

**“Green and Growing”
Urban Farming in Columbus
Representative Carlton Weddington’s Roundtable**

Community Need:

Key components for Community Urban Farming “Green and Growing” in Columbus, Ohio are human and social capital which includes personal development, wellness, environment management, and economic development. Youth programming is a major focus engaging 200 children, ages 5 – 19 years, in personal development, wellness, and environment management through 4-H projects – horticulture, beekeeping, money management, food preparation, and nutrition. Besides youth development, another goal is community economic development which is twofold: 1) make use of vacant properties and 2) provide jobs in two Columbus communities, Linden and Mount Vernon.

Educational Activities for Youth Participants and Adult Mentors are:

1. Planting and maintaining a vegetable garden.
2. Preparation of fresh fruit and vegetables.
3. Healthy eating and physical activity practices following the food guide pyramid.
4. Engagement of physical activity through gardening.
5. Management of personal finance.
6. Development and implementation of entrepreneurship skills.

The community participants, adults and estimated 200 youth, will be involved in planting, weeding and watering plants, they will learn soil cultivation, composting, fertilizing and community research/outreach. Program responsibilities include: 1) scheduling participants to work 2-3 days a week 3-5 hours per day, 2) understanding the importance of growing food and how to transplant plants that to other locations due to lack of water, sun, etc.

Urban Farming Project Outcomes

Urban Farming Project Goals:

1. Educating youth on project ownership which is key to building stewardship. Youth involved will learn “connective processing” and how nurturing small plants become edible food.
2. Youth and adults exposure to economic development by becoming producers and actively engaged in the market system rather than practicing consumer skills only.

Short-term Objective:

1. Increase knowledge of raising food produce including vegetables, herbs, and fruits.
2. Youth and their families will prepare and eat more fruits and vegetables.
3. Youth will be able to correctly identify 30 vegetables, herbs, and fruits.
4. Area food pantries and farmers markets will have increased inventory of fresh produce: vegetables, herbs, and fruits.

Medium-term Objective:

Youth and their families will develop healthy living and eating practices.

Long-term Objective:

Improved health outcomes when compared to other communities without intervention

Program Structure:

To accomplish the “Green and Growing - Urban Farming” goals and objectives, adult oversight, supervision, and teaching is needed. Adults will serve as role models encouraging youth to accept, complete, and be accountable to job responsibilities. The following Urban Farming program structure is advised:

1) Contract with two Coordinators from the communities of Linden and Mount Vernon to work with City of Columbus and local agencies to direct urban farming and youth development programs. Additional responsibilities include: educating youth, creating schedules, organizing and recruiting resident involvement, attending workshops and conferences, seek funding sources, establish relationships with buyers, seek corporate sponsorship, negotiate and find new production sites, research community fruit production sites, etc. They will provide leadership development, educating and providing marketing skills, transferring leadership and responsibility to youth, provide and create an positive relationship with youth.

- 1) **OSU Extension Educators** from Horticulture, 4-H, Family and Consumer Sciences, Leadership Center, and Program Development and Evaluation programs will be paid for program delivery.
- 2) **Volunteers from OSU Extension**, 4-H Leaders, Master Gardeners, Food Preservers, and Master Money Mentors (Columbus Saves – Build Wealth, Not Debt) will assist OSU Extension Educators by providing hands-on supervision and program development.
- 3) **OSU Student Interns** – supervised by OSU Extension Educators and Parwinder Grewal, Professor and Director of the Center for Urban Environment and Economic Development with OARDC (Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center), will develop and manage urban gardening sites. Student interns will work directly with community participants and OSU Extension volunteers.
- 4) **ECDI (Economic Community Development Institute)** will be providing the opportunity for community participants to qualify for Microenterprise Loans to develop local businesses. Fresh fruits and vegetables produced will be offered to New Harvest Cafe and the Kroger and OSU College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences and OSU Extension Food Security Incubator program.
- 5) **Central Ohio Beekeepers** will provide the knowledge and maintenance of four beehives in two communities, Linden and Mount Vernon, involved in urban farming.

- 6) **Local Matters - Local Ohio Foods** provides opportunities for local, healthy, and sustainably grown foods through partnerships to offer economic, social, and environment change in the community.
- 7) **Columbus Public Health Department** is a leader in improving the health and safety of Columbus by monitoring community health status, identifying and addressing public health concerns.
- 8) **Other Community Partners** are welcome to become involved in this community urban farming program.

Volunteers:

OSU Extension

Four to six Franklin County Master Gardener and 4-H volunteers will be recruited and managed by Cory Skurdal and Beth Boomershine to work with the two program sites, Mount Vernon and North Linden, twice a week. These volunteers will be able to present horticulture lessons from the 4-H project books and to work with the youth in garden maintenance. This will include ongoing care such as weeding, watering, mulching, etc., pest identification and management, and harvesting. However, these volunteers will not be responsible for the garden in total; they are available to work alongside the youth, adults, and adult mentors. Adults and youth will receive educational programs from Food and Nutrition and Money Mentor volunteers, managed by Marilyn Rabe and Susan Shockey.

Procedure to Implement Urban Farming Programs:

1. Clean-up and Beautification

OSU Extension volunteers and other agencies will receive educational guidance from OSU Extension Educators. These volunteers will work with community coordinators, adult mentors, and youth to clean-up community properties and plant flowers. This will be the first step for urban farming program preparation.

2. Creating Community Capacity and Leadership Skills

OSU Extension Educators will teach community capacity and leader skills. Programs will be developed with the Community Coordinators. Through the partnership of ECDI (Economic and Community Development Institute) and OSU Extension Horticulture and Agriculture, community economic will be assessed and developed. OSU Extension Educators and Community Coordinators will teach leadership skills through weekly “Green and Growing” community meetings involving youth and adults who are involved in the urban farming project.

3. Introduction of Honey Bees

As discussed during Urban Farming committee meetings, adding honey bees to the project completes the cycle necessary for pollination of the fruits and vegetables to be grown and harvested. The cost of a complete hive with bees is approximately \$250. This is two hive bodies for the brood and food of the colony and a honey super for surplus honey. Further thought on this subject and the goals of the project would be to

have the project maintain ownership of the colonies but train interested persons the skills necessary to maintain them.

Placing colonies, two to a location and training two responsible people to maintain them at each location might serve well. Training two beekeepers per location may work well. The thought is that if the colonies become the property of the beekeeper the stability of them remaining in the neighborhood if the beekeeper moves might be jeopardized. Having them belong to the project will allow new beekeepers to be trained when necessary. Those maintaining the colonies would receive their 1/3rd of the crop as if they owned the bees.

The honey crop could be expected to be near 60 lb per colony if the nectar sources are available and the colonies are maintained well. At a good market honey can be expected to sell from \$4.00 to \$5.00 per pound. However, the true benefit is not the honey but the pollination of the crops in the gardens and fruit trees in the area.

The pollination will serve not only the gardens of the project but those of anyone planting gardens or fruit in the area. By working with the Central Ohio Beekeepers Association the cost of training of these new beekeepers might be reduced.

4. Test Soil Contamination and Nutrients

Community gardening sites' soil in the Linden and Mount Vernon area will need to be tested for contamination and nutrient levels. Successful gardening can only take place with the knowledge of the components of the soil.

5. Select Crops

Suggested Crops:

Growing plants from seed are suggested, if sown in the garden within the first few days of June. Success with seeds may depend on how hot it is in early June and how well seeds are irrigated to get plants established:

Green beans

Lima beans

Sweet corn (use an early-maturing variety)

Cucumber

Beets

Summer squashes

Winter squashes (use early-maturing varieties, if desired)

Sunflower

Transplants

Tomato

Peppers

Eggplant

Basil

Parsley

Rosemary

Dill (if available)

Cost of transplants varies, but for tomatoes and peppers, is looking at perhaps \$1.99 for a 4 transplant pack, depending on size. Large tomato plants can be bought for \$3.00 each or more. Herbs can be just over a dollar each for a small, 3" pot or so. Rosemary will be somewhat more expensive. Suggest transplants are purchased in early to mid-May and held somewhere, if possible, so that you get good selection. Late in May, plants may be well-picked over.

6. Develop Urban Farming Timeline

June-October Garden Timeline:

June

Soil preparation – addition of organic matter, turning or roto-tilling soil to loosen it, pre-plant fertilizer applied, if desired

Crop selection (could be done in May though)

Secure seed and transplants (could be done in May though)

Garden planning and layout on paper

Make markers/tags for crops

Plant all crops, transplants and seeds, very early June

Determine training method for tomatoes; stakes or cages and get those in place at planting

Apply starter fertilizer to transplants, if desired

Irrigation frequently to get crops well established

Mulch – newspaper, straw, etc.

July

Irrigation

Fertilizer, as needed

Weeding

Pest management, as needed

Some harvest will begin

Start a compost pile, if desired

August

Irrigation

Fertilizer, as needed

Weeding

Pest management, as needed

Harvest

Add to compost pile

September

Irrigation
Weeding
Pest management, as needed
Harvest
Begin removing plants that are declining or dead
Add to compost pile

October

Last of harvest
Clean up garden – remove debris, remove markers, stakes, etc.
Add to compost pile
Tool cleaning and care for storage

7. Program Evaluation

To assist with development and implementation of additional Urban Farming in Columbus, OSU Professors, Kristi Lekies, Parwinder Grewal, and Susan Shockey will provide leadership to program evaluation. “Local Matters” will be involved in strategic planning analysis.

Urban Farming Budget

Educational Supplies

Paper	\$ 200
4-H Project Books (200 books x \$5 a book)	\$ 1000
Horticulture - Master Gardener Training (\$25 per person)	\$ 500
<u>Educational Total</u>	\$ 1,700

Urban Farming Supplies

- Soil Analysis for Contamination and Nutrients (2 sites x \$250)	\$ 500
- Donation: Seeds (Livingston Seeds)	?
- Transplants (Cool Garden)	\$ 400
- Poly Huts (For Year-round Gardening)	\$ 1000
- Honey Bees (\$250 x 4 hives)	\$ 1000
- Hoses	\$ 350
- Locked Shed	\$ 800
- Soil and Soil Amendments (Kurtz Bros. SWACO?) Linden 1.5 acre/ Mount Vernon ?	\$ 2400
- Irrigation (Water) – Ask Columbus City – Barb Seckler?	
- Boyce Safford III – Dept. of Development	\$?
- Rain Barrel (2 x \$250)	\$ 500
- Raised Garden Beds (Lot Size ?)	\$ 1000
- Fencing	\$ 1000
- Garden Tools including Rota-tiller (2 sites)	\$ 1000

Evaluation – OSU Professors and Local Matters

Ideally 10% of Budget, suggested (\$6,000 – 10,000)

\$10000

Liability Insurance (2 Communities)

- All State Insurance (Seasonal) (Negotiate with Columbus City)	\$ 500
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Travel (25 miles x .505 per mile x 50 trips a week)
conservative estimate.)

\$ 632 (This is a

OSU Internship – 2 interns (Linden & Mount Vernon)

\$6,500

Learning Responsibilities: Survey of site, collect soil
samples, test soil, site preparation, program oversight,
and maintenance

Community Events

\$ 500

Booth Rent to Sell Produce

Operating Total

\$ 31,482

Personnel Time

Community Coordinators

Linden Coordinator (Contractor) - Kwojo Kababio \$55,000

Director of Linden Programs

- Economic Development - Community Gardens
- Juvenile Diversion talk with County Commissioners programming area
zip code 43211
 - Behavior Modifications
 - Change behavior from Consumer to Producer

Mt.Vernon Coordinator (Contractor) - Cecil “Haatim” Brown \$55,000

Director of Linden Programs

- Economic Development - Community Gardens
- Juvenile Diversion talk with County Commissioners programming area
zip code
 - Behavior Modifications
 - Change behavior from Consumer to Producer

OSU Extension Educators

4-H – Beth Boomershine \$ 1000

(April – September) 18 weeks x 1 hours per week = 18 hours)

Horticulture – Cory Skurdal \$ 5000

(April – October) 28 weeks x 12 hours per week = 336 hours)

Family and Consumer Sciences – Susan Shockey \$ 1000

(April – September) 18 weeks x 1 hours per week = 18 hours)

Food and Nutrition – Marilyn Rabe \$ 1000

(April – September) 18 weeks x 1 hours per week = 18 hours)

Personnel Total **\$118,000**

Estimate Total **\$149,482**

Items Needed to Complete Proposal

1. Matrix for Program Responsibilities
2. Data Base for Program Contacts
3. Resumes
4. 3 Year Budget Projection

“Green and Growing” Urban Farming Proposal

Name	Title	Responsibility
Community Involvement: Gus Newport	Former Mayor of Berkley, CA	Consultant – Liaison to Government Officials
Kwodwo Ababio	New Harvest – Community Area Commissioner	Lead Consultant for Linden Urban Farming Project
Cecil “Haatim Gyenyam” Brown	Community Organizer and Rights of Passage Leader	Lead Consultant for Mount Vernon Urban Farming Project
Carmen Perez	National Organizer – The Gathering for Justice	Community Capacity Builder – Strategist
Ryan “Kwesi” Holmes	Greater Columbus Community Leader	Community Organizing & Outreach Recruitment Bridge between youth and adults
Christopher Reynolds	Greater Columbus Community Leader	Community Organizing & Outreach Recruitment Bridge between youth and adults
Ohio State University Extension Susan Shockey	OSU Extension, Family and Consumer Sciences	Family & Consumer Sciences, Subject matter and proposal development
Kristi Lekies	OSU	Program Evaluator
Cory Skurdal	OSU Extension, Master Gardner Coordinator	Manager of Master Gardeners
Susan Colbert	OSU Extension	Community Development & Money Management Subject Matter
Beth Boomershine	OSU Extension, 4-H	4-H Volunteers
Marilyn Rabe	OSU Extension, EFNEP	Food and Nutrition Subject Matter
OARDC Parwinder Grewal	OARDC, Director for Urban Environment and Economic Development	Student Internship
AAAS – OSU Extension Center Carla Wilks		
Central Ohio Beekeepers Ron Hoops Dana Stahlman		
Economic Community Development Institute Steven Fireman Bob Leighty	Entrepreneurship Consultant	
Columbus Health Department Sandy Gill Barb Seckler		
Local Matters Michael Jones	Executive Director	
Black Press Ohio J. Darwin Hollingsworth II		
Ohio Department of Agriculture Michael Eckhardt	Legislative Liaison	