is to promote the small farm Agriculture industry in and around Fallon. Secondary goals include making a connection between the farm and food we eat while creating new markets for specialty crop farmers. Tertiary goals include creating tourism for Fallon that brings out-of-area visitors during the event and throughout the year in order to cultivate Fallon's agriculture brand.

To accomplish this, advertising and public relations are combined to get the T&T event recognized by food and entertainment writers. This coverage goes beyond selling tickets to T&T but to increase potential visitors and purchases of Nevada grown crops.

More than 20 stories and announcements were generated about T&T. A Facebook page was also established to create a forum for discussion. The T&T website was a valuable tool in disseminating information and providing updates about the event.

Eight farms provided food for the event which is an increase of four from 2010. The event sold out all 100 tickets available. Sixty five guests were from out of the area while 35 were local. This is an important statistic because it demonstrates that the event has established awareness in primary urban market and was successful in attracting visitors. The locals that participated were also unaware of Fallon's Agriculture and arts attractions.

Rick Gray, Project lead made strong efforts to meet each guest, listen to comments, and to provide information regarding agri-tourism in the area. The response from participants was positive in relation to the local food and Fallon tourism. This project created 100 ambassadors

for Fallon's Agriculture and arts. Follow-up and outreach through social media outlets will provide a positive outlook for the event and Fallon's Agriculture.

The original goal to double the number of attendants was revised in order to improve the experience for event participants. The number was revised to 100 people after evaluating the number of attendants that could be efficiently fed a five course meal and be given a thorough tour of local farms. It would have been difficult to obtain enough local food to feed more than 100 people at the end of the growing season. Conducting tours to over 100 people that effectively demonstrates the role of local specialty crop production would also have been challenging. The limit of 100 attendants provides a more intimate setting between participants, farmers, and local chefs. Farmers were given the opportunity to interact with all participants.

The goal was revised to outreach to over 200 people in order to increase the number of out of area attendants and to encourage new participants. This event will ultimately help increase local specialty crop sales each year and increase awareness of what crops are grown by Nevada farmers. Approximately 65 out of the 100 participants were from out of the area.

To increase awareness of the event and motivate new participants various outreach initiatives were utilized. Interest was monitored through the number of "hits" the online advertisements and stories received. Press releases and other media outreach were picked up in over 20 media outlets. The Reno Gazette Journal, Sacramento Bee, Reno Tahoe Edible, and San Francisco Chronicle are a few of the press release outlets utilized. Hits received on the San Francisco Chronicle totaled 1,389 full page reads, which contributed to the outcome of 65 out of area attendants. The Reno Tahoe Edible Magazine distributes approximately 20,000 copies of which an estimated 3 people read each copy. During future Tractor's and Truffles events new attendants will be sought out and informed regarding local specialty crop production.

Beneficiaries:

Participating farms, local restaurants, the Churchill Arts Council, and the City of Fallon were all beneficiaries of T&T. The event execution added credibility to agricultural industries and moved the Fallon agriculture brand forward.

The event featured a display of antique tractors from area farms. Local farmers expressed gratitude for the event's focus on farming and the importance of agriculture to the area's economy. This extended positive response will encourage community support that is important in creating events that have a solid foundation in the community.

T&T is moving the farm-to-table, eat local movement forward. The energy saved in utilizing local foods is an important component to growing the market for local and regional farmers. The ability to provide fresh foods for consumption in regional restaurants is key to opening up additional markets to area farmers.

Lessons Learned:

Although the event was extremely successful, chefs and farmers indicated that the October 15th event date stretched the limits of what produce would be available. In order to have the freshest

produce and food options, a date in August or September will be selected for the third annual event in 2012.

An older demographic was noticed at the event. This made the social media and website outreach somewhat inefficient. Alternative outreach methods will be utilized to convey event details for future events.

The logistics of providing a five course meal to 100 guests in an outdoors setting was challenging. Better efforts will be made to support the chefs and staff during future events.

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Project Title:

Nanadew Herb Farm Strawberry Intern Project Phase II

Project Summary:

The goal of this project was to build upon a previous SCBGP project and provide youth and potential future farmers, located in the surrounding areas of Churchill County, opportunities to learn sustainability, organics, and niche marketing through the experience of growing specialty crops, specifically strawberries, herbs, beans, and edible flowers. During the three year period, the intern recruitment was more focused on potential future growers and their individual interests in specialty crop production. Education was provided to youth and interested growers from an experienced farm operation (NanaDew Herb Farm) and the various activities involved in being a specialty crop grower, allowing the participating interns to develop new skills and establish/expand their own specialty crop operation.

Project Approach:

Monthly workshops were held allowing interns to participate in classroom and hands on training at the farm. New students were gained by word of mouth, flyers, and emails. The tribal judicial system also sent prospective growers via community service requirements. Education opportunities for interns to learn the many aspects of specialty crops included; winter planting for early spring harvest, raised bed frost prevention, starting seedlings, planting strawberries, raised bed maintenance and irrigation techniques. In addition, interns learned about where to order crops that perform well in their prospective areas and how to price their product and make a profit based on their production expenses; essential skills in having a sustainable operation.

Curriculum sheets were prepared for the intern trainings and included the following subjects; pros and cons of CSA's, marketing styles, farmers markets, marketing laws and regulations, advantages of organic farming, planting techniques, cultivation, future roles of farming, seeds vs. cuttings, hoop house production, irrigation techniques, and transplanting.

The primary goal of successfully growing, marketing, and educating during the 2011 and 2012 growing season was achieved at the NanaDew Herb Farm. Four interns were provided the

opportunity to learn about the many aspects of Specialty crops including the following; season extension practices during spring and fall, hoop house construction, ground preparation, transplanting, weed management, micro irrigation layout, harvesting, and marketing specialty crops. Interns also participated in crop protection concepts through windbreak design, installation, and fencing.

Another round of intern recruiting began during October and December of 2012. Intern announcements were posted at Western Nevada College and small businesses throughout the Fallon Community. During this period, two new interns were recruited that were in the process of establishing specialty crop production sites. During November of 2012 they participated in a two day training that incorporated hoop house construction, raised bed production, and weed management strategies.

The grant goal of educating farm interns about specialty crop agriculture, specifically strawberry and other high demand row crops, continued at NanaDew Herb Farm during 2013. In 2013 four interns participated in the project. In addition, during the final phases of the project the internships were expanded to another location, Shoshone Tribe. The project was expanded to allow existing interns the opportunity to teach their new specialty crop production skills to an underserved population. This activity helped others develop skills to produce specialty crops and improve access to fresh food.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved:

This project was designed to give prospective specialty crop farmers the skills and knowledge to start their own project from the ground up and see it through from production to eventual sales. Over the project period, ten interns were educated on specialty crop production and marketing.

Expected accomplishments included having each intern choose a crop they were interested in growing and using what they learned during each session to apply it to their own specialty crop project. Interns who had grown before used knowledge gained during their internship to improve crop vigor resulting in increased yields. Some interns reported planting larger areas, even doubling land put into production, from what they had done in previous years because they had more confidence to grow such quantities after taking part in the internship.

Interns also learned about how to market/price products they had grown. One of the marketing methods they learned about was Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs) baskets. During 2011 and 2012, approximately 167 CSAs were sold. During 2010, approximately 97 CSAs were sold.

Unexpected accomplishments were seen at the Fallon Paiute Shoshone Tribe. Participants continued the process they learned from the interns to their own yards and put in home gardens.

Beneficiaries:

The direct beneficiaries were the ten interns and individuals located at the Shoshone Tribe location. Interns demonstrated their new skills and constructed a hoop house for the Shoshone Tribe community to benefit from. In addition, 264 consumers that participated in the CSA program benefited by having access to fresh local produce.

Lessons Learned:

NanaDew Herb Farm Strawberry Intern Project Phase II identified two groups that have an on-going high demand for specialty crop education, production, and consumption:

1. Interns interested in producing their own specialty crops as farmers or home gardeners.
2. Underserved populations living in food deserts that have an interest in gaining access to specialty crops from local growers and through the ability to grow their own crops.

During the 2012 growing season (May-October 2012), projects took longer than anticipated, primarily due to the interns being novices. This limited 2012 spring plantings and the summer harvests. As a result, only 12 local CSA subscriptions could be filled.

Due to time constraints and production limits, marketing was not expanded to the school lunch program as initially anticipated. Moving locally produced foods into the school meal plan continues to be a struggle for Nevada producers. The project didn't yield enough product to be feasible for use within schools. The NDA is hoping to provide future trainings on school procurement, food safety practices, and distribution requirements that will help this goal be more achievable for farmers. One training was provided during February of 2013 at the Nevada Small Farm Conference and an additional is anticipated for February 2014.

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(Hoop house construction workshop) (Hoop House at Tribe location)

Project Title:

NDOA Specialty Crop Marketing Program Assistant

Project Summary:

This project was awarded to provide further outreach to disadvantaged farmers and local growers about the SCBGP and to provide more efficient services to sub-grantees. Prior to creating program staff, the NDA had lost several positions and didn't have staff available to properly manage the program. As a result, NDA program staff that were dedicated to other programs had to apply time to the SCBGP and their programs suffered as a result. This project enhanced

specialty crops by providing more information regarding specialty crop production and how the program is available to assist growers, educators, consumers, etc. Funding provided the opportunity for more outreach and education to be conducted in addition to providing efficient services to current SCBGP sub-grantees.

Project Approach

Over the duration of the award the following activities were performed:

Alternative outreach sources targeting producers, educators, and researchers was a priority during 2012 and 2013. Participating in various stakeholder meetings was successful in identifying industry needs, making new connections, and increasing SCBGP awareness to appropriate applicants. Stakeholder meetings that were attended include; National Farm to School Network-Funding Opportunities Meeting, planning committee for the Nevada Small Farm Conference, Washoe County Health Division-Farm to School forum, Food Protection Partnership Conference, and Grant Management Training. The Program Assistant was able to discuss the SCBGP and 2012/2013 priorities at these meetings.

During 2011 and 2012 outreach was provided to University of Nevada Reno (UNR) students pursuing degrees related to agriculture. The Program Assistant spoke during 4 UNR courses which averaged 20 students per class. Participants were informed regarding the overall goals of the program, program needs, specialty crops produced in Nevada, and previously funded projects.

The Program Assistant and Program Manager organized the 2012 and 2013 Request for Proposal (RFP) document. A notice was sent out prior to the release of the RFP to inform interested individuals that the application would be open shortly. The polished document was then added to the Nevada SCBGP web-page. The RFP was distributed electronically and outreach was performed during 6 WNC workshops, the 2012/2013 Nevada Small Farm Conference, the Nevada Landscape conference, at the NDA location, and in response to e-mail inquiries. Outreach was performed at these events due to the array of attendees including; beginning farmers, recent graduates, struggling farmers, and educators.

A SCBGP poster was created with information on previously funded projects, program priorities, and eligible applicants. The poster was displayed at the 2012/2013 Farm Conference and Landscape Conference. A 2012 and 2013 SCBGP award newsletter was also created and disseminated during fall of 2012 and 2013. The newsletter contained project descriptions for awards, an introduction to the new Good Agricultural Practices-Farmers Assistance Program, and details on the expired Farm Bill. The newsletter was disseminated to approximately 500 people on the program contact list during 2012 and 2013.

A SCBGP Project and Application Development workshop was held January 17, 2012. Approximately 220 people received e-mail notifications regarding the workshop, 80 people received a verbal notification at trainings, and a workshop flyer was also posted on the web-site. The Program Assistant presented information on measurable outcome requirements, quantifiable outcomes, outreach components, stakeholders, and previously funded projects. Approximately 20 participants were able to attend and 30 expressed interest. The goal of 25 applicants was not achieved; however during the 2013 application there were 25 interested applicants and 14 full

applications were received. Additional workshops were not performed during 2012 due to the expired Farm bill.

To ensure timely reports to the NDA and USDA, reminders were sent out to sub-recipients eight weeks prior to the USDA deadline. All reports were due to the NDA four weeks prior to the USDA's deadline in order to provide sufficient time to review, correct, and submit reports to the sponsor. To enhance the quality of reports, regular reminders were sent in addition to the report checklist and sample report. This proved successful in receiving timely reports. Program staff assisted sub-recipients in identifying relevant content for reports.

Regular project site visits were provided during the award. The Assistant Manager documented all site visits within three days of the initial visit. This was beneficial in ensuring that projects were following program requirements and meeting proposed outcomes. Documenting site visits has proved beneficial when preparing reports. Sub-recipients often leave out pertinent activities they've performed in their reports but discuss these activities during site visits. Program staff were later able to refer to site visit documentation and include this pertinent information when preparing reports.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved:

Outreach was performed during 6 WNC workshops, the 2012/2013 Nevada Small Farm Conference, the Nevada Landscape conference, and at the NDA location. Approximately 800 people benefited from these activities and increased their knowledge regarding the SCBGP and awarded projects.

During the 2012 SCBGP Project and Application Development workshop, approximately 20 participants were able to attend and 30 expressed interest. The goal of 25 applicants was not achieved, however 17 Letters of Intent were received. During 2013 there were 25 potential applicants and 14 full applications were received.

Beneficiaries:

Hundreds of individuals were informed about the SCBGP during this project through outreach conducted at WNC workshops, agriculture events, the University of Nevada Reno, and through promotional items created. The existing SCBGP award recipients benefited from the project by having an additional point of contact for program questions, reporting, project changes, etc.

Lessons Learned:

The SCBGP Project and Application Development workshop resulted in a better understanding from applicants regarding the SCBGP program and how to prepare expected measurable outcomes during the 2012 application process. Due to time restrictions, a workshop was not held during 2013, however future workshops are anticipated in order to assist interested applicants. The workshop was also beneficial for informing interested applicants regarding previously funded projects. Previous applicants were able to discuss their projects and experience with the program.

Creating newsletters and visual materials for the program helped create a better understanding of the program. Interested applicants indicated that the previously funded newsletters allowed them

to better understand what types of projects are awarded and how these projects have benefitted educators, new growers, consumers, youth, etc. In addition, these materials have helped increase awareness about the program throughout the state.

Contact Person:

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Project Title:

Specialty Crop Grant Program, Grants Analyst

Project Summary:

During the economic downturn and state income shortfall, there was no/little staff available to manage or perform outreach for the Nevada SCBGP. The purpose of this project was to continue funding a program manager to adequately manage and promote the grant... In addition the Program Manager would ensure that program requirements were being performed, sub-grantees were receiving the technical assistance needed, and that outreach to Nevada stakeholders was being performed to increase program participation and awareness regarding previously funded projects.

Project Approach:

The Program Manager sought out disadvantaged farmer contacts and program enhancing projects through various outreach activities. Activities include participating in stakeholder meetings in order to identify local needs, speaking during producer trainings, creating outreach documents, and coordinating a SCBGP workshop during January of 2012.

During the award, outreach materials were created and distributed throughout Nevada. Materials included SCBGP flyers, brochures, newsletters, etc. A Nevada SCBGP webpage was established to assist interested applicants. An additional webpage was created for sub-recipients in relation to post-award management. The sub-recipient webpage provided sub-grant contract requirements, reporting materials, deadlines, Nevada grant requirements, etc. During 2012, the webpage was moved with the new NDA website and issues were encountered with the web counter. Prior to the move, the web-page counter indicated that approximately 1235 page visits were made during the first two years of the award.

General program duties were performed daily throughout the project. All request for reimbursements were closely reviewed to verify that appropriate expenditures were being made. Timely reports were received and submitted by the Program Manager. Reports were thoroughly reviewed to ensure that activities reflected program requirements and approved work plans. Site visits were performed annually and documented in order to further project oversight. These activities helped staff identify project needs and revisions.

In January 2012 a SCBGP Project and Application Development workshop was held. A presentation was organized and distributed in hand-out form so attendees could refer to

information during the upcoming application. The presented information included the following; program objectives, request for proposals, application information, measurable outcomes, quantifiable outcomes, outreach components, stakeholders, and previously funded projects. Approximately 30 individuals RSVP for the workshop and 20 were able to attend. People of various backgrounds attended and networked with each other throughout the day. Conversations throughout the workshop suggested the development of several partnerships. The NDA received 17 letters of intent to apply and 10 completed applications. 2012 applicants that attended the workshop submitted complete proposals that demonstrated their understanding of program goals.

During 2012 and 2013 the Program Coordinator participated in Grow Nevada stakeholder meetings, Nevada Strike force Committee Meetings, the Nevada Small Farm Conference Planning Committee, and Nevada Agriculture Day at Cottonwood Elementary. Information on specialty crop production and program priorities (including food safety and distribution) were discussed during these events/meetings.

The Program Coordinator performed outreach at seven Nevada farmers markets in order to target specialty crop producers. Growers were informed about the program and provided with brochures and the SCBGP newsletter. Additional outreach materials were provided at farmers market information counters. Program materials were also made available at the Great Basin Community Food Cooperative, Farmer Distribution Center.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved:

The initial goal to receive 25 applications during the 2012 application process was not met. 10 complete applications were submitted and 17 letters of intent. Two additional requests to submit proposals were made after the application deadline. During 2013, the Program Coordinator continued providing outreach at events, participating in stakeholder meetings, and developing promotional materials in order to prompt more program interest and the submission of eligible proposals. During 2013 there were 25 potential applicants and 14 full applications were received.

All reports were submitted on time during this project as a result of having a Program Coordinator.

During the project, an average of 250 specialty crop stakeholders and interested applicants were notified of SCBGP requirements, deadlines, and previously funded projects. In addition, by attending WNC and UNCE specialty crop workshops over 350 people increased their knowledge regarding the program.

Beneficiaries:

The 24 cumulative applicants and 42 interested applicants benefited from this project by receiving assistance on the SCBGP application process, requirements, and award management. In addition over 250 SCBGP contacts received regular updates regarding SCBGP deadlines, newsletters, and awarded projects. 250 Small Farm Conference attendees benefitted by learning about SCBGP awards, the Lincoln County Value Added project findings, and SCBGP eligibility.

350 WNC and UNCE workshop attendees were informed about the program and proposal deadlines.

Lessons Learned:

Attending WNC/UNCE workshops and the Nevada Small Farm Conference was helpful in monitoring sub-grantee activities, identifying potential SCBGP projects/applicants, and educating the public regarding the program and previously funded projects. Through involvement with Nevada meetings/conferences, particularly the Nevada Small Farm Conference, the Program Coordinator was able to get various SCBGP projects highlighted during conference sessions. This activity allowed stakeholders to become informed regarding specialty crop programs and project accomplishments. In addition, new contacts were acquired that were interested in applying for the program.

Throughout the project, the Program Coordinator offered one-on-one assistance for sub-grantees and interested applicants. This benefitted sub-grantees by reminding them of important program requirements including the following: only purchasing approved materials, advertising must be used solely for specialty crops and cannot benefit one person/entity, annual/final reports, tracking project activities, record keeping requirements, etc. One-on-one assistance benefitted interested applicants by helping them to understand program requirements and what is expected in a complete application.

Performing site visits during the project was helpful in keeping sub-grantees on track and familiar with SCBGP requirements. In addition, seeing their activities in person proved beneficial during reporting. Some sub-grantees struggle with putting their project activities on paper and meeting SCBGP reporting requirements. Since staff had performed site visits, they were familiar with the project activities that had actually occurred and were able to assist sub-grantees with the reporting process.

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