

Project Title: Urban Agriculture

Project Leader: Francis Mangan

Project Overview

A focus of activities for FY 2018, 2019 and 2020 will be related to a USDA grant that covers all three years. This grant, promoting the Healthy Incentives Program in Massachusetts, has the goal of promoting the purchase of Massachusetts-grown fresh produce by SNAP recipients living in Massachusetts at four retail point-of-sale sites: farmers' markets, farm stands, mobile markets and CSAs. This grant involves multiple organizations in Massachusetts, including the Department of Transitional Assistance, which oversees the SNAP program, the Mass. Department of Agricultural Resources and CISA among several others.

This is a state-wide project. A focus in FY 18 is on 19 cities in Massachusetts: Boston, Lynn, Lawrence, Lowell, Malden, New Bedford, Fall River, Taunton, Southbridge, Brockton, Worcester, Leominster, Fitchburg, Greenfield, Springfield, Holyoke and Pittsfield, Framingham and Haverhill. Latinos make up the majority of SNAP recipients in the public schools of these 19 cities. There is also a large Portuguese-speaking population in these cities, including Brazilians, Portuguese (from Portugal) and Cape Verdeans.

The two goals of this project are the same for all nineteen cities:

1. To increase access and consumption of fruits and vegetables by families from low income, multi-cultural and multi-ethnic neighborhoods in Worcester, Springfield and Lawrence, Massachusetts.
2. Increase the availability of fruits and vegetables for people living in the target areas.

Activity Summary – 2018

- Individual visits to cooperating markets in Worcester, Springfield and Boston (45)
- Crops grown at the UMass Research Farm in Deerfield, Mass. for promotion (10)
- 6th Annual Urban Agriculture Conference (1)
- Urban Agriculture Print Publication (1)
- Urban Agriculture Presentations (4)
- Urban Agriculture Invited Talks (5)
- UMass Urban Ag Facebook page and posts (17)

Total educational contacts

	Adult Contacts	Youth Contacts
In Person	1107	
Indirect Contacts (Print, Web, etc...)	2794	2000

Narrative Summary and Impact

A major focus of our work in in FY 2018 continued for part of the year on activities related to a USDA grant to promote activities related to the Healthy Initiative Program (HIP). The overall goal of HIP is to promote the consumption of Massachusetts-grown fresh produce to SNAP recipients. (SNAP, formally known as Food Stamps.) Specifically, our component of this project has been to promote locally-grown produce among ethnic and immigrant groups in Massachusetts. Immigrant and ethnic SNAP recipients in Massachusetts are estimated to be approximately 50% of the one million residents in the Commonwealth eligible for SNAP.

A focus of activities in FY 18 were providing farmers selling at HIP-sanctioned retail markets with information on crops popular among ethnicities living in the area of their markets. We also put together culturally-appropriate information in multiple languages to be used at markets, as point-of-sales materials, and promoted the markets in local and state media.

The funding for the HIP program ended quite unexpectedly half through FY 18, which dramatically reduced our efforts in this area. (The funding ended due to greater buy-in from farmers and food stamp recipients than expected, which meant the funds made available for this program ran out much quicker than expected.)

I gave 14 talks during FY18 to over 1,300 people on my work in the area of urban agriculture and growing and marketing crops popular among ethnic and immigrant groups. In FY 18 I made 17 posts on a program Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/umassurbanag/> with an average of 795 “reaches” for each post. There are over 1,000 “friends” who follow this page.

Collaborating Organizations

- **Community Involved in Sustainable Agriculture (CISA)**
- **Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance**
- **USDA Healthy Initiative Program**

