

Rhode Island DEM/Division of Agriculture

Specialty Crop Block Grant Program – Farm Bill

Agreement Number: 12-25-B-1092

Final Performance Report

Submitted: May 22, 2013

Contact: Peter Susi
Deputy Chief RI/DEM Division of Agriculture
235 Promenade Street
Providence, RI 02908

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Farm Fresh Rhode Island Potato Promotion Program -----	2
Farm Fresh Rhode Island Enhancing Online Farm Data Base -----	6
Coggeshall Farm Museum Kitchen Garden Project -----	8
Rhode Island Nursery and Landscape Economic Impact Survey of Rhode Island's Turf and Environmental Horticulture Industry -----	21
Rhode Island GAP -----	25
Rhode Island Apple Growers -----	28
Rhode Island GET FRESH BUY LOCAL PROGRAM -----	35
Greene Company RI Bees -----	38
Rhode Island Center for Agriculture Promotion & Education (RICAPE) -----	44
Rhode Island Christmas Tree Growers -----	55
Southside Community Land Trust -----	63
Charlestown Land Trust -----	70
Harvest New England -----	85

FARM FRESH FINAL REPORT 12-25-B-1092

PROJECT TITLE

Rhode Island Potato Promotion Program

PROJECT SUMMARY

□□ Provide a background for the initial purpose of the project, which includes the specific issue, problem, or need that was addressed by this project.

□□ Establish the motivation for this project by presenting the importance and timeliness of the project.

□□ If the project built on a previously funded project with the SCBGP or SCBGP-FB describe how this project complimented and enhanced previously completed work.

The Rhode Island agricultural economy is one of small farms and family operations, with most cultivating less than 100 acres. Land in New England has been farmed for centuries and development pressure on land is stiff. These factors lead to an agricultural economy for specialty crops that is

- Focused on retail sales to make the most income per acre
- Focused on specialty crops: fruits, vegetables, meat and dairy, for the table
- Practicing sustainable techniques to maintain land/soil value
- Community-supported and supporting, as owner-operators live here and are not absentee landlords

Many years ago, wholesale buyers in Rhode Island bought consistently from farmers in Rhode Island, for quality and convenience. Wholesale was a viable business plan for many sizes and types of farms. Recent times have seen a different type of market landscape for specialty crop growers: retail sales, despite their labor-intensity, are the only way many farmers can make ends meet. Wholesale transactions, competing as they do against produce from all over the world, become a dump for sub-quality local produce, giving wholesale Rhode Island specialty crops a bad reputation with institutional and restaurant buyers. A destructive cycle of low prices and low quality affect the wholesale market for Rhode Island specialty crops, and thousands of buyers and consumers (those who do not/are not able to enjoy farm stands or farmers markets) miss the exceptional quality and economic benefits of buying locally grown.

Given these constraints, the agricultural community in Rhode Island have been seeking to grow the direct-to-consumer side of specialty crop sales, as well as renew the trust and quality of farm-wholesaler relationships.

Farm Fresh Rhode Island promoted Rhode Island-grown potatoes through an integrated marketing strategy, reaching out to wholesale and retail buyers. Project deliverables included point-of-sale displays, collateral materials for restaurants, schools, and other food service buyers, and staff outreach to wholesale buyers. Farm Fresh also created marketing materials for farms doing direct-to-consumer sales at farmers markets and farm stands. Farm Fresh created a two-month series of promotional and tasting events at farmers market during fresh-dug potato season.

These approaches and events promoted the special qualities of the Rhode Island potato, during the time frame when it is the most delicious: as it is freshly dug. This allowed

consumers to identify the potatoes at the market, as well as other Rhode Island specialty crop root vegetables. Signage, tastings and promotion empowered buyers, both retail and wholesale, to thoughtfully choose the local product.

PROJECT APPROACH

- Briefly summarize activities performed and tasks performed during the grant period. Whenever possible, describe the work accomplished in both quantitative and qualitative terms. Include the significant results, accomplishments, conclusions and recommendations. Include favorable or unusual developments.*
- Present the significant contributions and role of project partners in the project.*

Farm Fresh Rhode Island worked with a graphic designer to create point-of-sale materials for retailers selling local potatoes, as well as other root vegetables. These items included: pricing signs, promotional posters, table tents, children’s activity books and laminated bin signs. These items were printed and distributed to potato farmers, so that they could be used at their farm stands, farmers markets, and other points of sale. The digital versions of these graphics were also utilized in Farm Fresh’s online outreach efforts. Weekly newsletters to regular farmers market shoppers highlighted a different root vegetable each week, including interesting recipes for each vegetable. The graphics were also posted on the Farm Fresh blog to promote the marketing campaign, which reached wide readership across Rhode Island.

During the late fall Farm Fresh hosted root vegetable promotion and tasting events at its popular wintertime farmers markets. Every Wednesday, a group of student chefs from Johnson and Wales University attended the farmers market to run educational cooking demos, focusing on different ways to cook root vegetables while offering a taste to shoppers. Additionally, Chef Kait Roberts of Easy Entertaining Inc. ran three specialized cooking demos at the Saturday market, covering a range of kid-friendly snacks to gourmet appetizers. Children and families were able to do “create your own cookbook” activities, with a specially designed booklet that encouraged investigation of recipes with root vegetables. Filled-in booklets were rewarded with cooking gadgets for use with their newfound recipes.

Farmers, chefs, institutional buyers and customers all received the materials very well. All felt that the materials gave a special focus to the root vegetable season.

GOALS AND OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

- Supply the activities that were completed in order to achieve the performance goals and measurable outcomes for the project.*
- If outcome measures were long term, summarize the progress that has been made towards achievement.*
- Provide a comparison of actual accomplishments with the goals established for the reporting period.*

- Clearly convey completion of achieving outcomes by illustrating baseline data that has been gathered to date and showing the progress toward achieving set targets.*

Farm Fresh tracked potato sales to chefs, grocers and institutional buyers through its aggregation and delivery service Market Mobile. For 2011, sales of potatoes were up 15% over 2010 sales. For the year to date comparison of January – March 2011 and 2012, sales of potatoes on Market Mobile are up 45%.

Farm to school sales of potatoes, as tracked by the F2S project were 14,500 pounds in 2010 and 30,350 pounds in 2009. For 2012, potato sales were 44,290 pounds – up 32%.

Clearly, more potatoes are being sold through these outlets in Rhode Island. We are hopeful that our efforts had some part in these increases. We had predicted a 15% increase for these types of sales. The increases noted above match or exceed 15%.

BENEFICIARIES

- Provide a description of the groups and other operations that benefited from the completion of this project's accomplishments.*
- Clearly state the quantitative data that concerns the beneficiaries affected by the project's accomplishments and/or the potential economic impact of the project.*

The primary beneficiaries of this program are the forty-five farms growing root vegetables in Rhode Island to whom Farm Fresh distributed these promotional and labeling items. These price cards, posters and bin cards draw attention to “Rhode Island roots” and catch the shopper’s eye. These materials are appropriate for use at farm stands, farmers markets and retail operations.

Other beneficiaries are wholesale buyers of Rhode Island potatoes and root vegetables. Grocers and institutional food service kitchens used materials from the project, such as table tents, posters and bin signs (used on salad bars or cafeteria lines also). Buyers of local specialty crops are often proud of their purchasing to support local farmers and the local economy. Signage for these buyers reinforces their commitment to buy locally grown specialty crops and also highlights their efforts to their customers in turn.

Retail customers were beneficiaries as well. The two-month series of tastings and chef demonstrations allowed customers to try new ways of preparing potatoes and also an opportunity to sample less well known root vegetables, such as celeriac and parsnip. Interactive lessons, recipe books and promotion for root vegetables raised the interest in these products at Farm Fresh’s very busy Wintertime Farmers Market (1,500-2,000 customers per week). Farm vendors reported greater interest in potatoes and other root vegetables by consumers. Because of the constraints of farmers market record-keeping (limited item tracking, no use of cash registers etc.), no farmers were able to provide hard numbers on increased sales per vegetable.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Offer insights into the lessons learned by the project staff as a result of completing this project. This section is meant to illustrate the positive and negative results and conclusions for the project.*
- Provide unexpected outcomes or results that were an effect of implementing this project.*
- If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving.*

We were excited to do a specialized promotional campaign for potatoes specifically, and root vegetables more broadly. Big box stores do these frequently and it was fun to design a campaign appropriate for smaller venues and direct farm-to-customer sales. Challenges included deciding on the range of materials to create to maximize the printing budget. We printed posters, bin cards, price signs, table tents and interactive recipe-gathering booklets.

Contact with grocers demonstrated that a wide range of display materials is used in groceries. A single size did not necessarily fit all! With the budget and time frame, we were not able to meet with each grocer, design materials to their specification and then create these materials. A different project could take on work with large- and small-scale grocers.

Farmers making direct sales at markets or through farm stands have more flexibility in their types of displays, and were positive about the designs and the items we produced. So too were the institutional customers, such as school and corporate cafeterias, cafes and diners.

CONTACT PERSON

Noah Fulmer, Executive Director, 401.312.4250, noah@farmfreshri.org

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Provide additional information available (i.e. publications, websites, photographs) that is not applicable to any of the prior sections.

FARM FRESH FINAL REPORT 12-25-B-1092

Project Title

Enhancing the Online RI Farm Database

Project Summary This project worked to ensure the accuracy and breadth of the information in the online RI farm database at www.farmfreshri.org by getting current farm data from more RI specialty crop growers. A mobile application for viewing the specialty crop farms' information was created, which lists farms, farm stands and farmers markets, ranked by proximity of the user. The website server was changed to one with more storage space to increase farmers' sites and accommodate more users and more content.

Rhode Island is home to hundreds of farms that grow specialty crops but the local marketplace for these foods, where direct sales maximize profitability, is not as established or accessible as that for non-local foods. Food purchasers, both individuals and businesses, need information about who's growing what and where and how to get it. Given these access barriers, Farm Fresh created a website that is a comprehensive database of RI farms, indexed by foods grown, season and how to buy each farm's food. The website reduces the upfront costs of finding local foods and has created countless new relationships between farmers and buyers in the few years it has been online. Over three hundred RI farmers also now maintain their own farm data.

Project Approach

The www.farmfreshri.org farm database is a public resource that promotes the purchase of locally grown foods in Rhode Island. Communicating the farm and food information as clearly as possible streamlines local food sales. The website has so far generated dozens of new business-to-business purchasing relationships with local farms, provided key information for journalists bringing media attention to RI farms, and given thousands of Rhode Island eaters the tools to buy fresh foods directly from the farms that dot their home state's landscape. Furthermore, it enables buyers to increase demand for local foods from suppliers further up the purchasing chain, in a way that opens up larger markets to RI specialty crops, through local purchasing relationships that result are more direct and financially viable for farmers. September 2011 was the busiest month of the past year. There were 120,000 unique visitors to the website. Specific farm, food and market pages were viewed 340,000 times Even during the slowest month of the year, January 2011, there were still 51,000 unique visitors looking for winter farmers markets, CSA sign ups and other RI farm information.

The Local Food Guide does not focus on any one specialty crop, but instead aims to promote consumption of the wide variety of fresh fruits and vegetables produced by Rhode Island farmers. The website allows consumers to find which farms grow the type of produce they are looking for. This holistic approach, having all of the produce promotion in place, broadens the appeal of the website to a wider audience.

The www.farmfreshri.org project began by taking RI Division of Agriculture farm data and making it searchable online. Farm Fresh RI editors update the database regularly as we hear from buyers and farmers that farms have changed or no longer exist. Farmers can also keep their individual farm information up to date and can use their webpages on the site to promote their specialty crops. Due to lack of funding, the RI Division of Agriculture is unable to consistently conduct surveys to update the data. However, the www.farmfreshri.org website enables regular updates by farmers that benefit buyers, researchers, policymakers and Division of Agriculture

staff. During the past year, 93 farmers have updated their own farm information, 264 farms have had their information updated by Farm Fresh staff. Thirty-two new Rhode Island specialty crop growers have been added to database, and 13 inactive farms have been removed. Continued outreach to farmers and buyers will continue to ensure the accuracy of the database and its usefulness as a resource.

As the database has become more and more popular, there have been increased demands upon Farm Fresh RI in providing comprehensive, accurate information for the growing number of constituents and users. There have been requests from many farmers and users for enhancements. One frequently suggested example is in-depth farm-to-chef resources to help facilitate direct connections and better understanding. RI has a strong cadre of chefs who look to source RI-grown food for its superior quality and the availability of unusual varieties. Specialty crop farmers and chefs throughout RI were extensively contacted for the purposes of this grant and updating the website resources targeted towards increasing consumption of locally grown produce via consumers and restaurants.

The swift development of in the internet mobile web devices such as iPhones, iPads and more has led the need for constant website maintenance and enhancements, such as for adaptation to smaller, mobile screens and 3G connectivity. Farm Fresh, with the support of a Specialty Crop grant, optimized the website for mobile users. This involved an adaptation of the existing Local Food Guide database using new PHP and CSS code that is formatted for smaller screens and slower wireless connections. General maintenance and upgrades were also performed on the website based on user feedback to keep the Local Food Guide as effective as possible in promoting RI specialty crops.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved

To coincide with the website updates and features described in the Project Approach, there were efforts to increase awareness of these new features among farmers and consumers. Farmers were targeted through bi-monthly email newsletters, at conferences and through personal outreach at weekly farmers markets and other events. There were similar efforts aimed at the public for the consumer features of the Local Food Guide. Farm Fresh promoted the website address on popular bumper stickers, in all Farm Fresh printed materials, through a weekly email newsletter and social media publishing.

The measurable goals and outcomes outlined in the original proposal were all achieved or exceeded:

- 38 specialty crop farmers sign up for new accounts. (13 more than expected)
- 264 specialty crop farms have updated information. (64 more than expected)
- 78 specialty crop farms have new photos, Facebook, Twitter on their listing. (28 more than expected)
- Goal = 100,000 unique visitors to the site each summer month. Actual web hits : JUNE=95,000, JULY=98,000, AUGUST=125,000, SEPT=120,000, OCT=145,000
- 211% increase in mobile device usage on the website. (11% more than goal)

Beneficiaries

This projects' stakeholders include:

- all 600 or so RI food-growing farms, growing specialty crops
- dozens of new farmers looking to let local customers know about their specialty crops

- thousands of Rhode Islanders using a computer or phone to look for a farmers' market, farmstand, pick your own or CSA
- hundreds of wholesale buyers looking to source fruits and vegetables from local farms
- researchers and journalists who cover farm and food topics

Lessons Learned

The Local Food Guide project continues to be a great success for RI specialty crop producers. The website reduced the upfront costs of finding local foods and created countless new relationships between farmers and buyers. Farm Fresh RI plans continued outreach to farmers and buyers to ensure the accuracy of the Local Food Guide database and its usefulness as a resource.

Contact Person

Noah Fulmer, Executive Director, Farm Fresh RI – noah@farmfreshri.org – 401-312-4250



FINAL REPORT

PROJECT TITLE

Coggeshall Farm Museum Kitchen Garden Project

March 2011-March 2013

PROJECT SUMMARY

- Provide a background for the initial purpose of the project, which includes the specific issue, problem, or need that was addressed by this project.

Coggeshall Farm Museum is a living historical farm set on 48 acres in Bristol, Rhode Island. The still-existing house and farm were inhabited by tenant farmers from the 1790s until about 1900. The museum focuses Bristol's agrarian life in the 1790s using live interpretation, historic structures, and heirloom plants and animals. In addition to the farmhouse, livestock, grounds, and building exhibits, the museum features a recreated late 18th century kitchen garden that reflects the agricultural practices of the period through live plant exhibits and historic agricultural techniques and tools. Early in 2010, Coggeshall Farm Museum asked historical horticultural specialist Christy Higgenbottom to redesign the historical garden to more accurately reflect the agriculture of the time period. The Specialty Crop Grant provided the funding for Coggeshall Farm Museum to bring those plans to fruition. By introducing the museum's visitors to these crops and their manner of production, storage, and use, we are

striving to create a greater awareness of the value, viability, and importance of raising these plants on Rhode Island farms for a Rhode Island market. Our 18th century garden brings our visitors closer to the roots of their own food supply, and help to ensure a demand and awareness for locally grown produce, and agricultural practices that are compatible with their own region.

- Establish the motivation for this project by presenting the importance and timeliness of the project.

Coggeshall Farm museum applied for the Specialty Crop grant just after receiving a garden re-design done by historical horticultural specialist Christy Higgenbottom in early 2010. Her plans and suggestions included new varieties of vegetables and fruits that were more appropriate to lives of tenant farmers in Rhode Island in the 1790s, as well as a more historically correct garden layout. In addition, the garden fence needed to be rebuilt, and the museum needed reproduction agricultural tools that would allow staff to more properly exhibit the agricultural methods used to grow these crops—as well as allow visitors a hands-on experience to learn about the same. The Specialty Crop Grant provided the funding for the museum to accomplish these things.

As a kitchen garden was vital to the survival of the tenant farmers that lived on this farm in the 1790s, Coggeshall Farm Museum’s garden exhibit is a key component in our museum programming. In 2010 Coggeshall Farm Museum undertook an initiative to expand quality programming for museum visitors. The garden is now used in almost all of our programming and provides an activity station for almost every school group visit. We use the garden regularly in our hearth cooking workshops (participants pick produce from the garden, learn about historical and modern methods of cultivation...and then cook the produce using 18th century techniques in the museum hearth); the garden provides several subjects and supplies for workshops (see below); and it is one of our main exhibit areas for walk-in visitation.

- If the project built on a previously funded project with the SCBGP or SCBGP-FB describe how this project complimented and enhanced previously completed work.

Not applicable.

PROJECT APPROACH

- Briefly summarize activities performed and tasks performed during the grant period. Whenever possible, describe the work accomplished in both quantitative and qualitative terms. Include the significant results, accomplishments, conclusions and recommendations. Include favorable or unusual developments.

Summary of Activities Performed During the Grant Period

- Planted, cultivated, harvested, and preserved over 60 varieties of heirloom vegetables, herbs, and fruit. Seeds have been collected from many of these varieties and are re-propagated year after year. Varieties include White Caseknife Beans, Early

Mowhawk Beans, Canada Crookneck Squash (the rare predecessor to the Butternut Squash); Green Hubbard Squash (the rare predecessor to the modern Hubbard Squash), several heirloom lettuces that date from the 1700s or early 1800s, White Portugal Onions, Early Scarlet Horn Carrots (originally dating from the 1600s), Hollow Crown Parsnips, Windsor Fava Beans, Calendula, Borage, Feverfew, Elecampane, Champion of England Peas, Purple Top Milan Turnips, Haldenstein Spinach, Smallage, Long Anglais Cucumbers, Pineapple Melon, and more.

- Rebuilt the old, dilapidated garden fence with a higher paled fence that is more accurate to the time period and will more effectively keep out wildlife and livestock and shelter plants from the wind.
 - Hired interns to assist with garden cultivation, leading group tours, and educating the public about specialty crops and how they are grown, used, and preserved.
 - Created period-appropriate clothing for the interns whose stipend was provided for by the Specialty Crop Grant. This clothing has been re-used for subsequent interns and part-time staff.
 - Replaced modern garden tools with period-appropriate hoes, shovels, rakes, and forks, allowing museum staff to accurately demonstrate preindustrial agricultural techniques.
 - Built a seed-saving screen box for growing seed carrots off-site from our historic garden, to prevent cross-pollination between our carrots (insect pollinated) and the wild carrots in our pastures.
 - Developed programming for the purpose of educating the public about heirloom crops, preindustrial agricultural techniques and preservation methods, and seed saving. Programming is targeted towards walk-in visitors, school groups, group tours, scouts, 4H groups, and adults; and includes static exhibits, guided tours, hands-on demonstrations, workshops, and educational publications.
 - Established a collection of heirloom historic seeds available for sale to the public with all proceeds directed toward maintenance of the garden.
- Present the significant contributions and role of project partners in the project.
- Christy Higgenbottom did her garden plan for us before the grant period, but her plan has been crucial in carrying out our grant project.
 - Coggeshall Farm Museum wishes to thank Michael Wellik at The Strawberry Store for his generous donation of musk strawberries and hybrid Scarlet Strawberry, the oldest hybrid strawberry available today, similar in look and phenotype to the first hybrid strawberry created in the mid 18th century.
 - Coggeshall Farm also wishes to thank Roger Williams University for providing funding to match our school group programming (including our garden programming)

to Rhode Island Grade Span Expectations (This was an unanticipated benefit to our Specialty Crop Project; see below for details.)

GOALS AND OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

- Supply the activities that were completed in order to achieve the performance goals and measurable outcomes for the project.

Goal #1 from our Performance Plan: Increase consumer awareness of specialty crops through an interpretive, hands-on educational program, including workshops.

OUTCOME – Visitors to Coggeshall Farm will increase their awareness, appreciation, and understanding of specialty crops.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE – Project staff will hold pre- and post-tests in order to determine the increased knowledge about specialty crop varieties.

BENCHMARK – There is not currently any data concerning Coggeshall Farm visitor awareness of specialty crops; however, the pre- and post-tests will enable project staff to determine increased awareness.

TARGET – We anticipate a 20 percent increase in Coggeshall Farm visitor awareness of specialty crops.

Activities Completed to Accomplish this Goal

- Several different types of educational programming were developed as a way to introduce people to specialty crops. See details below in Goal #2.
- Written materials about basic seed-saving instructions were developed, for use in workshops, training staff, and for people who buy seed, as a way to increase consumer and visitor awareness about seed saving and specialty crops in general.
- Visitors took surveys regarding pre-visit and post-visit knowledge of specialty crops. Visitors were asked to rate certain information from 1-5, 1 being lowest, 5 being highest. Survey questions were as follows:
 - How much did an interest in Heirloom Gardening prompt your visit to Coggeshall Farm Museum? The average response here was **2.95**
 - How would you rate your awareness of Heirloom Gardening before your visit? average response: **2.76**
 - How much has your visit increased your awareness of Heirloom Gardening? average response: **4.31**Thus our visitors demonstrated an average increase of approximately **39** percentile points. Overall, **81%** of our survey-takers reported having an increased knowledge of heirloom gardening and specialty crops.
- Recipes were developed from historic sources, detailing how to use specialty crops. These were highlighted in our Hearth Cooking Workshops (see more details below) but are also included in our regular programming as well. Our hope is to give people a better understanding of how to use and cook specialty crops for the purposes of increasing their awareness and use of them.
- Garden produce was sold to visitors and museum members as a way to further introduce people to specialty crops. Our best seller was the Canada Crookneck

Squash, the predecessor to the modern Butternut. People bought the squashes both to eat, and for the seeds inside the squash so they could plant them. Beets were also popular.

- By the time you read this report we hope to have connected with slowfoodusa.com, to add Coggeshall Farm Museum's contact information to the applicable varieties of vegetables detailed on their site.

Goal #2 from our Performance Plan: Increase educational programming at Coggeshall Farm with focus on historic agriculture.

OUTCOME- Coggeshall Farm will have an interpretive program to educate visitors about specialty crops in New England.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE- measured by staff and board review of the program's work plan and accomplishment of program goals.

BENCHMARK –This program will build on a 2010 pilot program utilizing an intern to assist in public interpretation of period farming in the kitchen garden and related small scale plots of the afore mentioned crops.

TARGET- After the full program year, Coggeshall Farm will have a full-scale historic specialty crop program that involves daily public demonstrations, workshops, and heirloom seed sales.

Activities Performed to Achieve This Goal:

- Cultivate and maintain an 18th century garden exhibit featuring over 60 kinds of heirloom plants, herbs, and fruit, available for visitors to see and experience with all their senses, including sound, touch, smell, and sometimes taste. This is an ongoing task primarily completed by the Farm Manager who is assisted by staff, interns, volunteers, and visitors to the museum.
- Obtained historic reproduction gardening and agricultural tools that allow staff to more accurately carry out the cultivation methods described in period gardening manuals. Multiples of each tool were obtained so that museum visitors can learn experientially about the roots of their food supply.
- In 2011 interns were hired through funds from this grant to assist with garden cultivation and development of garden-related programming. Now, thanks to a generous donation, Coggeshall Farm has trained part-time staff who, among other tasks, give guided tours of the garden, including topics on the importance of specialty crops and heirloom plants; seed-saving from rare plants; preindustrial and sustainable agricultural techniques and tools; how to process and use locally grown produce; preindustrial methods of crop preservation including root-cellarling, drying, and pickling; and more. Tours are usually hands-on to allow visitors an experiential educational experience.
- Developed a garden component for all school group tours and summer camp field trips. Activities vary according to age, and include plant identification, comparisons with other gardens at home or what students have seen, and performing seasonally-related garden tasks such as planting, weeding, or harvesting; or indoor garden tasks such as seed saving. In all cases we discuss the importance of heirloom plants, specialty crops, and garden cultivation. As an unanticipated development, in 2012 Coggeshall Farm Museum was fortunate to receive a "Fund for Civic Activity" Grant from Roger Williams University that allowed us to employ an education specialist, Sarah Cole, to match our school

- programming with Rhode Island Grade Span Expectations. Sarah matched up our garden programming with these expectations at the K - 5 levels, allowing teachers to quickly and easily see what educational requirements our programming satisfies.
- Developed a series of garden-related workshops for adults and families, including small-space gardening, composting, and heirloom plants and seed-saving. In 2012 we ran the workshops as part of a series called “Please Do Try This at Home.” We plan to offer the garden workshops again this spring, and at other opportune times throughout the year such as during our special events like the Rhode Island Sheep and Fiber Festival. The small space gardening workshop is very popular; we are devising ways to boost attendance at our seed-saving workshops. School groups enjoy it; we are certain adults will too. We are working on developing the right marketing.
 - Developed Hearth Cooking Workshops, offered throughout the year. Participants receive a tour of the garden and root cellar, information on our rare varieties of vegetables, and then learn how to use them by harvesting what is seasonally available and then cooking it on the museum’s hearth.
 - Developed “Kids in the Kitchen,” a youth-oriented version of the Hearth Cooking Workshops.
 - The garden also provides produce and seeds that we use in our historically accurate house exhibit in the form of drying herbs, braided onions, and other components of material cultures representative of domestic in the 1790’s.
 - Developed a “Garden Guide” for walk-in visitors that will be included in our site guides. We had anticipated making the Garden Guide available to visitors sometime early in 2013, but the process inspired Coggeshall Farm Museum to include information about our other exhibit areas, including our rare breeds of livestock, our 1790s tenant farm house, and the grounds and outbuildings. We anticipate the completed Site Guide to be ready for publication in the spring of 2013.
 - Unanticipated development: due to the early success of our Heirloom Kitchen Garden exhibit, Coggeshall Farm Museum has partnered with Rhode Island College in offering an internship on historic medicinal plants and modern research of their proven, potential, or disproved, benefits. This project will further inform the “Garden Guide” aspect of our site guide as well as improving the historical presentation of our Heirloom Kitchen Garden by including those herbs most commonly used by 18th century lay people to treat everyday ailments.

Goal # 3: Increase seed stock from specialty crops.

OUTCOME- Coggeshall Farm will have seed stock of specialty crops to offer interested parties, including the public.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE- measured by the number of interested parties requesting seeds and information on growing them. A survey will be used to measure where the seeds will be planted (geographic region), which varieties are requested, and which program method prompted a request for seeds.

BENCHMARK- There is currently no program for saving and selling museum-raised seeds to the public at Coggeshall Farm.

TARGET- Locally grown and sold specialty crop seed stock will be made available to the public for the first time in the area.

Activities Performed to Achieve This Goal:

- Seeds were saved (and continue to be saved) from all possible plants. Please see bullet point “details on seeds” below for more information on specific crops.
- In 2012 we sent a small packet of Coggeshall-grown heirloom seeds as a “thank you” to each of our Annual Appeal donors who gave more than \$100, as a way to generate interest in our seed saving program.
- In 2012 we experimented with various types of seed packets, papers, and labels, to find a balance between efficiency in packaging and processing, and attractiveness in selling. We also developed a branded seed packet label that includes not only planting instructions, but also how to save seeds (as well as credit to the RI DEM.) This is something unique to Coggeshall Farm Museum—most seed companies that sell heirloom seeds do not include seed-saving instructions on their seed packets.
- Written materials detailing general seed-saving instructions; as well as specifics to each individual plant, were developed. These are used in our seed-saving workshops and are optionally available to seed-buyers. These written materials have also been submitted to our web designer to be put up as an online reference for seed-buyers or anyone interested in saving seed.
- In 2012 the first of our seeds went up for sale (from the annual seeds we were able to harvest in 2011; and a few biennial plants we happened to be growing before the grant period started and were also able to harvest in 2011.) Biennial plants (turnips, beets, carrots) were stored in the root cellar and re-planted for a late 2012 seed harvest. This is the best way to get seed, as you can select the best keepers for propagation. Please see bullet point “Details on Seeds” below for more information.
- We developed a written survey to get a more accurate view of which varieties people were most interested in buying, where they would be planted, and what, if any, of our programming prompted the buying of the seeds. Questions asked were 1) what kinds of seeds are you buying today; 2) what inspired you to buy the seeds; and 3) zip code of where the seeds will be planted. Of the preliminary set of seeds that we did have for sale in 2012, the most popular seeds were peas; lettuce was a close second. The onions were also popular, with the herbs and parsnips trailing at the end. We are looking forward to having a more complete line of seeds for sale in 2013 so we can more accurately understand what our visitors are interested in growing. As to what inspired people to buy the seeds, it was almost 100% due to our educational programming, usually speaking with one of our staff members on the uniqueness and most particularly the special taste qualities of specialty crops and the particular varieties of heirloom seeds we have here at Coggeshall Farm. Geographic area—most commonly the seeds were headed to a home right here in Rhode Island, though a few went as far as Virginia.
- Coggeshall Farm Museum now has a full line of seeds available to the public, including on site in our museum store, at our special events, and online.

Details on our seed-collection process:

- In 2011 we successfully harvested seeds from several types of annual plants as well as two biennial types we happened to be growing before the grant period started, including White Portugal Onion, Hollow Crown Parsnip, Champion of England Peas, Prince Albert Peas, parsley, calendula, and other herbs. These varieties all went up for sale in 2012. The biennial plants (turnip, beets, carrots, etc) did not produce seed until the latter end of 2012, and were not ready for the public until 2013. We experienced some problems with a few plants during the 2011 growing season, including fava beans (they were planted too late and withered in the heat before setting seed); regular pole beans and cabbages (the sheep got into the garden before the last of the fence was finished and devoured the cabbages and most of the beans before they could make seed); and Tropical Storm Irene caused wind-burn damage to all of our curcurbits. 2012 seed production was better: garden fence in place, sans sheep, we successfully harvested Windsor Fava Beans, several types of heirloom lettuces dating from the 1700s or early 1800s, Prince Albert peas, Champion of England peas, several types of beans including Early Mowhawk (pre-1700 and extremely rare); Hollow Crown Parsnip, White Portugal Onion, Purple Top Milan Turnip, Calendula, Coriander, Dill, Parsley, Elecampane, and other varieties of herbs; Canada Crookneck squash (the predecessor to the Butternut); Green Hubbard Squash (the predecessor to the common Hubbard); Pineapple Melon; and more. As always with agriculture, there were a few 2012 growing season setbacks: our cucumbers got hit by bacterial wilt; our smallage just up and died; our beets so carefully saved in the root-cellar rotted...and the ones we left in the garden as a backup didn't make it through the winter; the Early Scarlet Hoorn seed carrots successfully overwintered and were growing happily in our screened box that would prevent cross-pollination with the wild carrots in our pasture; but they didn't make it either. But overall, we had a successful year and ended up with a complete line of seeds for sale beginning now in spring 2013.

- If outcome measures were long term, summarize the progress that has been made towards achievement.

Coggeshall Farm Museum has accomplished its project goals; however, the garden is an integral part to our museum and educational mission. We will continue to hone programming and develop new ways to educate people about the preservation of rare and historic types of vegetables, herbs, and fruit. I have mentioned a few of our upcoming goals and plans in the various sections of this report.

- Provide a comparison of actual accomplishments with the goals established for the reporting period.

Goal #1: Increase awareness of Specialty Crops: (we anticipated a 20% increase in awareness.)

- 81% of our visitors report an increased awareness of specialty crops.
- Educational programming is in place to continue to increase awareness of specialty crops, in the form of static exhibits, written materials, site guides, and tours.
- Coggeshall Farm Museum now grows more than 60 varieties of vegetables, herbs, and fruit that are available for the public to observe, learn about, and purchase.
- Sales of seeds and produce also help increase awareness.

Goal #2: Increase Educational Programming at Coggeshall Farm Museum with a focus on historic agriculture.

During the grant reporting period, Coggeshall Farm Museum has added the following educational programs with a focus on historic agriculture:

- A functional historic garden exhibit available for public observation & demonstrations (pre-2010, the garden was managed by volunteers who were not consistent in their knowledge of agriculture, gardening methods, and did not have consistent enough time commitments to maintain the garden exhibit well.)
- Garden-related programming involved in almost every school group, matched with Rhode Island Grade Span Expectations.
- Hearth Cooking workshops that highlight the growing, use, preservation, and cooking of specialty crops; as well as Kids in the Kitchen (a similar program targeted towards children).
- Garden-related workshops with topics such as small-space gardening, composting, heirloom plants, and seed-saving.
- Garden produce that is used in other museum exhibits, such as braided onions hanging in the farmhouse, roots stored in our root cellar, exhibiting food preservation methods as well as providing historically accurate material culture for the 1790s Tenant Farmhouse.

Goal #3: Increase Seed Stock from Specialty Crops

Before the grant period, Coggeshall Farm Museum did not save seeds. In addition to perennial herbs and fruit, we now have saved seeds from the following varieties:

- Cranberry Bush Beans (1700s)
- Early Mowhawk Bush Beans (pre-1700)
- Jacob's Cattle Bush Beans (pre-1800)
- True Red Cranberry Pole Beans (1700s)
- White Dutch Runner Beans (1700s)
- Windsor Fava Beans (1700s)
- Long Anglais Cucumbers (1800s)
- Bath Cos Lettuce (1700s)
- Brown Dutch Lettuce (1700s)
- Tennis Ball Lettuce (1700s)
- White Portugal Onion (pre 1800)
- Hollow Crown Parsnip (pre 1830)

- Champion of England Peas (1843)
- Prince Albert Peas (pre 1842)
- Long Scarlet Radish (1700s)
- Haldenstein Spinach (1700s)
- Canada Crookneck Squash(pre 1820)
- Green Hubbard Squash (pre 1800)
- Yellow Crookneck Summer Squash (pre-1700)\
- Purple Top Milan Turnip (pre 1880)
- Calendula (older single-petal type)
- Parsley (older flat-leaf type)
- Borage
- Chives
- Coriander
- Dill
- Elecampane
- Hollyhock

And, barring natural disasters, plant diseases, insect problems, and other gardening frustrations, by next year we will also have successfully saved seeds from the following crops:

- Scarlet Hoorn Carrots (pre-1610)
 - Dwarf Horticultural Bean (pre 1800)
 - Wren's Egg Beans (1825)
 - Cylindra Beets (pre-1800)
 - Early Blood Turnip-rooted beets (pre-1800)
 - Late Flat Dutch Cabbage (pre 1840)
 - Red Mammoth Cabbage (1889)
 - Deer Tongue Lettuce (1740s)
 - Other Heirloom Lettuces
 - Chantara's Melon (pre 1800)
 - Prussian Blue Peas (1700s)
 - Scarlet Runner Beans (pre 1700)
 - Purple Top White Globe Turnip (pre 1880)
 - Smallage (very rare, old type of plant related to celery)
 - Fennel
-
- Clearly convey completion of achieving outcomes by illustrating baseline data that has been gathered to date and showing the progress toward achieving set targets.
 - The number of programs focused on or significantly utilizing the garden has increased from 43 in 2011 to 63 in 2012.
 - 81% of people reported an increase in awareness in heirloom gardening and specialty crops after visiting our museum.

- Sale of garden produce in 2010 was \$0; in 2011 it was \$133.15; in 2012 produce sales were at an all-time high of \$545.03.
- Seed sales increased from \$0 in 2010 to \$48 in 2011, and \$160.65 in 2012.
- Seeds have been saved from 28 varieties of specialty crops, with preparations already made for 15 more varieties. Combined with perennial herbs and fruit, the garden maintains over 60 varieties of specialty crops.

BENEFICIARIES

- Provide a description of the groups and other operations that benefited from the completion of this project's accomplishments.
- Rhode Island Families & General Public: walk-in visitors to Coggeshall and workshop attendees have learned a great deal about the changes in agriculture over the past 200 years, both in the methodology and the actual crops that were grown then and now. As a living history museum, Coggeshall Farm Museum is able to exhibit these living crops as they would have been grown 200 years ago, and allow visitors to experience them with all their senses (sight, smell, touch, taste) as well as provide a background on the individual crops, and a better understanding of the roots of their food supply. We also sell the produce and seeds, allowing Rhode Island families to take these crops home, and aid in the preservation of these crops by creating interest about them.
- School groups: As mentioned previously, the garden is used in almost every school group visit. Teachers have also benefited by our Grade Span Expectation Matching Program. More school groups are expressing interest in Biological Science focused field trips to our museum beyond our typical History based offerings.
- Boy Scouts of America: as of late 2012 Coggeshall Farm Museum began coordinating with the Boy Scouts of America, offering workshops and experiences tailored for the completion of their badges. We've currently developed a Textiles workshop and an Animal Science Program; in summer 2013 we plan to add a Garden Badge Program and are in discussion with the Narragansett Council of the BSA on initiating the first workshops in the new Sustainable Farming Merit Badge due to be unveiled this summer. The DEM-supported garden project will be a primary part of both the Garden and Sustainable Farming Merit Badge workshops.
- Homeschool Associations: In 2012 Coggeshall Farm Museum began tailoring programming for homeschool groups, working within their curriculum framework. The garden has consistently been a part of this, and sometimes a focus.
- Chefs: a number of chefs have attended our Hearth Cooking workshops and have benefited from learning about older, rare types of vegetables with a variety of tastes, textures, and uses in cooking.
- The MET School Student Interns: two students from the MET school in Providence completed an internship in the spring of 2012. Garden work was one of their primary tasks. These underprivileged students benefited in the form of physical outdoor exercise; learning about the roots of our food system, learning about job

responsibilities, and alternative job options. One student chose a garden-focused project for his final semester science project. This project came about through his own research and ideas. He lived in the city and had no garden of his own, so Coggeshall Farm Museum provided a bit of garden ground and some of our seeds for him to carry out his research.

- Community Service Credits: a number of high school or college students needing credit for community service have aided us in the garden for their volunteer credits and to expand their knowledge of pre-industrial gardening and heirloom varieties of produce.
 - Clearly state the quantitative data that concerns the beneficiaries affected by the project's accomplishments and/or the potential economic impact of the project.
- Rhode Island Families & General Public: We estimate approximately 13,000 people visit the museum each year in general admissions. In addition to this, over 5,000 people attend our special events, of which the garden is always a part.
- School groups: During the grant project period, approximately 2,200 people visited the museum as part of a group tour or school group. (That number is not included in the above general admission and special events number.)
- Boy Scouts of America: based on recent badge programming, we anticipate between 20 and 80 boy scouts earning a Garden Badge per calendar year.
- Homeschool Associations: In 2012 we launched an intensive farm training program, involving an initial one-week training period, followed by monthly returns. Six dedicated students have participated in this training program. They are booking a second program in 2013, which will include additional students as well.
- Hearth Cooking Workshops: In 2011 and 2012, Coggeshall Farm Museum offered approximately 26 Hearth Cooking Workshops serving a total of 145 adults; in addition, we ran 9 "Kids in the Kitchen" programs—a version of our Hearth Cooking for children, serving 48 people.
- The MET School Student Interns: two students from the MET school in Providence completed an internship in the spring of 2012. Both of them did garden work; one of them completed a garden project for his semester school project.
- Community Service Credits/Volunteers: I do not have specific numbers, as sometimes volunteers sign up as a group, but I estimate up to 50 or more volunteers aided in the garden during 2011-2012.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Offer insights into the lessons learned by the project staff as a result of completing this project. This section is meant to illustrate the positive and negative results and conclusions for the project.

From the standpoint of Coggeshall Farm Museum in achieving our Mission and educational and agricultural exhibit goals, this has been a very successful project. It's clear that from both a historical and agricultural standpoint that projects like this vastly

increase visitor interest in rare or alternative types of vegetables not usually found in supermarkets today. Some people enjoy it from a historical perspective; many want to take vegetables or seeds home and try out the specialty crops in their own kitchens. This project, with its historical significance, ties in beautifully with current social and agricultural issues, making for a meaningful visitor experience.

- Provide unexpected outcomes or results that were an effect of implementing this project.
- This project has inspired at least one multi-semester collegiate internship involving the examination of medicinally-based horticulture in the 18th century.
- In 2012 Coggeshall Farm Museum was fortunate to receive a “Fund for Civic Activity” Grant from Roger Williams University that allowed us to employ an education specialist, Sarah Cole, to match our school programming with Rhode Island Grade Span Expectations. Sarah matched up our garden programming with these expectations at the K - 5 levels, allowing teachers to quickly and easily see what educational requirements our programming satisfies.
- Sales of produce: At the outset of the project, we did not anticipate selling produce. The primary purpose of the garden is educational, but it yielded much more than expected and we are able to sell our excess produce to museum members and visitors, providing yet another way to introduce people to interesting and rare varieties of vegetables. **Sales from excess produce help supplement the income from seeds in supporting the continuation of the Kitchen Garden Project, including upkeep, replacement, and repair of period and modern tools; maintenance of the period fencing surrounding the garden; purchase of garden supplies such as twine; seed packets, labels, marketing, other seed-selling items; the purchase of additional seeds in the case of crop failure or loss of our own seed stock; maintenance and replacement of 18th century clothing necessary for staff and interns to carry out programming in the garden; the maintenance, administrative costs, and marketing of current garden programming; and finally the development of additional specialty-crop related workshops and programming.**
- We have discovered the need to broaden our field trip and workshop offerings beyond historical areas to biological/agricultural based workshops.
- If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving.

We believe that all goals and outcomes were successfully achieved.

CONTACT PERSON

- Name the Contact Person for the Project • Telephone Number • Email Address

Shelley Otis, Farm Manager
401-253-9062
s.otis@coggeshallfarm.org

Rhode Island Nursery and Landscape.

RINLA Final Report
Contract #: 011-016

Project Title

An Economic Impact Survey Rhode Island's Turf Grass and Environmental Horticulture Industry.

Which became: The Economic Impact Study of Plant-Based Industries and Agriculture in Rhode Island.

Project Summary

This is the first consolidated effort by the Rhode Island Nursery and Landscape Association, RI Turfgrass Foundation, RI Department of Environmental Management, RI Economic Development Corporation and the University of Rhode Island to assess the true impact of the agricultural and plant-based industries to Rhode Island.

Within the Project Summary, please address the following question: What was the impetus or motivation for the implementation of this project? Specifically, describe the issue, problem, or need that was addressed by this project.

Rhode Island is the smallest state in the union, but among the most diverse in terms of agricultural production and plant-based industries. Despite the state's small size, estimating the economic impact of these sectors has proven difficult. At the outset of this study, a number of public officials indicated that reliable estimates of economic impacts were unavailable, and local industry groups claimed that the relevant, published Federal government estimates were too low.

Project Approach

This study combined 1,100 green-related business listings from various sources with industry profile data and listings from the USDA Agricultural Census, the RI Department of Environmental Management and the RI Secretary of State. Because of the size of RI the study's Resource Economist was able to hand count businesses, which normally would be impossible anywhere else in the nation.

All the missing businesses were extrapolated according to conservative practices to avoid any over confidence in the estimates. The study does not include many related businesses in Forestry, Wood Products, Fisheries, Aquaculture or Marine Resources. All estimates are within lower bounds.

The group of organizations came together because estimating the economic impact of the sectors has proven difficult over the years. As a team we felt that reliable estimates of the economic impacts were unavailable, and we also felt the Federal published estimates were too low.

In addition, plant-based industry, as a group, defies standardized industry classification systems (e.g. SIC, NAICS) because the businesses reside under such disparate categories as retail, wholesale, services and entertainment. As a result, the impact of these businesses may be both underestimated and improperly aggregated for the purpose of current policy discussions. This study attempts to fill the knowledge gap surrounding the economic impact of agriculture and plant-based industry in RI and correct any misinformation or misconception that may exist.

Within the Project Approach, please address the following question: Discuss the tasks provided in the Work Plan of the project proposal (provided below):

Establish Steering Committee and create an action plan, oversight protocol and feedback for students. Representatives from RINLA, RITF, RIEDC, URI, DEM and RIAgP will sit on the Committee. The Steering committee made up of these organizations helped with accessing mailing lists, played an integral role in defining the questions for the survey, distribution of information, worked to keep the survey moving forward, etc. The Students and Steering Committee develop protocol and methodology for data collection.

Hire Two Masters of Accounting Students – The group hired two Masters Accounting students who helped with the survey mailings and documenting/the intake of the reply's to the surveys entering them into spreadsheets, which were then ready to support analysis. The data was then was given to Dr. Tom Sproul and his graduate student in the Resource Economics department for analysis. In addition he reached out to existing sources of data from the RI Department of Labor and Training (numbers of people employed in these economic sectors, etc.), Secretary of State (lists and numbers of businesses listed in survey economic sectors) and USDA Department of Agriculture to help with analysis.

University of Rhode Island's Dean Higgins and Dr. Tom Sproul helped us to develop the survey question template as well as provide us with the proper protocols to keep the survey scientifically rigorous as well as keeping respondents anonymous. Dean Higgins's and Dr. Sproul's students help to produce the survey templates which were mailed to 2,500 agricultural and plant-based industry businesses.

We produced not only a final written report, but our preliminary findings as well as a 4 page summary of the findings (see attached materials). The group approached newspapers, put flyers in legislator's mail boxes, and unveiled the finding at Agriculture Day at the Statehouse (400 individuals in attendance). Each organization has used the information to promote the significant impact of our industry to agency leadership, the Governor and his office, Economic Development Corporations, Municipalities, etc.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved

The partners achieve all of our goals which were to provide a preliminary study, a formal white paper and a summary 4 page document. We also provided a template for others such as

forestry, aquaculture and other economic sectors within the state of Rhode Island who would like to conduct similar economic surveys (See attached documents). During the grant period the group met on a regular basis to accomplish these goals. *2 RINLA Final Report*

Within the Goals and Outcomes Achieved, please address the following question: Elaborate on the completion of the expected measureable outcomes indicated in your approved project proposal (provided below):

RINLA's and RITF's goal is to produce an economic survey of the RI turf grass and ornamental horticulture industry. Currently, no survey of green industry has been conducted. There is also no template, which would allow for other commodities, efforts or program niches to be added or subtracted contributing to the understanding of the full impact of other green market segments on the economy of Rhode Island.

The group produced a survey which has had important ramifications within the state. The data has helped to recognize the importance with in RI economy and we have been asked to participate on the Board of Directors of the RI Economic Development Corporation – the first time agriculture and plant based industries have been asked to vision for RI economic future. There is a need to continue to build on this survey's effort in other parts of value added agriculture, forestry and aquaculture.

The final survey report will be distributed to the public/consumer via RINLA's and RIEDC website where we estimate as many as 10,000 people visit. Both organizations can measure how many times this information was accessed on the site. RINLA and RITF will also come away with a better understanding of Turf grass and Ornamental Horticulture industry and our membership.

The Survey is on the partner's websites as well as being posted on Facebook...we have a reach of nearly 2,500 people with the visits at each partner's website.

For example, RINLA will know who our non-members are and why. RINLA will increase awareness with at least 100 non-members by distributing informational materials along with survey information. One month later we will follow up with a phone call to each member to inquire whether they have considered becoming a member and it is our hope to increase membership by at least 20%.

RINLA has not followed to gather this information, but we have had an increase in membership (15) due to the media attention.

The final report will also be distributed to at least 8 green industry related departments and colleges at URI. A few weeks later our organizations will establish contact with department chairs, Deans and the Provosts to discuss our survey findings. We should be able to meet with at least 5 individuals and assess their overall understanding of the economic impact and begin the process of relationship building. After 6 months, we will review if there have been any attitude changes such as a willingness to work closely on an internship program or the inclusion on an advisory council. Both organizations will continue monitor our long-term success with on-going implementation of programs relating to horticulture and turf.

We are in the initial stages of this follow up. Generally, the University of Rhode Island

departments are willing to work closely with us.

The survey will provide both organizations with the ability to demonstrate the economic value of the turf and horticulture industry to Rhode Island. The survey will serve as a template for others within the Green Industry. The project supplies RINLA and RITF with quantifiable and accurate data necessary to influence future collaboration with universities, state and federal government and other green industry leaders. The overall project process offers RINLA and RITF an opportunity to foster unity within our own membership and Green Industry. Finally, the report will serve as a marketing tool for our organization and members, which will demonstrate the many positive ways the green industry, affects the regional economy.

We have had a number of articles written (Providence Business New, Narragansett Estuary Bay Newsletter, and Providence Journal) about the survey findings and we will continue to build on this.

Beneficiaries

The direct beneficiaries are RI agriculture and plant-based industries small businesses and farm. The survey helps demonstrate that Rhode Island is diverse in terms of agricultural production and plant-based industry and that there is much more needed in terms of data collection over the long-term as well as to include the missing sectors (i.e. forestry, aquaculture).

This survey has proven to be a very important document to our community in garnering the necessary recognition from legislators, universities and others to demonstrate our value as a vibrant and growing economic sector here within the state.

This effort has built a lasting partnership with the organizations involved and they are: Rhode Island Nursery and Landscape Association, Rhode Island Turfgrass Foundation, RI Agricultural Partnership, RI Department of Environmental Management, the University of Rhode Island: College of Business and the College of Environment and Life Sciences and the RI Economic Development Corporation.

Within the Beneficiaries, please address the following question:

Provide a quantification of the beneficiaries affected by the implementation of this project and/or a potential economic impact of the project.

Conservatively the 2,812 businesses as well as the nearly 13,000 individuals who rely on these economic sectors for work were the beneficiaries of the economic impact survey project. The group produced a survey which has had important ramifications within the state. The data has helped to recognize the importance within RI economy and we have been asked to participate on the Board of Directors of the RI Economic Development Corporation – the first time agriculture and plant based industries have been asked to vision for RI economic future. There is a need to continue to build on this survey's effort in other parts of value added agriculture, forestry and aquaculture.

Lessons Learned

Some of the lessons learned are:

- The cost associated with the Economic Survey was not reflective in the budget outline. RINLA expended an enormous amount in staff time which was not even given a stipend from the Specialty Crop Grant (printing costs, mailing, etc.).

- The need to better prepare the community for survey's such as this one.
- Communication between all the involved partners took time.
- The significance of economic data to our industry, legislators and others. It is a necessity to continue to build on information a regular and long-term basis. And to house this data in a central location for easy access.

Contact Person

Shannon Brawley, Executive Director
Rhode Island Nursery and Landscape Association
executivedirector@rinla.org
401.874.5220

Title: Continuation of Rhode Island Good Agricultural Practices (RIGAP) Training for RI Growers and Promotion of RI GAP Program to Consumers

Project Co-Directors: Lori F. Pivarnik and Martha S. Patnoad

Award No./Total Award 12-25-B-1092/\$12,000

Project Award: April 1, 2011 to March 30, 2013

Project Summary

The Rhode Island Good Agricultural Practices program, a partnership between the University of Rhode Island and RI Department of Environmental Management/Division of Agricultural, was established in 2002 with support of a CSREES/USDA grant. This program has been sustained in Rhode Island following the conclusion of the grant due to personnel and financial commitment of URI and RIDEM/Division Agriculture. This successful collaboration has resulted in the only state GAP certification program. In RI, all farms are considered very small by USDA standards and marketing efforts by farmers are directed to consumers through on-farm retail (roadside stands) and/or pick-your-own operations and local farmer's markets. Thus, the majority of farmers engage in both in direct sale to the consumers and wholesale. The on-farm, RIGAP audit used to determine GAP certification and is reviewed and revised yearly to reflect current areas of concern. With the Produce Safety Standard regulation promulgated by FDA as part of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), this program provides critical educational information not just to those who will have to comply, but more importantly, to those who are exempt but are still expected to keep their products safe. The RI GAP program continues to be proactive in addressing food safety concerns for small growers in an effort to keep RI agriculture viable with potential expansion into new venues.

Project Approach

The project approach for this project included: 1) RI GAP training (4 hours) to attract new growers to the program; 2) On farm visits for yearly RI GAP recertification for growers currently participating in the program; 3) Consumer outreach utilizing static display and promotional materials at farmer's markets in both urban and rural locations in the state and 4) Review of RI GAP audit by project team. While all the activities were successfully completed and outreach efforts continued throughout the growing season, the program did not result in increased participation – this was surprising. It did maintain certification for many growers and did increase awareness. For those who attended the training, the evaluations have been high (See outcomes) anecdotally, farmers have indicated that customers have inquired about whether they have food safety training. These buyer's requests will only continue to grow.

The project advisory group includes individuals (Chief and Deputy Chief) from the RIDEM/Division of Agriculture. Without this support and *active* participation, this program would not exist. This is an example of a successful partnership between the URI Food Safety Program (Cooperative Extension) and RIDEM/Division of Agriculture. URI is responsible for all educational activities and Division of Agriculture conducts farm audits for certification and recertification. Changes to existing materials are made in consultation the advisory group.

Activities:

1) Annual RI GAP training

The annual RI GAP training was held in March 2012. In anticipation of the objectives of the new project (start April 1, 2012), the training included a FSMA update by FDA as well as presentations by a produce wholesaler and food service operator about the future and importance of GAP (morning session). The afternoon session included the traditional RI GAP training with significant updates. All currently certified RI GAP growers, as well as potential new participants, were invited to the morning session. There were 24 participants in the morning session and 14 in the afternoon.

2) Yearly recertification and outreach

The agriculture specialist (Karen Menezes) conducted all on-site visits for recertification during the year. Unfortunately, fewer farms were recertified and of the participants in the most recent training, only 2 were new farmers expressing interest in the program. Currently, there are 34 RIGAP certified farms. For a variety of reasons, three farms are no longer certified. In addition, a more critical assessment has evolved and farms/farmers are finding the need to address certain issues that have arisen with audits. The project coordinators feel that this is a good development that will result in a better program for the state and the farmers. Summer audit travel for 2012 was partially supported through these funds.

3) Consumer Outreach

A Nutrition and Food Sciences undergraduate was hired to take the RI GAP static display designed. However, the project directors have decided that participation at Farmer's Markets for consumer education does not have the impact that was hoped. The major issue that arose was location of the display, especially in the larger markets in urban areas. At these markets, the display and student were placed with non-profit organizations and not near the farmer vendors. The location did not lend itself to consumer traffic. Therefore, this objective will not be addressed in the future. We will continue to make the exhibit available for use for other venues, e.g. use by Master Gardeners, RI Agriculture Day at the RI State House and/or placement at farms for specific events.

4) Advisory group meetings

The project advisory group has had four meetings and the audit and guidelines were reviewed by the RI GAP committee (included project directors, agricultural specialist and representatives for RI DEM/Division of Agriculture). After thorough review, additional areas were added to the audit and others were made critical.

5) Comprehensive farmer list

As outlined in the original funding request, although the grant was awarded for 2 years, the budget actually only reflected one year of costs to support the program. However, with some funds that were still available during the second year, a student was hired. Working with Farm Fresh RI, a more comprehensive farmer list was collated in an effort to enhance RI GAP training/outreach. The approach for future training will be revised (see lessons learned).

Goals and Outcomes

The overall goal of this project was to help maintain RI agricultural viability by continuing to offer GAP training to RI farmers as well as RIGAP certification and recertification and to increase consumer awareness about the program and about produce safety. The activities that were completed to achieve performance goals were RIGAP training, RIDEM/Division of Agriculture recertification, and consumer outreach.

Annual RIGAP training was completed. There was a diversity of participants – representatives from food service, regulatory, media and agriculture. The participants rated the sessions using a 5 point Likert evaluation scale (1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree) focusing on questions of content understanding and usefulness of the training. The morning session had a rating of 4.0 ± 0.7 (N=10) and the afternoon rating was 4.4 ± 0.6 (N=6). Unfortunately, 3 farms were not recertified and of the participants in the most recent training, only 2 were new farmers expressing interest in the program and they did not pursue certification. The goal to increase participation was not met. However, the training increased awareness of regulatory changes and provided GAP information to farmers. There is a resistance among small farmers to consider GAP certification, particularly if they feel they may be exempt from future regulations. All certified farms were revisited and thirty-four (34) farms were recertified.

Consumer outreach education continued with student participation. Displays were taken to 7 Farmer's Markets in RI that included those accepting WIC vouchers. Consumer information about RI GAP was distributed. Based on resource distribution, about 58 consumers picked up information and, in total, there could have been up to 850 consumers at the markets.

Beneficiaries

The potential beneficiaries of this program include both the farmers and RI consumers, particularly the children in schools where farm to school programs exist. Thirty-four (34) of 36 RI school districts are managed by the 3 foodservice providers and require farms to be RIGAP certified to sell to the schools meal programs. All schools in these districts have some history of program participation in the farm to school initiative. In 2011-2012 RI Public schools (K-12) spent \$175,000 on food from RI farmers. That added up to about 250,000 pounds of RI produce and milk. Every district bought some amount of RI grown produce (<http://www.farmfreshri.org/about/schools.php>)

Lessons Learned

The most important lesson learned has been in regard to the training approach. In the past it has been all about certification. Future training will be more about education and getting the information to the small farmers so they can, hopefully, implement on-farm food safety practices. The smallest farm will be encouraged to attend – whether they get certified in RIGAP or not. The approach will reflect an opportunity to understand what can be done, proactively, to ensure that the produce grown and sell is safe for the consumer. If farmers do not need to know the information now, they may need it in the future. Attendance at training would not only be the first step to allow farmers to become RIGAP certified, it will be, more importantly, the chance to become familiar with what expectations may be if small farmers want to expand. The overall goal will be that participants will leave training with the ability to do some of their own assessments of their farm practices that will help prevent any food hazards from occurring. URI Food Safety Education Program/Cooperative Extension and RIDEM Division of Agriculture are committed to offering this valuable program to Rhode Island growers.

Contact Person

Lori F Pivarnik, PhD. Phone: 401-874-2972 E-mail: pivarnik@uri.edu

Website

<http://web.uri.edu/foodsafety/grow/>

RI APPLE GROWERS FINAL REPORT Specialty Crop Grant 12-25-B-1092

Project title: Vanishing Orchards: Apple Growing in Rhode Island

PROJECT SUMMARY

Over seven years ago Alex Caserta and Michael Bell were approached by Heather Faubert, an entomologist who works for the University of Rhode Island. Heather has worked for twenty-five years at Uri's Cooperative Extension with the apple growers in Rhode Island. We were approached to see if we would be interested in documenting the orchards because so many had vanished. During the next year Alex, Michael, and Heather meet with the Apple Growers association of Rhode Island and the RI Council for the Humanities who has funded this documentary in three phases.

Through direct interviews, still photography, and videotape, folklorist Michael Bell, photographer and project director Alex Caserta, and filmmaker Rocco Michaluk spent the past eight years documenting the occupational folk life of Rhode Island's apple growing culture. We recorded the year-round, everyday activities of those involved in the cultivation of apples. Apple growing families, hired orchard workers, fruit-stand owners and employees, retailers, and direct customers (such as pick-your-own consumers) were included in the wider scope of this study.

The central story of Rhode Island's apple culture is how growers have responded to changing technology and markets so that they can continue to succeed in a business that is inherently risky and fraught with economic uncertainty. Growers have had to balance the traditional approaches that were handed down to them by their parents and grandparents with the variable realities of today's business climate.

We believe that *Vanishing Orchards* will promote public understanding of the value of folk life studies in interpreting how this historically significant way of life in Rhode Island, which seemed to be on the brink of extinction, has managed to survive through resourceful adaptation. *Vanishing Orchards* explores how traditional systems can be creatively maintained and even extended in a dynamic marketplace. Introducing the general public to the apple growing culture through the film will give the public insights into the complex but easily taken-for-granted processes behind products they consume. The educated consumer will keep the farms viable.

In the latter part of the twentieth century, as local wholesale markets began to shrink due to large retailers' national distribution systems, growers increased their direct marketing through on-site stands, pick-your-own programs, farmers' markets, and school/tourist visits. This direct approach has, in turn, stimulated diversification to satisfy the eclectic tastes of increasingly sophisticated consumers. Growers now cultivate an array of both fruits and vegetables, and many also are making and selling prepared foods, such as apple cider and fruit pies. Yet, despite changes in technology and marketing, the annual cycle of work that nature and tradition have bestowed on Rhode Island's fruit growers remains stable at the core, and tasks such as planting, pruning, spraying, thinning, picking, storing, and selling endure.

A preview version of the film has been delivered to the Department of Environmental Management. Delays have occurred with the final cut of the film and are currently being addressed. The cause of the delays was unforeseeable due to financial difficulties on the part of the production studio "Video & Vision". The film director had spent time out of the State of Rhode Island in order to provide an income for the studio. The owner of the studio almost had to close down the business due to a lack of money. The editor and director of the film were forced to work on other projects as well as the film in order to keep the business going. As a result the final cut has been delayed. The final cut is being worked on and production will continue during the next several months. The budget for the production of the film was mostly in-kind funding and a good sum of money was spent by the studio out of pocket.

The producer of the film worked with the production staff in person at the studio when the film director and editor made themselves available. Most of the time spent on the production was on editing the film. A lot of time was spent on the phone between the film director and the producer. However the producer was unaware of the financial difficulties with the studio until recently. Both Michael Bell and Heather Faubert were made aware of the situation. We have all agreed to work together to complete the final version of the film. Pre editing production was done over the two year period of time by Michael Bell and Alex Caserta and the final two hours of time codes for the final production was given to the editor and film director in the Fall of 2012. They were also given a script to follow and a sequence for the story.

The final cut of the film has taken longer than the allocated two years for completion. Even with the final cut additional time will be spent over the next year with the distribution of the film and airing to the public. The positive marking effects for the farmers will occur with the distribution and airing of the film over a period of time. This project will have long lasting positive effects for the Specialty Crop Farmers.

PROJECT APPROACH

We are producing a fifty seven minute documentary film required by PBS for television and an additional film for the theater that will run about **75 minutes**. We reviewed more than one-hundred and sixty hours of videotape and more than three-hundred color and black-and-white photographs in addition to interviews with fruit growers and other related individuals. Editing allowed us to bring the usable footage down to 60 hours and finally down to two hours of footage that we used to produce the film. It takes approximately 15 hours of editing time to get one hour of raw footage to be used in the next phase of editing. If we take 15 hours and multiply it times 60 hours of raw footage it comes out to 900 hours of editing time. Editing was ongoing for two years.

The final two hours of footage was then broken down into sections of information that was used to form a sequence that would develop the story. The time line of the story brings the audience from the period when filming began eight years ago to the present. The history of apple growing in Rhode Island is referenced through out the film.

Key personnel include folklorist and writer Michael E. Bell, Ph.D., still photographer and producer Alexander Caserta, and videographer, film director Jeff Michaluk, and Catherine McShane and Scott Rancourt editors, Heather Faubert who served as a consultant to the project. Together we will use the storyline that was developed from a grant from the RI Council on the Humanities. The documentary **shows** the recorded year-round, everyday activities of those involved in the cultivation of apples. Apple growing families, hired orchard workers, fruit-stand owners and employees, retailers, and direct customers (such as pick-your-own consumers) were included in the wider scope of this study. Interviews and filming was taken at 16 orchards in the state.

During the eight year period of the project the realization of the farmers making a positive new direction became apparent. Even though a couple of farms may be sold in the near future the true story lies with the remaining farmers becoming more productive and diverse with the products they produce. The "Buy Local" movement has become popular and strong since we began this documentary. "Sustainability" has become an everyday word among the farmers and the public and the local products are being sold in a number of the chain stores. The farmers markets have also grow in size and location and the public support this growing industry.

Alex Caserta has been corresponding with PBS regarding their interest in airing the completed film and two movie theaters in Rhode Island. He worked with the editors on editing the final production and provided oversight of the entire project and staff. Alex worked on the final two hours of time codes and divided the information into categories. **The producer developed the relationship with the owner of The Jane Pickens Theater in Newport and the**

preview on May 23, 2013 attracted an audience of 121 viewers. Alex will continue to promote the film with local state officials and the Rhode Island Department of Agriculture. Alex will also work on contacting distributors to market the film and submit the documentary to film festivals where appropriate and showings in additional theaters.

There are two trailers available at the web site www.vanishingorchards.com and a copy of the preview was given to DEM. A final version of the film will be available during the month of August 2013. The film will be entered onto the RI International Film Festival and will be aired in the Fall on RI/PBS.

Jeffrey "Rocco" Michaluk provided oversight of post-production activities at his Video & Vision studios in Newport. He is the videographer who filmed the project, assisted with the editing in the studio and handled all the technical problems associated with producing a finished product.

Scott Rancourt worked as the main editor of the film and coordinator with Jeffrey and Alex during the editing process. Scott also made contact with the local band "The French Connection" from Newport and recorded their music in the sound studio and on location at one of the farms for the film.

Michael Bell coordinated all necessary research (historical and folk life) and produced a script for the narrator to read in the film. He worked with Heather Faubert on historical information to be included in the film. Michael and Alex worked together on the editing of the original 160 hours of footage and narrowed it down to 60 hours and finally 2 hours.

Information that was used in the film came from individuals across the state. We would like to acknowledge the Governor of the State of Rhode Island, and the members of the band "The French Connection", Kenneth Ayars from DEM, Heather Faubert, Richard Rhodes (Associate Dean), Mike Sullivan, and Bryan Maynard from the University of Rhode Island, and the farmers from the orchards. The information provided insight to the farming industry in Rhode Island, as well as statistical information and stories.

GOALS AND OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

ACTIVITIES PERFORMED:

- Activities began during the month of April 2011 formatting questions for interviews with the Governor of Rhode Island, Ken Ayars at DEM, Rick Rhodes, Michael Sullivan and Brian Maynard at the University of Rhode Island. Additional interviews were done at the video production studio in Newport Rhode Island with Rhode Island apple growers.
- During the month of June Alex Caserta and Michael Bell spent time watching over sixty hours of film footage, selecting sections of film, and recording time codes. During the months of June through August Alex, Michael, and the editor worked in the Newport studio editing footage from the time codes to be used in the film. During the months of September into November time was spent in the studio by the editor cleaning up the selected footage using the time codes selected by Alex and Michael. During the months of November into **May** the final production was edited by Scott and Rocco. The

accomplishments are in line with the established goals that were set at the beginning of the project. The selected footage provides information that will enhance consumer knowledge of local farming and the importance of sustainability in farming.

- The individuals interviewed over the summer months have played an important role both as project partners and informants providing significant information.
The collection of information gathered through the interviews relates directly to the goals of the project offering an insight on the history and working culture of the Rhode Island apple growers.
- A short trailer made on DVD has been turned in as part of the performance report as an illustration towards the progress being made. Interviews were conducted in the studio with Heather Faubert from URI, Kristen Dame from Dame Farm, Mrs. Eckhart from Sweetberry farm, Allison Jaswell from Jaswell farm and Kerry Stenovitch, the new president of the RI Fruit Growers Association. Many other interviews were conducted on the orchard properties, URI in Kingston, the Governors office and DEM.

Benchmark

- **The final cut of the film will be completed during the summer months and made available to RI/PBS for airing in the Fall of 2013. The film will educate consumers through a marketing campaign on television. The final cut will be duplicated and given to RI / DEM division of Agriculture for additional production of copies. The copies will also be made available to the RI Department of Education for distribution to the school systems in the State of Rhode Island.**

Target

- **Educating the consumer and providing locations and product information that come from the farms will increase the population of consumers. The population of educated consumers will have a direct impact through increased sales for the farmers. If the consumer are aware of the locations of farms and the products they harvest fewer people will have the need to purchase products from outside the Sate of Rhode Island.**

OUTCOMES

The staff who worked on this documentary achieved the long term goals that were set.

Information included in the interviews covers sustainability, promotion of local food, development of marketing skills, farmers markets, organic growing, and cider production, product availability at different seasons, pest management, government policies, educating young children and additional topics.

The target goal of interviewing people in the apple growing community has been reached and three additional interviews were recently conducted. One at Sweet Berry Farm, now that the marketing plan is in place an operational inside a building open to the public, Steere Orchard and Jaswell's Farm. The story of fruit growers in Rhode Island has been recorded on film and the information will be made available to the public through various forms of marketing.

Our goals in producing a film on Rhode Island's apple growing culture are to enhance our target audience of consumers'. To bring an awareness and appreciation of its long and meaningful history and folklife in the state and to stimulate the consumer to reflect on how they might be involved in its future. We believe that understanding the local farming culture will reinforce some trends already underway and stimulate more people to buy local. This new movement has provided an audience of consumers who are interested in buying local and supporting the farmers. They also realize that keeping the farms viable will maintain the rural character and open space of much of our state. We believe that *Vanishing Orchards* will encourage discussion and dialogue concerning the future, not only of Rhode Island's apple orchards, but of small family farms generally in Rhode Island. We believe the accomplishments that have been made in the production of this film have met the established goals.

Baseline data will be achieved and illustrated when the documentary film is made available to the public. The farmers have already indicated that the theme of supporting the local farmer and buying local has had a positive effect with their economic status. This film will tell the story of local farming and educate the public about the positive effects farmers have on society which in turn will assist the farmers economically. The collection of baseline data will begin once the film is presented to the public through RI/PBS. The farmers will provide the data according to the sales of the previous year for comparison.

BENEFICIARIES

This documentary has incorporated a large number of apple orchards and their owners in the State of Rhode Island. Both the farmers and consumers in the state will benefit from the production of this documentary. The consumer has very little information provided to them about local farming. Increasingly, Americans are abandoning highly processed foods in favor of fresh whole foods picked when they are ripe, tasty and at peak nutritional value and do not have to be shipped long distances. Many consumers want to know where their food comes from and how it is produced. They are willing to pay a little more for quality food grown under conditions that they can see for themselves. Informed consumers are buying produce from farmers markets, local produce stands, and availing themselves of the pick-your-own opportunities that exist -in-season.

Our access to the consumer will be enhanced through our agreement with RI/PBS/WSBE – TV (Ch. 36) that will air the film. The Department of Environmental Management, Division of Agriculture and Resource Marketing are supporting this project and will be distributing the film to the school systems in the state. We are also interested in working with the Department of Tourism in the state to promote the local farmers through the use of the film. The documentary will be distributed to schools across the state for viewing in the classroom. Students will learn about the production of growing apples during a yearly cycle and the benefits of purchasing local farm fresh food as opposed to shopping in a super market.

The production of this film will expand the audience in the state of Rhode Island. According to RI/PBS/WSBE-TV between 7000 to 10,000 people will view the film per showing on television. If the film is picked up by the National PBS network the potential audience per viewing could be as high as 500,000 people. Through the resources of the Rhode Island Division of Agriculture the film will be made available to students within the Rhode Island school systems. This should attract an additional audience of 15 - 20,000 young people. The film will also be made available

to the public through the State Library Services, attracting a potential 500 additional people. The documentary will be available to view at two local theaters attracting a potential of an additional 1000 individuals.

LESSONS LEARNED

The project staff had the pleasure of working with a number of dedicated individuals who farm for a living. The insights they provided us with in sharing their stories are reflected in the documentary and how it was developed. The staff was fortunate in the fact that we spent so many years filming and collecting information compared to the time spent on most films. During the collection period people in the community began to think differently and we experienced a growing movement called "Support your local farmer" and "Buy local". This reoccurring interest that once existed in this part of the country is becoming popular again. The educated consumer is spreading in the community and having a positive effect on the farmers and their economy. Sustainability is a word that has become popular among local community people from several generations.

The staff was filming up to the last period of editing before production was completed in order to bring the story full circle. We believe this documentary will tell the story on the history of orchard farming in the State of Rhode Island up to the present time. A preview was given to RI/DEM according to the required deadline.

The film director did run into a situation where it was financially difficult over the winter of 2013. He was forced to spend time outside of the State of RI filming in order to raise money to keep the studio functioning. This did have a negative effect on the editing process in terms of a final cut. The producer was unaware of the financial difficulties the studio was having until after the preview. However the problem is be addressed over the summer months to produce the final cut for the airing on RI/PBS.

The editor of the film has not been paid for the work on the film and the rest of the production crew has been working on the film mostly through inkind support for the project. The funds have been allocated to the production staff according to the grant agreement. A project of this magnitude would normally cost \$50,000.00 dollars for the production. The grant funding amount was \$12,000.00 dollars. As a result the inkind support was a major factor for the completion of the project.

As an end result the production staff of this film believes they have collected a large portion of information on the Apple Growers in the State of Rhode Island. We also believe that this amount of important information has never been collected in the past and will provide valuable insight to the public.

CONTACT PERSON

Alexander Caserta
401-943-5228
alexcaserta@gmail.com

Project Title

RI. DEM GET FRESH BUY LOCAL Campaign Final Report

Project Summary

This program was built on the previous projects and enhanced our commitment to increase demand and consumption of RI Grown Specialty Crops. Our motivation was to enhance the marketing of Fruits and Vegetables in the State for over 110 farmers. This is needed to help slow down the loss of Agricultural Land to development by making farming of Specialty Crops viable in Rhode Island.

The Rhode Island Division of Agriculture working with specialty crop growers throughout the state expanded on its “Rhode Island Get Fresh Buy Local” buy local initiative by conducting produce preparation demonstrations featuring local celebrity chefs at all RI farmers market and participating roadside stands. The Division also updates its RI Agricultural Display. We also used grant funds on marketing projects with Harvest New England which is a multi-state project consisting of the six New England States in a joint effort to capitalize on the local grown effort into the retail trade, namely the large supermarket chains operating throughout the New England region. The Division also uses SCGF to enhance its marketing program by making point of purchase advertising material available to farmers. The need for this project is to help keep Specialty Crop Farming Viable in Rhode Island. Since Rhode Island has such a short growing season it was critical for us to get Specialty Crop Farmers (Fruit and Vegetable Growers) the logo material.

Project Approach

By expanding our marketing efforts by purchasing new graphics for our display and doing shows throughout the State we increased demand for RI Grown Specialty Products (fruit and vegetables). We also expanded our farmers’ market program by introducing wireless EBT technology into two additional markets. At the market we increased sales for Rhode Island Specialty Crop Farmers. Also our support in the Harvest New England Program expanded our sales by promoting a regional supply of fruit and vegetables.

Our partnership with Rhode Island Specialty Crop Growers has served over 400,000 Rhode Island residents by bringing the locally grown fruits and vegetables. Working with over 48 farmers markets we have increased outlets for the sale of locally grown Specialty Crops. Fruit, Vegetables, Nursery Stock and Honey are now in demand more than ever.

We also contracted with North Star Marketing to help promote the consumption of fruits and vegetables. North Star had staff attend 30 farmers in costumes portraying apples, corn, strawberries to get children to eat these items. We also offered over 200 children a page to color with their favorite fruit or vegetable on it.

We also held cooking demonstrations in partnership with Johnson and Wales University at 9 farmers markets throughout the State. Customers were taught how to prepare fruit and vegetables that were being sold at the farmers market. Over 800 people saw these demonstrations.

We also hired a summer intern to work at the farmers markets to help Specialty Crop Farmers sell their products. The intern's job was to help specialty crop farmers display their products. The intern's job was to give out information about specialty crops and answer any customers' questions. Also the intern would interview specialty crop farmers to see if our efforts increased their sales.

In interviewing farmers we have seen a 6% increase in sales of Specialty Crops over last year. We interviewed 50 Specialty Crop farmers at farmers markets and asked if they have seen any increase in sales due to our marketing efforts. Due to the added demand we have 8 additional farmers markets.

To ensure Specialty Crop Funds were only used for Specialty Crops the DEM/Division of Agriculture contributed over \$50,000 dollars of State funds to cover non Specialty Crops that have benefited from this program. Over 80% of the Agricultural Crops sold in RI are Specialty Crops.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved

By expanding our marketing efforts by purchasing of display material and doing shows throughout the State we have increased demand for RI Grown Products. Also by expanding our farmers' market program and introducing wireless EBT technology into the markets we have increased sales for Rhode Island Farmers. These sales were documented by bank statements showing sales of fruit and vegetables that were processed through the EBT machines. There was sales of \$10,000 processed on the EBT machine for Specialty Crops. We also measured the increase sales of RI Grown Specialty Crops by speaking and surveying farmers to see if their sales have increased. We know as in the past informing the public about RI Grown Specialty Crops increases demand for such products.

EBT Program was supplemented by 20% of State funds to compensate for the sales of non Specialty Crop items. It has been determined that 20% of products being sold at our farmers markets are not Specialty Crops.

The goals we achieved for the season are:

- Set up EBT systems at 2 additional farmers markets
- Re-Certified 30 farms for GAP compliance for sales to school districts
- Had cooking demonstrations at farmers markets throughout the season at 10 farmers markets over 6000 people learned how to prepare fresh fruits and vegetables. This was a partnership we have with Johnson and Wales University that is very popular.
- Gave out information to 50,000 citizens promoting RIGrown at shows

-Point of purchase material is critical to educate the public as to what products are RI Grown Specialty Crops. These point of purchase materials also let the farmer help customers identify which are Rhode Island Grown Specialty Crops. We will measure the outcomes of our actions through the surveying of farmers to see if our efforts have increased demand for their products.

-Of the 50 Specialty Crop Farmers Surveyed. All responded that our efforts have helped them in some way to stay viable as a Specialty Crop Grower in RI. They all have seen an increase in sales.

- We held Agriculture Day at the Rhode Island State house May of 2012 and over 37 Specialty Crop Farmers were able to give out information about the crops they grow and where their establishments are located. Over 2,200 people attended the event. There was also a proclamation from the Governor for Agriculture Day in Rhode Island.

-OUR MARKETING EFFORTS HAVE LEAD AGRICULTURE TO BE THE ONLY SEGMENT OF THE RHODE ISLAND ECONOMY THAT IS PROSPERING.

Beneficiaries

The beneficiaries of the project are all the citizens of Rhode Island and Specialty Crop Farmers. Our efforts have increased the availability of fresh fruits and vegetables for the citizens of Rhode Island.

Lessons Learned

We have learned that marketing of Fruits and Vegetables and other Specialty Crops is critical to increasing sales and keeping farming viable in Rhode Island

Contact Person

Peter Susi

peter.suis@dem.ri.gov

401-222-2781 ext. 4517

FINAL REPORT THE GREENE COMPANY

Super-Saturation Crop Pollination by Honey Bees – 2011-2012

RIDEM Specialty Crop Grant 12-25-B-1092

PROJECT SUMMARY

The purpose of this grant was to determine if saturating a crop with honey bees – well beyond USDA recommended levels – would produce a measurable and consistent crop yield increase. Increasing crop yields per acre clearly make the crop more competitive.

The combination of rented honey bee colonies, feral honey bees, and native pollinators supports the USDA general recommendation of one or two colonies per crop acre. This assumption was based on ecological conditions and farming practices more than 50-years ago. Today's ecological conditions are far different with varroa mite eliminating feral honey bee colonies and urban sprawl and pesticides dramatically reducing native pollinators.

Wisconsin growers recently reported higher crop yields after increasing the number of honey bee colonies from 1-2 to 5-7 per acre. The first stage of this experiment is to repeat the Wisconsin practice in Rhode Island to determine if the results are repeatable here. The results of this two-year study may indicate crop yield benefits for orchard, berry, vine and other specialty crops. Additional economic benefit will be increased economic stimulus for local beekeepers. Additional, follow-on, studies may provide more insight into the pollinator/fruit set dynamic for this and other crops.

The 12 acres of cultivated cranberries that were super-saturated with honey bees (Gibson Hill bogs) were geographically separated from the control bog (Arnold Farms bogs) by a distance of a few miles, but located within the same general climactic setting. These bogs contained the same cranberry cultivar, were established at approximately the same time, and are under the same farm management practices. This allows for a classical experimental group and control group experimental approach.



Honey bee colonies at cranberry bog.

PROJECT APPROACH

Activities performed for two growing seasons:

- The experimental treatment consisted of 96 colonies of honeybees deployed on 12 acres (i.e., 8 colonies per acre)
- Honeybee colonies were fed during the pollination period to ensure a minimum of 6-frames of brood.
- Crops were managed similarly per standard cultivation practices
- Colonies were removed from the area within 72-hours after crop set
- Crop yields were analyzed by comparing:
 1. The previous 4 years (2007-2010) to study years (2011-2012), and
 2. The experimental group (Gibson Hill) to control group (Arnold Farms).

The experimental bog (Gibson Hill) is approximately 12 acres in size and planted with “Stevens” vines. Prior to this study, colonies of honey bees were deployed on all bogs at the rate of two (2) colonies per acre as per USDA recommendations. For the study, the experimental bog was super-saturated with eight (8) colonies per acre (96 colonies of honey bees) for two consecutive years (2011 and 2012).

The grower monitored the first opening of the bloom and alerted the beekeeper when to deploy the colonies. Beekeeper prepared the colonies per standard practice ensuring the colonies have a minimum of 6 frames of brood in all stages. All medications, if indicated, were applied prior to deployment. Each colony was fed approximately 4-lbs of protein and sugar mix in the form of a cake-like patty placed directly over the brood chamber while they were deployed on the crop. The beekeeper, upon the grower’s request, dropped the colonies in specific locations around the bogs... Because the colonies were super concentrated, the risk of nectar and pollen deficiency that could degrade colony strength during the pollination period was considered. The beekeeper monitored the colony health, inspecting not less than once per week during deployment. The bees were observed aggressively working the bloom in the expected manner. The State’s apiary inspector inspected the bees during the pollination period to ensure colony strength was met. The colonies were removed about 4-weeks later at the end of the crop bloom. The time frame for colony deployment was approximately June 10 through July 20. The grower managed the crop per standard practices for the farm and the crop was harvested in October.

SYNOPSIS

Years of study	2
Acreage	12

USDA Recommended colonies /acre (cranberries)	2
Study quantity colonies /acre	8
Total colonies for study (per year)	96
Going rental rate /colony	\$80
Additional cost/colony to feed (material, labor & travel)	\$22
Total Grant Funding	\$20 ,000

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Crop yields during the experimental period and four years beforehand are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Average Cranberry Crop Yields in Barrels per Acre¹ - Arnold Farms Vs. Gibson Hill, Coventry RI, 2007-2012.

Crop Year(s)	Arnold Farms (Control) ²		Gibson Hill (Experimental) ³		Yield Difference	% Difference ⁴
	Avg. Yield (Bbl/Ac)	Std Dev.	Avg. Yield (Bbl/Ac)	Std Dev.		
2007	275	(57.6)	218	(14.7)	-57	-21%
2008	159	(47.3)	172	(15.0)	13	8%
2009	202	(81.0)	172	(42.1)	-30	-15%
2010	259	(96.3)	221	(37.8)	-38	-15%
2007 - 2010	223	(83.8)	195	(35.7)	-28	-13%
2011	169	(84.5)	234	(21.0)	65	38%
2012	251	(82.4)	231	(18.6)	-20	-8%
2011 - 2012	210	(91.0)	232	(17.8)	22	10%

Notes:

- (1) 1 Bbl cranberries = 100 lbs.
- (2) Control Group (Approx. 36.8 ac.) with 2 colonies of honey bees per acre.
- (3) Experimental Group (Approx. 13.4 ac.) with 8 colonies of honey bees per acre.
- (4) Difference expressed as a percentage difference compared to the yield of the control group.

The results suggest that super-saturation of honey bees may have an effect on cranberry crop yield, however, the variability in yield over time and between the different bogs obscures the determination of whether the results of this brief study are significant.

In particular, an examination of the sample standard deviations for the yield averages indicates the variation in the yields of various bogs within the control group are substantial. It is apparent that the variation within the control group is frequently greater than the variation between the control group and the experimental group.

Nevertheless, in the four years prior to the experiment, the average yield at Gibson Hill was 28 bbl/ac less than at Arnold Farms, and the average yield during this period ranged from 79 % to 108% of the average yield at Arnold Farms.

In comparison, during the experimental period the average yield at Gibson Hill was 22 bbl/ac greater than at Arnold Farms. However, it should be noted the average yield at Gibson

Hill during this period ranged from 92 % to 138% of the average yield at Arnold Farms indicating a relatively reduced yield during one of the years.

It may be possible that the remarkable increased yield of 2011 at Gibson Hill (38 percent greater than the control bogs) induced a phase of biennial production on this bog and explains the poor performance during the following year. This is a phenomenon observed in cranberry agriculture where bumper crop years are followed by years of poor yield. It has been speculated that this is caused by a stress reaction of the plants due to various factors. Alternatively, this relative performance may be the simple result of an unusually poor year on the control bogs. It appears that a longer term comparison is necessary to obtain statistically meaningful results.

Due to illness no one attended the annual Eastern Apiary Society Annual Conference held in Vermont in the summer of 2012. No presentation of the funded grant project was made at that conference.

Dawn Lockwood and Greg Underwood of the Greene Company presented the results of this study on November 16, 2012 to 30 growers at a field meeting held at the cranberry bog main location in Coventry , Rhode Island . In addition, the project and it's implication was presented to 40 state and federal employees at the USDA NRCS Regulatory Training at the Quaker Lane location in Warwick RI on May 1, 2012. In March of 2012 it was presented at the Westerly College Club to 40 club members and members of the general public. In March 2013 I discussed this grant project in my presentation on beekeeping at the March meeting of the Westerly College Club.. On June 15, 2013 I briefly discussed this grant at a field meeting of the Rhode Island Beekeepers Association and plan to give a full presentation of this grant project at the next field meeting in July.

BENEFICIARIES

Increased yield as a result of complete pollination reduces cost of production, and reduces unit farm labor costs. All growers of specialty crops that require pollination by insects (e.g., apples, peaches, blueberries, raspberries, cranberries, squash, pumpkins, and cucumbers) could be beneficially affected. The positive impact of production efficiency results in more profitable – and thereby sustainable – farming operations.

An increased demand for pollination services is a potential secondary benefit to the agricultural community. Today, the State only has one or two professional apiarists (honey bee farmers) providing pollination services. This forces growers to seek the services of migratory beekeepers who truck honey bee colonies into the State from other states such as Florida, Georgia, and California. Besides the potential import of harmful pests and diseases that affect the honey bee, the economic benefit is lost to local beekeepers and the RI economy. By establishing a sustainable pollination demand, local beekeepers will be able to rise to the economic opportunity and establish viable beekeeping farm services.

Project presentations with results were made to CCGA, RI Beekeepers, Eastern Apicultural Society and the RI Fruit Growers Association.



Presentation by Everett Zurlinden at RI Fruit Growers Meeting

An outreach presentation was made on Nov. 16, 2012 at the cranberry processing barn.

LESSONS LEARNED

When the current USDA recommendation was made, native pollinators including feral honey bee colonies were far more abundant than they are today. The parasitic *Varroa mite* (*Varroa destructor*) has all but eliminated feral honey bee colonies, and urban sprawl and homeowner applied pesticides have reduced the availability and effectiveness of native pollinators. Farming practices that encourage the removal of weeds and wildflowers which bees and other insects depend on for a food source, can suppress the availability of native pollinators. It has been hypothesized that modern-day environmental conditions and farming practices have reduced the number of native pollinators.

This study of the super-saturation crop pollination by honey bees was done over a two year period. By continuing this project over a longer period of time, a larger and more robust data set could be collected for more meaningful statistical analysis. For example, ongoing statistical evaluation may allow the determination of which bogs in the control group are more closely trend correlated with the experimental bogs, providing an indirect method of reducing the effect of variables such as soil moisture, edaphics, and micro-climate. A longer time frame of crop observation would also be expected to modulate the general effect of variables such as weather, microclimate, and localized soil moisture conditions – all of which can affect yield independently of pollination success.

Additionally, further understanding the requirements for successful cranberry pollination and fruit set, as well as the limits of natural pollinators (as a result of density effects or poor weather, for example), may show that additional colonies are required to create the intended effect on yield. An interesting question to consider is whether super-saturation of honey bees can dampen the year-to-year negative effects of other variables rather than result in a uniform increase in crop yield.

New cultivars (i.e., hybrids) of cranberry are being developed that could conceivably increase current high yields by 200 to 300 percent. Although it is unclear if such high yields can be maintained in a commercial agricultural setting, it would be worthwhile to evaluate the effect of pollinator super-saturation on these new cultivars.

PROJECT CONTACTS

Greg Underwood, Bog Manager - The Greene Company, (401) 623-6077
gunder7238@aol.com.

Everett Zurlinden, Beekeeper - Beehavin' Apiary, (401) 374-4730 everett@beehavin.com.

Dawn Lockwood, Director – The Greene Company, (401) 397-5785
thegreenecompany@aol.com.



Final Performance Report

March 15, 2013

Att: Peter Susi, Deputy Chief, RIDEM Division of Agriculture

Re: Specialty Crop Grant 12-25-B-1092.

To: Peter Susi, Deputy Chief

RIDEM/Division of Agriculture

Rhode Island Center for Agriculture Promotion & Education (RICAPE)

Project Title

RICAPE CASE STUDY-FILM PROJECT Farm Viability Grant Proposal

Project Title: Reanimating Agriculture and the Challenges of Local Zoning

Project Summary

Agritourism and alternative enterprises on the farm are a growing portion of farm income not only in Rhode Island but throughout the northeast region. They are also increasingly critical

adjuncts to traditional agricultural activities in sustaining farm viability and profitability. Agritourism is now recognized as an integral part of the sustainability movement.

But several challenges threaten agritourism's continued upward trajectory - none more so than the relations between towns and farms and how those relations are reflected and articulated (or not) in comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances. The notion that popular trends in local farms and foods will always rule the day is being proven untrue in several instances. Coupled with the continued march of suburban sprawl placing farms in ever closer proximity to residences and small businesses signals significant detours ahead for the further growth

Motivation for this project: the Problem Addressed

In 2010, Greenvale Vineyards of Portsmouth, RI made petition to the town to construct a winery on its property in order to develop its own products from its own commodity – wine grapes. They hoped to consolidate their enterprises instead of continuing to have their wine made at and shipped to and from another facility. In the process of their petition to the town, neighbors near the Vineyard presented counter arguments against the petition and the winery. These arguments led to several months of zoning hearings, and an editorial campaign in the local papers. They ultimately led to a review of existing agritourism activities and social events (i.e. weddings) at Greenvale and in Portsmouth. And they opened for discussion the town's position and its formal rulings on such activities. (Note: Weddings provide 10-15% of Greenvale's annual income.)

Over several months, the ongoing zoning hearings and editorial campaign exposed a troubling truth about Portsmouth's town and farm relations specifically as it concerns alternative agricultural activities, public perceptions of them, and the rules, regulations (comprehensive plans/ordinances) and other protocols and customs that govern them. As evidence of its impact, the petition and ensuing arguments in the hearing room and on the street caused the largest response to any local issue in recent memory according to the Newport Daily News. But the fallout has resonance far beyond Portsmouth and Aquidneck Island.

This project successfully documented significant elements of this story and by extension, will touch dozens of other legitimate farm enterprises that generate revenue for specialty crop farmers. Some of these enterprises, if not many, are being delayed or derailed by long standing and often out of date town zoning ordinances (Note: there are 39 towns in Rhode island.). Disparities in the visions, perceptions, interests, preferences and concerns of farm operators, their neighbors and those who make decisions in the town of Portsmouth were highlighted.

Project Approach

RICAPE, in partnership with First Priority Media of Cranston, RI produced a 20-minute video documentary of the Greenvale Vineyards Winery case entitled "Old Zoning for the New Agriculture."

Link:

http://youtu.be/tE_5Z6EFHuY

Activities Performed

Pre Filming

1. Research was conducted to identify the positioning of agriculture and agricultural tourism in Portsmouth's comprehensive plan and zoning ordinances. We also reviewed other town plans to identify how these issues are or are not being addressed elsewhere.
2. Project Leader Stu Nunnery in coordination with Creative Consultant Samantha Best wrote the narrative from this and other research to serve as the working script drafts for the video shoot, voiceover and on-screen copy.
3. Stu Nunnery in association with Kim Henshaw (FPM) and Samantha Best produced the final shooting script for the filming.

The Film

Filming began in Late November, 2012 and continued through February 2013 with post-production completed by March 31, 2013 at which time the video became available for broadcast. The final film is hosted by Stu Nunnery and features a lengthy interview with Nancy Parker Wilson, Manager of Greenvale Vineyards. It also includes pictures, graphics, quotes and captions from news stories and editorials and other text from additional documents with critical information for farmers and decision makers embedded within. The technical capabilities of First Priority media allowed for a "film like" quality created through High Definition Videotape. High quality post production features as well helped to frame a very warm, personal and inspiring narrative and provide an up to date presentation of information, graphics, figures and photographs.

Uses and applications

The video provides information and dozens of tips for farmers about the issues and how they might be addressed by farm operators and town decision makers in the future. The video is now available to RI Specialty crop farmers, but can be sent as well to other farmers, agricultural interests, educators, decision makers and political groups or individuals within the community.

- We have sent along the link to the video on You Tube. It will eventually appear on the RICAPE Website (WWW.NEFarmways.org) now undergoing revisions and updating.
- The RICAPE Newsletter (The Fence Post), email blasts and other communication mechanisms with links to the video are being sent to appropriate parties, organizations and institutions.
- Hard copy DVD distribution can be made available for those seeking their own copy. Once we are certain that the video has been seen by a significant portion of the agricultural community, we will advertise our willingness to show the video to farm and other community groups as requested.

- We are offering the video to local news staff and other local broadcast media to support their agriculture-themed stories. Interviews and scenes from the program will be offered for their use at their discretion.
- Workshops for town planners, zoning officials, town council reps, agricultural interests and neighborhood and community associations can also be scheduled as requested.

Timeline

Project Start: November 2012 - Pre-Production - research, original content development and copywriting, pre-interviews with key figures, schedule film shooting.

October, November 2012 - Draft Script completed

November 2012-February2013 - On farm site film shooting, interviews, document gathering for post production, still photography

January-March 2013- Post-production

- Transcriptions, content indigestion, edit prep, screening and logging of footage, review and adding of graphics. music and other effects, voice over script rewriting and revisions, segment editing, audio toning, audio recording (voice-overs) and editing, copy for multiple purposes., synchronization, and synch to You Tube

Post Notes

This project was under the direction of RICAPE and First Priority Media and was subject to standard protocols for R&D, Production, and Post-Production of such a documentary format. The final video was vetted and approved by DEM's legal affairs department

With the video launched, we are launching a Survey via Survey Monkey to assess our benchmarks with RI Specialty. Crop Farmers and to elicit ideas for additional videos.

We are also reconfiguring the RICAPE website – www.nefarmways.org to make other materials - (articles, power points and links to Agritourism-related sites and information) available to all specialty crop farmers in Rhode island.

By the numbers

- 9 – Total project team members engaged in various aspects of the project
- November 2012-March 31, 2013 video pre-production, production and post production
- 2 Days – total video shooting
- 8 - hours total video footage shot
- 10 - days of research, concept development, script writing, material gathering
- 7 - days of post production – editing, re-editing
- 20 minutes - duration of finished edited video

Significant results/accomplishments

- A documentary “Old Zoning for the new Agriculture” Vineyards Winery Case was produced in partnership with First Priority Media.
- With additional dollars from a USDA RBEGrant, the documentary was extended from the originally planned 5-10 minutes to 20 minutes.
- The documentary is now coupled to a 13-part (6 full length, 7 short “Tips”) video training series entitled the “Destination Farm in Transition” that provides information and instruction to RI specialty crop farmers engaged in agritourism.
- The Town of Portsmouth is revising their definitions of “agricultural activity,” “right to farm,” and reviewing their zoning ordinances relevant to agricultural activity.
- The Portsmouth Town Agricultural Council has become active again and is engaged in the town’s review of its zoning ordinances.

Favorable and Unfavorable Developments

Favorable

- RICAPE participated in the support of Greenvale Vineyards both through editorials in the newspaper and through Testimony its Director gave during the zoning hearings. RICAPE’s statements provided information, materials and guidance to the Portsmouth zoning board to review the town ordinances.
- While the Portsmouth zoning board eventually denied Greenvale Vineyards a special use permit to hold special events, it agreed that the existing zoning ordinances in effect were out of date and subject to review. The Zoning Board it stated that it had refused the special use permit only because until now, there was no purview for farms to seek such permits – only golf course, recreational facilities and eat-in establishments. The Board did not wish to redefine Greenvale’s status but rather to change the ordinances to allow farms to seek SUP’s.
- The Zoning Board permitted Greenvale Vineyards to continue hosting weddings and other events while it (the town) reviewed and worked to change zoning ordinances that might better reflect contemporary agriculture and Greenvale’s rights and responsibilities in conducting events on the farm. Still in progress.
- The town of Portsmouth is using materials (from USDA and elsewhere) provided by RICAPE Director Stu Nunnery in its strategy to update the ordinances to reflect later research and documentation ala USDA Office of Alternative Enterprises and Agritourism – “Activities for Healthier Lands and Profits.”
- The RI Department of Environmental Management in partnership with the RI Division of Planning and others completed in 2012 a “Community Guidance to Working Farms and Forests” to assist towns to address agricultural issues inspired by the Greenvale Winery case and others.

Contributions of project Partners

Grant Award and Project Administrative Guidance

- Ken Ayars, Chief, RIDEM Division of Agriculture
- Peter Susi, Deputy Chief

Pre-Production, Production and Post Production Management and Coordination

- First Priority Media, Cranston, RI

Creative Consultant, on site performance director, script writing and concept development

- Samantha Best

Clarity Connect - RICAPE's Web builder

- Clarity Connect is working work with RICAPE forward to launch video frames on the RICAPE website to broadcast the video and to assist us to link written materials on the site - (power point presentations, links and material resources) that augment the video programming.
- Nancy Parker Wilson, her husband, Bill Wilson and Nancy's Mother, Nancy Parker through their willingness to tell their story and experiences and to serve as teachers for other farmers made this initiative especially enlightening and inspiring.
- **Congressman Jim Langevin (D-RI)** – provided assistance with the awarding of the RBEG grant.

Additional Funding

- USDA Office of Rural Development - Rhode Island
 - Pamela Miller, JoAnn Demars, Area Director
- USDA Office of Rural Development - Massachusetts
 - Jay Healy, State Director
 - Jennifer Learch, Program Director
 - Christine Kimball
 - Wendy Kendrick

*USDA Rural Development RI&MA awarded RICAPE an RBEGrant toward the creation of a multi-part raining series for rural specialty crop farmers engaged in agritourism The project **The Destination Farm in Transition: Expanding Rural Farm Agritourism Enterprise through a Unique Distance Learning Format** provided an expanded platform for this farm viability project with which to help complete it and broaden its reach.*

GOALS AND OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

Benchmark

Ultimately, our goal was to increase the number of farms engaged in successful agritourism and alternative enterprises. As time went on, we expanded that goal to include “assisting farmers to be able to successfully negotiate farm/town issues, and for towns to be able to work more closely with farm operators.”

Our Survey (by Dec. 2013) will indicate an additional 15-25 farms that have begun to engage or expand their activities in new agritourism activities (see above) between June 2012 and Dec. 31 2013.

Outcomes achieved

The project's outcomes will benefit both farm operators and towns/citizens in proximity to them. Identified were: opportunities to improve town/farm relations; challenges inherent in current zoning regulations related to same. The project assists policy makers, planning and zoning officials to improve connections and understanding between farm operators, service providers, town officials and neighborhood citizens. It encourages an increase in town agricultural councils/committees and greater citizen involvement in the crafting of comprehensive plans.

Baseline data

Our baseline data started with our New England FarmWays farm marketing initiative – since 2005 - that has brought dozens of farms to request and participate in our training programs, website promotions, and on-site farm assessments.

- Evidence of the upward trend in agritourism in Rhode Island comes from the 2007 Census of Agriculture conducted by the National Agriculture Statistics Service. It showed that income from agritourism in Rhode Island totaled \$689,000 on forty three (43 farms), up from \$23,000 and six (6) farms in 2002.
- Further experience shows that multiple opportunities await farmers engaged or wishing to be engaged in agritourism. Through our work since 2002, RICAPE has been a key player in engaging the small business community to bring into play many of its business services and resources to assist farmers to plan for, budget and succeed in for agritourism activities.
- Agriculture's profile in state and in the region is rising as indicated by RICAPE's marketing outreach Some thirty million visitors are within a day's drive of Rhode Island farms while agritourism and nature-based tourism continue to be among the fastest growing sectors of tourism here and nationwide. Current tourism preferences are for the "authentic" experience that farms can provide.
- The history of the region and the local food and farm scene plays into and off the farm setting. In-region marketing support is growing and includes not only New England FarmWays (RICAPE), but also VisitNewEngland.com, (Googles #1 website for NE attractions,) state tourism agencies, CVB's, Discover New England and more.
- RICAPE projected correctly that unresolved issues relative to town zoning ordinances and agricultural activity could slow and even derail much of the positive agritourism trend.

Measurable Outcomes

Expected

- It is too early at this date to show but we expect that with the release of this video, 1-3 Rhode Island towns (Portsmouth and 2 others) will agree to further review and amend their comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances to accurately reflect agriculture as it is today, and define it as a key indicator of community strength and sustainability. The RIDEM "Guidance for Communities" goes further in assisting all RI communities with an agricultural sector to address these issues in appropriate ways.

- We expect as well that a full menu – or a list to be determined by each town – of potential agritourism enterprises will be identified as legitimate “agricultural activities” on town farms by May 2014.

Unexpected

- This documentary has become coupled to a 6-part video training series entitled the “Destination Farm in Transition” that provides information and instruction to RI specialty crop farmers engaged in agritourism.
- This documentary has already been shown to 100+ at the Feb/. 27th Harvest New England Ag Marketing Conference and Trade Fair in Sturbridge MA and at “The Specialty Crop- Agritourism Connection – a RICAPE training workshop conducted March 25, 2013 in Berlin CT.

If outcome measures were long term, summarize the progress that has been made towards achievement.

Ultimately, our goal is to increase the number of farms engaged in successful agritourism and alternative enterprises. Toward that goal:

Progress:

- This documentary identifies both issues and opportunities to improve town/farm relations; identifies challenges inherent in current zoning regulations related to same; assists policy makers, planning and zoning officials to improve connections and understanding between farm operators, service providers, town officials and neighborhood citizens; encourage an increase in town agricultural councils/committees and greater citizen involvement in the crafting of comprehensive plans.
- By highlighting assumptions on the part of both farmers and neighbors about “Right to Farm” laws and more e.g. and by pointing out the deficiencies in town zoning ordinances to address contentious farm issues, this documentary helps to better identify and define the activities, rights and responsibilities of specialty crop farmer engaged in agritourism and their neighbors.
- By broadcasting the video to RI’s specialty crop farmer, town planers and other decision makers we will trigger larger discussions about agritourism and how comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances can facilitate a healthier agriculture sector and better town farm relations.
- As on going advocate for agritourism’s growth we continue to provide technical assistance, marketing support and training to specialty crop farmers interested or engaged in agritourism in Rhode Island.

We also expect:

-that the resource and economic viability of 50% of RI's non-turf and nursery farms (about 100-150 farms) that may currently host visitors at their farms stands, vineyards, wineries and other agricultural sites, will be positively affected by this initiative and by those actions taken as the result of it’s showing.

-that this initiative will enhance farmer's ability to conduct more and more successful alternative enterprises in a market and region eager and zoned for same.

-that this initiative will shorten the psychological distance between town and farm in the future and ease the efforts of town officials to address and resolve contentious agricultural/agritourism issues.

How producers will benefit from this project

- Farmers now have in hand and on film a unique educational and information tool for use in their farm planning and to help them address more successfully contentious zoning issues with their town officials.
- In June 2013, this documentary and additional web based resources will be made available via the internet to all specialty crop farmers in RI and to specific decision makers and political groups or individuals within the community from whom support is needed.
- The documentary will be posted on the internet to agricultural and other community organization and websites, blogs, social networks and content sites such as YouTube.
- Email blasts with links that include the video will be emailed to specialty crop farmers in RI.
- If additional funding becomes available, or if fees for same are paid, more video footage will be repurposed and/or shot and hard copy DVD will be produced for sale and distribution.
- The project leader will offer showings to community groups.
- Appropriate local media will be identified for broadcast. Interviews and scenes from the documentary will be offered for their use.
- Workshops for town planners, zoning officials, town council reps, agricultural interests and neighborhood and community associations can be made available.

BENEFICIARIES □

Of the more than 1000 farms in RI some 20% or 200 demonstrate some form of on-site agritourism. As for the economic impact evidence of this trend, the 2007 Census of Agriculture conducted by the National Agriculture Statistics Service showed that income from agritourism in Rhode Island totaled \$689,000 on forty three (43 farms), up from \$23,000 and six (6) farms in 2002. The next Census is due this year and we anticipate that trend will continue with mitigating factors due to the economic slump post 2008.

- Specialty crop farmers that host visitors and who face zoning issues connected to their agritourism activities
- Neighbors in close proximity to such destinations
- Any farm operator living and working in a residential area
- Town planners, zoning officials, community leaders and other officials and citizens who are engaged in the comprehensive planning process and/or who sit on town council or zoning boards
- The Tourism community that works to attract visitors to local farm destinations
- The academic community – agricultural, economic, land use and more) who engage students in critical thinking and skills development in these issues
- Farm and agriculture based organizations that inform, train and/or represent sectors of the agricultural community.

LESSONS LEARNED

Offer insights into the lessons learned by the project staff as a result of completing this project. This section is meant to illustrate the positive and negative results and conclusions for the project.

- Greenvale Vineyard’s case was not unique in RI except for its subjects and circumstances.
- Many RI farms will continue to face significant obstacles to conducting and/or expanding agritourism activities without more redress from RI’s 39 towns,
- Neighbors near or adjacent to agricultural land will pose a continuing challenge to “causal, anything goes” agritourism activity without more guidance and definition from each town’s comprehensive plan and zoning ordinances.
- Neighbors do and will continue to have legitimate concerns about some agritourism activities and will use legitimate and other means to hinder and/or derail a host of agricultural activities.
- The growing sprawl and proximity of RI farms to residential and commercial areas will continue to pose a short and long term risk to agricultural businesses and enterprises in each of RI’s 39 towns.
- Current and often outdated town zoning ordinances (and the comprehensive plans from which they emanate) pose limitations and/or delays to the ability of specialty crop farmers to develop and successfully implement agritourism activity to generate additional revenues on site.
- Many towns in RI have gone beyond the five year limit to produce a new Comprehensive Plan and with heavy workloads and declining budgets, that timetable may not be sped up any time soon.
- Zoning ordinances tied to those eroding plans will continue to cause contentious zoning issues.
- The issues addressed in this documentary feature resonate throughout the RI agricultural community

The Film

- High quality scripting, interviewing, production and post production values are critical adjuncts to good story telling and positive impacts.

- Interest shown by viewers to date indicate a strong desire for (and willingness to purchase) such video presentations of important agricultural issues
- More documentaries of this length, scope and tone will meet with a favorable response.

Unexpected - Positive

- When this grant was awarded we did not know that additional funding would become available for us to add length and production value to the documentary.

Unexpected - Negative

- RICAPE produced this film as part of its 501c3 educational charge to provide technical support, training and marketing support to RI's specialty crop farmers. Our participation in the narrative and zoning activities was met negatively by a neighbor that served as the leader of the editorial opposition to the Greenvale Winery.
- In one of her editorials in the Newport Daily News, she referred to RICAPE Director Stu Nunnery as "Greenvale's high priced lobbyist." Within six months of the end of the Greenvale Zoning hearings, RICAPE was notified by the IRS that it would be audited. We were told by the IRS that they had gotten word that we were engaged in "lobbying" activity for Greenvale Vineyards by a neighbor of Greenvale's and were working outside our charge as a 501c3.
- Upon that audit and further investigation RICAPE was cleared of any wrongdoing.

PLEASE NOTE: RICAPE and its Director Stu Nunnery do not, have not and is not providing lobbying services of any kind for any farm operator, agricultural interest, public official or others in the execution of its activities.

RICAPE Director Nunnery receives no compensation or remuneration from any entity other than RICAPE in the execution of his duties which under no circumstances include lobbying of any kind.

RICAPE conducts no such activities at any time for any individual or entity. Federal funds are not used for any lobbying activities by RICAPE or its Director. No funding was provided RICAPE or its Director by any person or entity to influence or conduct this project or any such lobbying activities.

CONTACT PERSON

Stu Nunnery, Director, RICAPE

ricape@cox.net

401-714-1877

FINAL REPORT

PROJECT TITLE

- Provide the project's title.

***Rhode Island Christmas Tree Growers Association (“RICTGA”)
2012 Marketing & Educational Initiatives***

PROJECT SUMMARY

- Provide a background for the initial purpose of the project, which includes the specific issue, problem, or need that was addressed by this project.

The Grant was utilized to assist RI Christmas Tree Growers with two core initiatives; Education and Marketing;

Education

Like any agricultural product, Christmas Trees are susceptible to pests. And due to the lengthy time it takes to bring a tree from seedling to maturity, loss of crop from pests can be especially devastating to tree farmers. Richard Cowles, PhD of the Ct Ag Station has been testing treatments for Christmas tree farmers at the UConn farm. RICTGA engaged Mr. Cowles services to attend our spring field meetings in order to keep us current with Integrated Pest Management (IPM) best practices through lectures and demonstrations. Additionally his presentations in RI have counted toward continuing education credits for those farmers who maintain a RI pesticide applicators license.

One of the normal tasks of the Association is dissemination of the most up-to-date information on Integrated Pest management, and these opportunities to bring best practices to Association would be invaluable to all farmers. Our activities with Ms. Lopes Duguay at DEM with early identification trapping and testing for invasive pests (i.e. Eastern Long horned Beetle) also benefits the forestry practice as well.

Lastly we had several members participate in the New England Integrated Pest Management (“IPM”) 2-day biennial conference in Keene, NH. Materials and information collected at this conference has been archived and disseminated to RICTGA membership.

Marketing

Website/Logo – RICTGA currently operates a website that provides families looking for a local farm access to web pages of each member farm from which they can obtain information and directions. RICTGA recently started a “Blog” page in order to post our board minutes and other announcements without the additional cost of a webmaster to regularly update our site. Our logo identifies us as a “brand” that we believe with increased recognition through consistency and repetition will signal professionalism, quality and consistency in our farming operations and agricultural products.

Signage – We believe that the strength of our “Brand” is our Association, and we want to market our member farms as a part of that Association in order to raise awareness that we are local and members of a product focused statewide agricultural organization.

Brochure – RICTGA has had no printed advertising that identifies or explains our existence or our activities. Such an item represents a tangible announcement of our existence, and ultimately of the existence of locally grown Christmas Trees. It also directs readers to our website from where they can locate local farms.

Newsletter – Less than 30% of RICTGA members have internet access, or use the internet regularly. Despite the prevalence of e-mail and web based communication, the printed word remains

the main mechanism for maintaining contact with membership for the foreseeable future. Additionally the Newsletter is an opportunity for RICTGA to establish and maintain professional contact with sister organizations, both Christmas tree grower associations in neighboring states as well as other agricultural professionals and organizations within RI.

Establish the motivation for this project by presenting the importance and timeliness of the project.

Nationwide sales of artificial Christmas trees have been catching up with live tree sales, and as of 2010 it was reported artificial tree sales eclipsed sales of live trees for the first time in history. Much of this is fueled by the misunderstanding that artificial trees are more beneficial to the environment. Since there is compelling evidence that Christmas Trees are sustainable agriculture and artificial trees are petroleum products this is a misconception that it is important for growers nationwide to correct.

RICTGA determined that the “Buy Local” and “Rhody Fresh” initiatives were gaining traction and created a timely opportunity for the RICTGA to lead an initiative to piggy-back and increase awareness of locally grown Christmas trees (Marketing) and also improve the quality of those trees (Education)

Those efforts continue in 2013 and beyond.

If the project built on a previously funded project with the SCBGP or SCBGP-FB describe how this project complimented and enhanced previously completed work.

This project was not built on a previously funded project.

PROJECT APPROACH

Briefly summarize activities performed and tasks performed during the grant period. Whenever possible, describe the work accomplished in both quantitative and qualitative terms. Include the significant results, accomplishments, conclusions and recommendations. Include favorable or unusual developments.

Education

Goal – To provide Association membership with access to best practices in Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques effective for our region.

Activities – . Three RICTGA members (President, VP & largest grower in state – David Henry) attended biennial IPM conference hosted by New England Christmas Tree Alliance. Information from that 2-day conference was disseminated to membership and continues to be available via regular communication at field meetings and Newsletter. **No Specialty Crop Block Grant Program funds were used for travel, lodging or meals associated with attendance at the NE IPM Conference. Program funds were used to purchase Educational Materials at the conference (though these materials are available outside the conference) which included text books on IPM strategies. These materials have been archived and are available to all RICTGA members.**

Additionally the RICTGA has hosted an annual Field Meeting (2 during Grant period) and contracted with the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station to provide a field rep (the Ct Ag Station has a large Christmas Tree research program) to attend our meetings and provide updates on best practices in Integrated Pest Management (“IPM”) To date the scientist who has attended our meetings has been Dr. Richard Cowles who is regarded as one of the best in the field. **Between 25 and 30 Christmas Tree Growers attended the field days**

Database of best practices is being assembled for posting on website to be available to all interested parties

Marketing

Website/Logo

Goal – To design and produce (through third party vendor) an appropriate, simple and reproducible Logo for use on the Association website and all printed materials, including signs.

Activities – The logo has been improved (see illustrations below) and the website has been updated to reflect the new logo, and provide links to our Blog and new Facebook page. (Don’t forget to “Like” us on Facebook!)

Signage

Goal – To design and produce (through 3rd party vendor) simple, attractive weather proof signs featuring the Association logo and identifying member farms as a part of an organized state-wide agricultural association.

Activities – Like Logo work noted above, the new logo has been reproduced and printed on all-weather canvas banners with the word “Member:” added. These have been distributed to all members to display in order to demonstrate our organizational affiliation and reinforce the ‘brand.’

Newsletter

Goal – To design and produce (through 3rd party vendor assistance) a template for our member Newsletter staff to use to easily and quickly produce attractive and useful Newsletters for Association members and other interested parties. The template will be Microsoft Word and Adobe based, so no additional proprietary software will be needed.

Activities – This activity has been initiated and is ongoing. Our Newsletter is vastly improved from the copy machine on yellow stock paper version previously produced, and reflects organizational professionalism. It has succeeded in keeping membership informed of RICTGA activities and has been critical to disseminate information.

Brochure

Goal – To design and produce a professional brochure that can be used at agricultural events and similar venues to spread awareness of the organization and ultimately to the availability and location of locally grown Christmas Trees. This was added last year as a desired marketing activity.

Activities - We have designed the brochures using a format that keep the brochures topical for years with facts about trees and links to our website. We have not yet printed the brochures but expect to this summer.

- Present the significant contributions and role of project partners in the project.

Specific partners included:

Dr. Richard Cowles – Ct Ag Experiment Station Scientist

Featured speaker at annual field meetings

New England Christmas Tree Alliance – host of biennial IPM Conference
Host of biennial New England Integrated Pest Management course held at UNH campus in Keene, NH.

Mary Sexton – Good Graphic Design

Provided design and layout services for Newsletter template. Also provided design services to redesign the RICTGA logo and brochure.

Tiverton Sign Shoppe – Tiverton, RI

Produced the all-weather logo banners.

AlphaGraphics – Providence, RI

Printer for RICTGA Newsletter & Brochure

Wayne Gunderman – RICTGA Treasurer

RICTGA Treasurer – tracked expenses and requisitions

Karen Menezes – RICTGA VP/Director of Programs

As program director coordinated with Ct Ag Experiment station for services of Dr. Cowles. Also assisted with NE IPM Conference.

David Henry – RICTGA member/owner Henry’s Tree Farm

RICTGA member – owner of one of the oldest and the largest tree farm in RI.

Attended NE IPM Conference and assisted in dissemination of information to membership.

Eric Watne – RICTGA President

Coordinated grant application and implementation. Interacted with parties listed above.

Produced Newsletter, attended NE IPM Conference, manages dissemination of information internally and externally.

GOALS AND OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

- Supply the activities that were completed in order to achieve the performance goals and measurable outcomes for the project.

These activities are summarized two sections above under “Project Approach” These are stated after “*Activities*”

- If outcome measures were long term, summarize the progress that has been made towards achievement.

Because the ultimate goal is to facilitate the long term viability of Christmas Tree production in RI the ultimate results are more long term than 24-months, however we have improved our position in the market as live tree sales surpassed artificial sales nationally (no RI data is available) and our website has experienced increases traffic. Further our circulation of our Newsletter has doubled in the past year.

RI farms can benefit from illustrating that they are part of a cohesive, organized and professional organization. It also reinforces the “buy local” effort that is currently underway both locally and nationally, as well as reinforces the “brand” that is RICTGA. This brand has value, and RI member farms need to build on that.

- Provide a comparison of actual accomplishments with the goals established for the reporting period.

Education

Goal – To provide Association membership with access to best practices in Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques effective for our region.

Actual accomplishments – Goal accomplished. Three RICTGA members (President, VP & largest grower in state – David Henry) attended biennial IPM conference hosted by New England Christmas Tree Alliance. Information from that 2-day conference was disseminated to membership and continues to be available via regular communication at field meetings and Newsletter. **Between Twenty Five and Thirty Christmas Tree Growers attended the tow day conference.**

Additionally the RICTGA has hosted an annual Field Meeting and contracted with the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station to provide a field rep (the Ct Ag Station has a large Christmas Tree research program) to attend our meetings and provide updates on best practices in Integrated Pest Management (“IPM”) To date the scientist who has attended our meetings has been Dr. Richard Cowles.

Marketing

Website/Logo

Goal – To design and produce (through third party vendor) an appropriate, simple and reproducible Logo for use on the Association website and all printed materials, including signs.

Actual accomplishments – goal accomplished. New logo reproduced and inserted below. It is cleaner and reproduces better on printed materials.

Old Logo:



New Logo:



Signage

Goal – To design and produce (through 3rd party vendor) simple, attractive weather proof signs featuring the Association logo and identifying member farms as a part of an organized state-wide agricultural association.

Actual accomplishments – goal accomplished. We contracted for 65 heavy duty canvas banner/signs to be produced and distributed to all members of RICTGA. We have some extras for new members and also displaying at events attended by membership. The signed display our logo (above) with the added word “Member” at the top. Banners are approximately 4’x 2’

Newsletter

Goal – To design and produce (through 3rd party vendor) a template for our member Newsletter staff to use to easily and quickly produce attractive and useful Newsletters for Association members and other interested parties. The template will be Microsoft Word based, so no additional proprietary software will be needed.

Actual accomplishments – Goal accomplished and continues – quality of newsletter has improved with stock graphics purchased online (one-time) through Good Graphic Design, Adobe computer program purchased for improved graphic layout, and professional printing by AlphaGraphics of Providence.

Brochure – (not a part of original grant but added as a marketing goal) RICTGA currently has no literature that advertises or explains our existence or our activities. It is a tangible announcement of our existence, and ultimately of the existence of locally grown Christmas Trees. This is also a one-time expense with long term benefits. We have designed a brochure and pending available funds will print them this summer.

- Clearly convey completion of achieving outcomes by illustrating baseline data that has been gathered to date and showing the progress toward achieving set targets.

As noted above the goals accomplished (and tasks ongoing) through these grant funds relates to increasing sales of live local Christmas trees. Those tasks are described fully above. As for baseline data gathered, we predominantly have anecdotal evidence on a state-wide level, however there is data based on national sales figures. That data illustrates that until this year sales of artificial trees has been catching and finally surpassed sales of live trees. Evidence from 2012 indicates that trend has reversed nationally, though we have not determined if that is reflected on the statewide level. Anecdotally we have been told that sales have been on the increase over the past 2 years, however we are working on a mechanism for more accurate volume reporting.

- **\$1.7 billion:** The amount U.S. consumers spent on Christmas trees last year

- **3 to 1:** The margin by which real trees outsold artificial trees (30.8 million real versus 9.5 million artificial)
- **16%:** The proportion of real trees that were cut down by the consumer
- **\$34.87:** Average amount spent on a real tree
- **\$70.55:** Average amount spent on an artificial tree

Source: Harris Interactive poll for the National Christmas Tree Association

BENEFICIARIES

- Provide a description of the groups and other operations that benefited from the completion of this project's accomplishments.

As the core goals of the project was to encourage purchasers of Christmas trees to "buy local" we believe that any buy local initiative helps all local (RI) agricultural producers. A consumer who has a positive experience purchasing a live tree from a local farm is going to be more inclined to attend a farmers market, or visit a farm to purchase other products such as pumpkins, vegetables, eggs, etc. In this regard we believe our efforts continue to advance the ongoing "buy local" initiatives that have been initiated by other agricultural interests and benefit all RI farms.

Our partners benefited (listed above) as business partners in economic transactions – even the Ct Ag Experimental Station who receive an annual honorarium for Dr. Cowles participation at RICTGA Field Meetings.

Finally and certainly most directly the member farms of the Association have benefited for all the reasons outlined above.

Between 20-25 Christmas Tree Growers benefited in an immediate, direct and tangible manner. 8-10 more in an indirect and potentially more long term manner, meaning that while they are not currently employing IPM practices they have indicated that they likely will over the next 2-5 years.

- Clearly state the quantitative data that concerns the beneficiaries affected by the project's accomplishments and/or the potential economic impact of the project.

There are several reasons this is neither practical nor illustrative of the projects economic impact. One is that limited local data is available about sales of live Christmas trees. Farms do not always report sales figures, (# of trees sold annually) and what limited data we have is unverifiable, so increases or decreases in sales is somewhat anecdotal. As noted above

sales of live trees has increased in recent years, and our anecdotal evidence suggests that this is true for RI as well.

Additionally the projects undertaken with this grant are longer term in scope in terms of results. This is true with most things related to an agricultural product that takes a minimum of 7 years growing time to bring to market.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Offer insights into the lessons learned by the project staff as a result of completing this project. This section is meant to illustrate the positive and negative results and conclusions for the project.

One lesson was the great deal of resources available to assist RI Christmas Tree farmers with crop development, management and improvement, and how to tap into those resources. While RI does not have the critical mass of farms that necessitates such research, Connecticut does, as well as larger tree producing states such as Pennsylvania, Michigan and Washington. Those states had representatives at the NECTA IPM Conference and were generous with their knowledge and resources. As such RICTGA has tapped into a wealth of resources for membership.

We have also learned that the public generally wants to support local agriculture if not price prohibitive or inconvenient, however on-going marketing and education are necessary as folks are not always aware that Christmas Trees are grown locally, or that trees purchased in lots at big box stores are not locally sourced.

- Provide unexpected outcomes or results that were a effect of implementing this project.

There have been no unexpected outcomes of note.

- If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving.

N/A - To our knowledge none of our goals was **not** achieved.

CONTACT PERSON

- Name the Contact Person for the Project • Telephone Number
- Email Address

Eric Watne – President RICTGA

401.624.2522
ewatne@cox.net

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Provide additional information available (i.e. publications, websites, photographs) that is not applicable to any of the prior sections.

Our website is www.RIChristmasTrees.com

Final Report – Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management – Specialty Crops Grant

Southside Community Land Trust

Project Title: Improving the Viability of Business Cooperatives for Small Scale Specialty Crop Growers

PROJECT SUMMARY

- *Background for the initial purpose of the project, including the specific issue, problem, or need addressed:*

The initial purpose of the project was to improve the capacity of more than twelve local food growers to successfully develop a business model for small-scale growers' cooperatives, and share their business model with other local food growers. SCLT planned to implement the project to improve the financial viability of Rhode Island specialty crop growers by helping them learn how to better market and promote their produce at farmers' markets and through CSAs.

The project addressed the issues and challenges that small-acreage specialty crop growers face, specifically around their limited expertise in marketing and business promotion. Many Rhode Island farmers struggle with gaining these skills in these areas.

- *Motivation for project and timeliness of project*

SCLT has partnered with small-scale farmers to develop cooperatives that allow specialty crop growers to increase their sales and improve their capacity to market and promote their business. The most established at the time of the grant proposal request was the Little City Growers Cooperative, a group of four urban food growers (including City Farm) that sell at farmers' markets and restaurants, and Four Friends CSA, a group of farmers at Urban Edge Farm that developed a strong model for a CSA-style cooperative. SCLT had just supported the development of a third cooperative of small-scale food growers, a group of urban farmers, most from immigrant and refugee backgrounds, who

began selling at Broad Street Farmers' Market. This third group, new to farm business cooperatives and to selling for market, had a great need to increase its efficiency and improve its sales.

- *If the project built on a previously funded project with the SCBGP or SCBGP-FB describe how this project complimented and enhanced previously completed work.*

The proposed project was not previously funded with the SCBGP or SCBGP-FB.

PROJECT APPROACH

- *Briefly summarize activities performed and tasks performed during the grant period. Whenever possible, describe the work accomplished in both quantitative and qualitative terms. Include the significant results, accomplishments, conclusions and recommendations. Include favorable or unusual developments.*

The activities performed included farmer-led workshops, on-site consulting and coaching between farmers at Farmers' Markets and events, creation of marketing materials, and purchase and development of radio and newspaper ad space.

Specifically the tasks performed, and the significant results, accomplishments, conclusions, and recommendations, include:

- 1) Christina Dedora and Chang Xiong, farmers from Four Friends CSA, led 2 workshops for the Community Grower's Collaborative on business topics including marketing, accounting, and administration. The workshops were attended by 5 Community Growers' Collaborative members, including 2 members who were new to the project in 2012. The members learned valuable lessons about how to promote their business in the community and attract new customers. The Collaborative developed a simple marketing plan for the Broad Street Farmers' Market. This marketing plan was beneficial to all members, as it set goals and provided an outline of promotional activities for their farm businesses.
- 2) Chia Xiong and Christina Dedora served as the coordinators for their respective farm business cooperatives. The coordinators managed communication between members, led promotional activities, and managed accounting for the sales and operations of the farm businesses. It was crucial to have one coordinator for each business cooperative. Chia and Christina served as the "point person" for all activities and any customers with questions or concerns could be directed towards them. **The Community Growers's Collaborative sold only specialty crops. There were no eggs, meat, poultry, or dairy as a part of their business or farmers' market sales. Four Friends CSA sells 90% specialty crops, but does have an egg share available as an addition to the regular CSA. Four Friends CSA did not use the USDA funds to promote or implement the additional egg share.**
- 3) Both Four Friends CSA and Community Growers Collaborative implemented a marketing plan that included purchase of ads in newspaper and radio, but also the

creation of a more “grassroots” marketing campaign that including flyer creation and distribution in targeted communities. In addition, the Community Growers Collaborative partnered with SCLT staff to conduct door-to-door outreach in the neighborhood surrounding the Broad Street Farmers’ Market. The traditional advertising was helpful in getting the word out to a wide range of customers, however both Four Friends CSA and Community Growers Collaborative members found that one-on-one interaction with potential customers produced more positive results. Many of the regular customers at Broad Street Farmers’ Market and the CSA participants that signed up for Four Friends CSA had made a personal connection with the farmers.

- 4) Per the request of new urban farmers, Chia Xiong and Christina Dedora led an informational workshop for new urban farmers who wanted to improve their sales through farmers’ markets and CSAs. SCLT and project partners discovered that selling in the urban marketplace provides unique challenges and opportunities, and many of the members of the Community Growers Collaborative have special experience with these communities and can share their expertise with new urban farmers.

- *Present the significant contributions and role of project partners in the project.*

All of the project partners contributed to the success of the project. Liza Sutton, SCLT’s Community Growers Director, managed the project. She communicated with project partners to plan activities and to ensure that all outcomes were being met. She also worked with SCLT’s Director of Operations to ensure that the project was successfully completed within the budget. Liza helped guide the Community Growers’ Collaborative leader, Chia Xiong, throughout her activities. Chia has improved her ability to manage the urban farming cooperative and is successfully overseeing the planning, accounting, and business development of the Community Growers’ Collaborative activities.

The project partners, Four Friends CSA, took on a leadership role in training the Community Growers’ Collaborative. In addition, Four Friends CSA was able to improve their own business operations and marketed their CSA to new audiences. Four Friends saw a consistent increase in CSA participation.

GOALS AND OUTCOMES ACHIEVED

- *Supply the activities that were completed in order to achieve the performance goals and measurable outcomes for the project.*

Goal	Activity Performed to Accomplish Goal	Timeframe	Significant results and accomplishments
To improve the capacity of the Community Growers’ Collaborative to coordinate marketing, accounting, and administration of their	Christina Dedora and Chang Xiong, farmers from Four Friends CSA, led 2 workshops for the <i>Community Grower’s Collaborative</i> on business	May 2012, November 2012	The Community Growers Collaborative, led by the coordinator Chia Yang was able to independently manage their business for the first

cooperative.	<p>topics including marketing, accounting, and administration. Christina conducted one workshop in May 2013 on improved marketing strategies for 3 <i>Community Grower's Collaborative</i> members. Christina Dedora conducted another workshop on troubleshooting during the market season and a follow-up on business plan creation in November 2012 for 2 <i>Community Grower's Collaborative</i> members. Chang Xiong also provided ad hoc consulting and support for the Community Growers Collaborative members on-site at the Broad Street Farmers' Market.</p>		<p>time in 2012. The Collaborative developed a marketing plan for the 2012 growing season, and Chia Yang track of all accounting and led meetings with Community Growers Collaborative members. Liza Sutton, the project director, provided guidance and coaching throughout the growing season.</p>
To increase the efficiency and success of Four Friends CSA and Community Growers Collaborative operations.	<p>Four Friends CSA once again hired Christina Dedora as coordinator. Christina managed CSA marketing and coordination with members. Community Growers Collaborative hired Chia Yang as coordinator of the operations.</p>	<p>April 2012 – November 2012</p>	<p>Both Four Friends CSA and the Community Growers Collaborative were able to conduct outreach and purchase advertising. Both groups of collaborative farmers were able to manage their own accounting independent of SCLT support.</p>
To improve the awareness of CSA model and increase the number of CSA customers in Northern Rhode Island and at local business offices in Greater Providence.	<p>Four Friends CSA purchased newspaper ads in <i>The Cranston Herald</i> and radio ads at WRNI. Coordinator Christina Dedora created flyers for community distribution to inform residents of the CSA opportunity.</p>	<p>May 2012</p>	<p>Four Friends CSA had a total number of 60 CSA customers in 2013. At least 25% of the CSA customers were brand new to the program, and were a direct result of advertising and outreach.</p>
To increase the number of customers at the Community Growers	<p>Community Growers Collaborative purchased radio ads at WRNI.</p>	<p>May – June 2012</p>	<p>Increased number of customers by at least 200 and increased total income</p>

Collaborative Stand at Broad Street Farmers' Market	Coordinator Chia Yang , assisted by Christina Dedora and Liza Sutton, created flyers for community distribution to inform residents of the farmers' market.		of Community Growers Collaborative by over \$2,000.
To increase awareness of Community Growers Collaborative and Broad Street Farmers' Market to Providence residents living near the farmers' market.	Community Growers Network Team conducted neighborhood outreach. Partnered with members of the Community Growers Collaborative to go door-to-door in weeks before and during the Farmers' Market	July – August 2012	Increased number of customers from the neighborhood surrounding the Broad Street Farmers' Market by at least 100 customers.
Increase resources and training available to specialty crop growers who want to start their own business collaborative.	Chia Xiong and Christina Dedora led an informational workshop for new urban farmers who wanted to improve their sales through farmers' markets and CSAs. The workshop specifically focused on marketing techniques in urban communities. Chia and Christina conducted pre- and post-tests to evaluate whether knowledge and skills were improved concerning cooperative business practices. Additionally, Liza Sutton conducted interviews with participants to understand the value of the workshops.	January 2013	4 new urban farmers attended a workshop to learn more about marketing techniques to improve their farm businesses. The 4 urban farmers participated in pre- and post-tests and interviews with the project coordinator. Participants reported a 40% increase in their skills and knowledge for cooperative business practices.

- *If outcome measures were long term, summarize the progress that has been made towards achievement.*

The proposal did not describe any long term outcomes, however the project did improve the capacity of at least 3 farmers to lead trainings for new farmers around specialty crop production and marketing. These farmers can continue to lead trainings for future farmers and share their expertise in farm business development.

- *Clearly convey completion of achieving outcomes by illustrating baseline data that has been gathered to date and showing the progress toward achieving set targets.*

SCLT and project partners have achieved many of the outcomes, illustrated with data on farmers’ market sales, farmers’ market customers, and CSA customers, gathered before the completed project, and in years 1 and 2 of the project.

Community Growers’ Collaborative Farmers’ Market Sales:		
2010: before project activities	2011: Project Year 1	2012: Project Year 2
\$800	\$2,000	\$4,000

Community Growers’ Collaborative Farmers’ Market Customers		
2010: before project activities	2011: Project Year 1	2012: Project Year 2
75	150	250

Four Friends CSA Participation:		
2010: before project activities	2011: Project Year 1	2012: Project Year 2
55	70	60

BENEFICIARIES

- *Provide a description of the groups and other operations that benefited from the completion of this project’s accomplishments. Clearly state the quantitative data that concerns the beneficiaries affected by the project’s accomplishments and/or the potential economic impact of the project.*

The beneficiaries of this project were Four Friends CSA farmers and members of the Community Growers’ Collaborative. With the funding, the groups were not only provided with funds for advertising and materials to promote their farm businesses, but also with professional development in many critical areas including marketing, accounting, and project coordination. The specialty crop growers learned valuable lessons that will sustain their farming operations for many seasons to come, and have gained

skills in sharing resources and expertise with other farmers to ensure that Rhode Island's specialty crop industry continues to grow and enjoy financial stability and success.

The completed project has made an economic impact on the project partners, increasing the sales and the number of customers at the Broad Street Farmers' Market who shop at the Community Growers Collaborative stand. As outlined above, the farmers increased their sales and customer base by over 300% in just two years. Conversely, Four Friends CSA has seen a stabilization of its CSA participation, but the farmers have learned valuable lessons about how to promote their CSA to new and existing customers, and how to better serve those customers to increase retention.

LESSONS LEARNED

- *Offer insights into the lessons learned by the project staff as a result of completing this project. This section is meant to illustrate the positive and negative results and conclusions for the project.*

Overall, SCLT and the farm cooperatives felt that the project was successful and worthwhile. We learned that it is very beneficial for experienced farmers to mentor and guide new farmers. SCLT found that it could employ a "train-the-trainer" model, with Christina Dedora and Chang Xiong of Four Friends CSA providing support to Community Growers Collaborative members, and that in time, these members would be able to share their expertise with other farmers.

SCLT and project partners also learned that while advertising in traditional mediums like radio and newspapers can improve the farm's business operations, the most beneficial way to increase sales and customers is targeted outreach to specific communities. Overall, more customers signed up for the Four Friends CSA and purchased food at the Community Growers Collaborative stand of the farmers' market if they'd received a flyer and had a conversation with the farmer. The one-on-one outreach was the most successful form of marketing throughout the project.

- *Provide unexpected outcomes or results that were a effect of implementing this project.*

SCLT and project partners did not expect to share newfound marketing and coordination expertise with urban farmers in Providence. However, new farmers requested the guidance and support of the project partners. In particular, Chia Xiong's experience working with diverse customers was helpful to the new urban farmers. Chia has sold at the Broad Street Farmers' Market for the past four years, and has developed skills in marketing to customers from different ethnic backgrounds and with difference linguistic abilities.

Increasingly, this skill is important to farmers who want to sell in diverse communities. The customers at both Broad Street Farmers' Market and at Armory Park Farmers' Market, two of Providence's most popular farmers markets, are extremely diverse in terms of ethnic backgrounds, and income status. Successful farmers must learn to market their product and promote their business to all of these audiences and potential customers. Experienced farmers like Chia Xiong can help other farmers to be successful in the urban and low-income marketplace.

- *If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving.*

In the second year of the project, Four Friends CSA did not have as many CSA signups as the first year. This might have been due to increased competition from other CSA programs in the area, or an increased interest in farmers' market shopping from former CSA customers. During a grant program debrief meeting with Christina Dedora and Chang Xiong, it was proposed that each year, during the end of the CSA season, all CSA participants are invited to complete a follow-up survey. This might better prepare farmers for the following year of CSA marketing and promotion, and farm business planning. Farmers might have a better sense of how to increase customers satisfaction and retain CSA participants. Four Friends CSA plans to conduct a survey at the end of the farmers' market season. With this survey, Four Friends CSA might gain a better understanding of why the number of CSA participants decreased in the second year of the program.

CONTACT PERSON

- Name the Contact Person for the Project: Jessica Knapp
- Telephone Number: (401) 273-9419 ext. 32
- Email Address: jessica@southsideclt.org

Final Performance Report
Grant 12-25-B-1092
Modified: 6/13/13
Charlestown Land Trust
Contact Person: Michael Maynard – Director,
clt@charlestownlandtrust.org

Project Title: Specialty Crop Promotion

Project Summary:

Productive farmland within Charlestown (and Rhode Island) is disappearing at an alarming rate. The purpose of this project was to provide a forum (Charlestown Farmers Market and/or other designated events) where local farmers (who protect diminishing farmland) can promote and continue to sell their locally produced, highly nutritious specialty crops and consequently keep the farmland in production. CLT also worked to establish an “agricultural” education and service learning project with grammar, middle, high school and college student bodies. Project was designed to increase student and consumer awareness as well as demand for locally grown specialty crops.

Project Approach: The Charlestown Land Trust is a community based organization that has a long history of taking a leadership role in the community. During the grant period (April 2011 – November 2012) the Land Trust worked tirelessly to fulfill the requirements of the grant and explore new opportunities to promote specialty crops consumption and continue to promote the protection of the farmland where these crops are grown.

The project work was primarily completed by the Charlestown Land Trust Executive Director - Michael Maynard, a core group of (8) Board members, service learning participants and a variety of “Drop in” Volunteers. Successful completion of the grant tasks and activities took considerably more time than CLT had originally allocated.

A summary of the Project Tasks are listed below. By continuously working to complete the Project Tasks, CLT was able to successfully complete the Project Activities that are summarized in the table below. A more detailed description of Project Activities is in Appendix B.

Task 1: Completed: Established work plans, meeting schedules for market/events and service learning activities. Task was worked on continuously throughout the entire grant period.

Task 1A: Completed: Create evaluation and reporting plans with specialty crop growers and primary partner organizations. Task was worked on continuously throughout the entire grant period.

Task 2: Completed: Expand partnerships with local specialty crop producers, local

middle, high school and college representatives that will participate in project.

Task 3: Completed: Identify, interview and train eight (8) - ten (10) participants for the service learning project.

Task 4: Completed: Establish time, location and schedule and vendor list for Farmers Market dates and events.

Task 5: Completed: Design market satisfaction survey and monitoring and evaluation protocols for both the market and service learning component.

Task 6: Completed: Establish and promote WIC and Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program.

Task 7: Completed: Identify, interview and hire six - eight (6-8) individuals that will participate in the agricultural demonstration events.

Task 8: Completed: Secure contractor to develop and assist in the implementation of the multi-media campaign (video, radio and newsletter) to promote specialty crops.

Project Activities

Below is a Table that identifies some of the activities performed during the grant period. *It should be noted that these Project Activities focused on Specialty Crops ONLY; including but not limited to strawberries, blueberries, apples, honey, tomatoes, squash, cucumbers, beets, peaches and pumpkins.*

CLT Volunteers, Board Members and service learning participants (21), and in conjunction with market vendors, completed a minimum of (12) twelve “Taste of Charlestown” tasting demonstrations and (12) cooking demonstrations and (16) additional Market Dates. CLT also organized five (5) farm visits (open to public) and established a continued presence (education and outreach) at two (2) farm stands in Charlestown. Locations are as follows.

Table 1 - Project Activities	Grant Goal	Accomplished	Met Goal	% Increase (+) Grant Goal
Taste of Charlestown	12 Tastings	12	Yes	-
Cooking Demonstrations	12 demos	12	Yes	-
Expand Market Dates -Cross Mills Location - Falcone Field “ - Church of Holy Spirit “	16 dates	31	Yes	93%
Market Attendees *	4,800-6,400	7,440 – 9,920		55%
Farm Tours	3 Tours	5	Yes	66%

Establish Service Learning Internship*	8 interns	21	Yes	162%
Additional Locations	-	2	N/A	200%

* Staff Monitoring and fulfillment of the Expected Measureable Outcomes – Service Learning Interns played a critical role in accomplishing the goals of the grant. Exit polls indicated that market attendance was down 20% which is captured in Table 1. Overall Attendance was down, however, the number of market events increased to (31).

Goals and Outcomes Achieved:

Goal 1

Q: Did Specialty Crop awareness and consumption increase by 25%?

A: Yes. It is estimated that awareness and consumption increased a minimum of 25%.

Estimates were based on the addition of (41) Specialty Crop promotion market dates/ events and the training of (21) + Specialty Crop Interns. . The 25% increase was conservatively estimated based on the grant accomplishments which are captured in Table 1 – Project Activities. CLT recognizes that this is qualitative analysis.

- 93% additional Market dates to sell specialty crops and provide outreach materials.
- 55% increase in overall market attendance.
- 66 % increase in Farm Tours.
- 162 % increase in Service Learning Interns
- 2 Additional “Private” Market locations for education and outreach.

Particularly helpful in achieving these grant goals was the “Specialty Crop” education and outreach campaign that we launched at the two (privately owned) farm stands in Charlestown. See locations below.

Activities Performed;

- a. Market Location #1 - Cross Mills Library - Fri. 9-12 pm (June–Sept) (13) Days
- b. Market Location #2 Falcone Field (Rte 1) Tues. 4pm -7 – (7) Market Days
- c. Market Location #3 Church of Holy Spirit (Parking Lot) Fri. 9-12 pm (June–Sept) (11) Days
- d. Education & Outreach (Awareness) Location #4 - West Beach Road Farm Stand – (June – Sept)
- e. Education & Outreach (Awareness) Location #5 – Post Road Farm Stand - (June – Sept)
- f. Taste of Charlestown – (12) food tasting
 - Tastings were popular with public and included (but not limited to) the following specialty crops; strawberries, blueberries, apples, honey, tomatoes, squash, cucumbers, beets, peaches, pumpkins and more. (Multiple locations)
- g. Cooking Demonstrations – (12)

- The cooking demonstrations were led by interns, volunteers, executive director and CLT board members and were designed to engage audience and discuss local food production and need for farmland preservation. (Multiple locations)

e. Farm Tours (open to public) (5)

- Tours focused on specialty crop production and protecting existing farmland.

Goal 2.

Q: Did CLT create a Service Learning & Education / Outreach Intern project for a minimum of eight (8) local middle, high school and colleges students that focus specialty crops and increased their knowledge by 50% about Specialty Crops.

Answer: Yes.

CLT created a Service Learning Project for over 21 Interns / Participants. Below is a breakdown of the participants and their activities. It should be noted that 100% of the Service Learning Participants had an increased knowledge in Specialty Crops. The 100% increase was based in the fact that during initial discussions, “NONE” of the (21) Grades 6 – Post Graduate Service Learning participants had any knowledge of what a constituted a “Specialty Crop”. In the future CLT would issue a pre / post test concerning the specifics of specialty crops.

Activities Performed:

a. Establish a comprehensive (age appropriate) service learning (Outreach) program that focused on specialty crops promotion and production. CLT identified the following (5) groups and developed age /skill appropriate activities for each group;

- Pre K – 5th Grade – Activities (450 participants - outreach) (Service Learning participants worked with this age group)
- Grades 6 -8 (6 students)
- High School (4 students)
- College (4)
- Post Graduate & Volunteers (7)

Intern activities included:

- Created “JUST THE GOODS” newspaper. Interns responsible for writing, editing, distributing this locally produced newspaper that focused on Specialty Crops and local food production. Paper included recipes, Market News, Updates and Events, Farmer interviews, Advertising for local farmers and “ Specialty Crop Highlight”.
- Established” facebook.com” and “blogspot.com” pages for updated information about locally produced specialty crops.
- Developed & implemented communications plan for specialty crops; including newspaper articles, press releases, advertising, Constant Contact enews and posters.
 - Developed and implemented both Customer Satisfaction Survey and Market Vendor Satisfaction Survey.
- Established “ Pumpkin Decorating Contest” to promote locally produced pumpkins. Included decorating session @ Kettle Pond Visitors Center as well donating 30 sugar pumpkins to High School art class for drawing and painting. Winners were given tee shirts and gift cards.
- Administered “Sustainable Food Production & Keep it Local” curriculum and questions into an Environmental Health college level class. (27) Students participated in assignment. Students were given opportunity to join intern program. (2) participants interested.
- Established “Market Table” for the 2012 farmers market which was primarily operated by Interns and focused on promoting and preparing “Specialty Crops”.
- Designed, built and displayed (6) Specialty Crop display boards.

Beneficiaries:

The Charlestown Land Trust and the entire community – the grant helped CLT focus our efforts on promoting specialty crops, developing a service learning/ Intern project, generating revenue for specialty crop / market participants and promoting the protection of farms that produce specialty crops.

Economic Impact for local Community/Farmer: The attendance at each market date averaged between 240 – 320 individual participants. (This was a 20% decrease in total market attendance). However, the CLT increase the number of market dates from sixteen (16) to thirty one (31) market dates x 240 – 320 participants = 7,440 – 9,920 total market participants. Exit poll data indicated that each market attendee spent an average of \$10. per visit. Therefore, 7,440 – 9,920 attendees x \$10 spent per visit = \$74,400 - \$99,200 sales at the market.

Volunteer Hours: 5 volunteers per event x 3 hrs per event = 15 volunteers hours per event x 31 events = 465 volunteer hours x \$15 per hour = \$6,975. In-Kind compensation.

As a result of this renewed focus and the many activities of the grant, CLT was able to secure a conservation easement on 140 acres of active farmland (Heavers Family Farm) in Charlestown. Estimated IRS valuation of the easement of 140 acres is \$450,000. Estimate is based on previously protected farmland properties.

The Charlestown Historical Society was able to use the Charlestown Farmers Market (and atmosphere created by Specialty Crop Promotional activities) to promote their Mission and generate donations and in-kind services of \$50,000 for the new Museum.

The Charlestown community (visitors, residents, businesses) have become more aware of the local farmer the land they farm and the role they play in producing specialty crops.

Local public officials (town council, zoning, planning, and agriculture) in Charlestown, RI are more aware of the importance of protecting the local farm and supporting the local farmer and the benefits they provide to the entire community.

State officials and local farmers have established a dialog and begun discussions on regulations that specifically support or hinder the family farm.

The Charlestown community has more access to locally produced specialty crops.

The nonprofit community (and its members) has worked collectively with CLT to promote specialty crops. Groups included (but not limited to) ; Charlestown Historical Society, Cross Mills Public Library, real estate agents, local business and more.

Specialty Crop Grant – Benefits			
Activities	Economic Benefit	Beneficiary	Direct/ Indirect Benefit
Economic Impact for local Community/Farmer: Attendance: (7,440 – 9,920 x \$10 spent per visit = \$74,400 - \$99,200 (numbers based on exit polls).	\$74,400 - \$99,200	-Market Farmers -Market Vendors	Direct
Volunteer Hours – (In – Kind) (5) Participants per event x (3) hrs. per event = 15 vol. hrs x 31 events = 465 vol. hrs x \$15 per hr = \$6,975 In-kind compensation	\$6,975	Market Participants	Direct
Protecting Local Farmland-Specialty Crop Grant Interns and Outreach activities stressed the importance of protecting farmland- Outreach directly resulted in discussions that lead to the acquisition of 140 acres of productive farmland (Conservation Easement)	\$450,000	- Land Trust Open Space Advocates - Town members	Direct
Expanded Farmers Market Dates allowed the Charlestown Historical Society to promote their Mission and generate funds for their new museum.	\$50,000	Charlestown Historical Society	Indirect
Establish Service Learning Internship** Internship provided valuable experience for	8 interns	21	Indirect

Lessons Learned:

- Advertising - Specialty crop promotional events (farm tours/ cooking demonstrations etc) need to be well advertised via newspapers, postcards, posters, signage and social media.
- Competition – The success of the CLT Farmers Market (which focused on Specialty crop production at local level) attracted a competing market “The Cross Mills Farmers

Market". The new farmers market had an aggressive ad campaign that included constant contact newsletter, interactive web site and twitter and face book pages. Publicity campaign confused our existing customer's base concerning the time and location of our market. As a result of the competing market, our market attendance dropped a dramatic 20%.

- Location - Quonnie Grange – CLT had planned on holding additional market days at Quonnie Grange. After 1 year the idea was scrapped due to poor attendance, distance from the village center and business district, need to be closer to beach traffic (More people, more customers), additional parking and safety concerns of traffic on Rte 1.
- Location - Falcone Field - Location proved to be an ineffective location; Poor attendance which we attributed to growing pains and the competing farmers market.
- Location – Church of the Holy Spirit – CLT kicked off the growing season at the new location and it was a success. Attendance increased dramatically (30%).
- Qualified Service Learning participants – identifying students that were interested in developing strategic plans for Ninegret Park, Quonochontaug Grange and the old dump located on Sand Plain Road was a difficult task. It was both beyond many of the interested candidate's abilities and interests and areas of focus. Candidates were more interested in working with farmers, and farmers market in an effort to promote specialty crops production and sale. CLT took the following action:
 - Shifted service learning project focus to farmers, and local food production and distribution. Interns were
 - Established "Market Table" for the 2012 farmers market which will feature Service Learning Interns.
 - Public Safety Issues - Escalating police costs – The Town of Charlestown was requiring the CLT to have two paid police officers and a police cruiser at the farmers market. That is a total cost for the police detail was in excess of \$400 per week.
 - Public Safety Issues - Road and building construction – The cooking demonstrations and other grant activities took place within close proximity of the RI DOT Post Road construction project and the construction of the Charlestown Historical Society Museum.
 - Visitors to the Markets were reluctant to complete Market Survey information.
 - Vendors at the Markets were reluctant to give any accurate sales information.
 - Quantifying the benefits to the community was difficult.

Appendix A
Charlestown Land Trust
Specialty Crop Grant Budget 2011 / 2012

CATEGORY	Total Grant Amount	Expended	Additional In Kind Services	
PERSONNEL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,600	
SERVICE LEARNING INTERN	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$3,500	
POLICE DETAIL/ RENT	\$2000	\$2,000	\$2200	
CONTRACTUAL FARM TOUR VAN RENTAL COOKING DEMO SUPPLIES WEB/NEWSLETTER/	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$1,400	
CONTRACTUAL MULTIMEDIA MARKETING WEB/NEWSLETTER/	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$1500	
TRAVEL	\$500	\$500		
EQUIPMENT	\$1500	\$1500	\$1500	
INSURANCE	\$1000	\$1000	\$1800	
RENT/ POLICE DETAIL	\$1000	\$1,000	\$3200	
DIRECT MAIL ADVERTISING PRINTING POSTAGE SIGNAGE	\$1000	\$1,000	\$2500	

	\$16,000	\$16,000	\$22,500	

Appendix B

Activities Performed Summaries

Activities Performed

- a. Farmers Markets—Location #1 - Cross Mills Library - Fri. 9-12 pm (June–Sept) (13) Days
On target to reach grant goals. Cross Mills location was a great location for the first three years of the market operations. During the 2011 season the attendance dropped dramatically due to a number of unforeseen circumstances; including but not limited to;
- Construction of Charlestown Historical Society Museum on adjacent property
 - Repaving of Post Road – entire road was ripped up and included police details and traffic details creating long delays during market season.
 - Competing farmers market opened. New “for profit” market opened down the street which led to confusion of core group of market customers.
 - Parking lot spaces were restricted and additional police detail (2 officers and cruiser) were required by Chief of Police.
- b. Farmers Markets – Location #2 Falcone Field (Rte 1) Tues. 4pm -7 – (7) Market Days
- This additional location was chosen (in lieu of Quonochontaug Grange) in an effort to expand market and allow for additional sale of specialty crop products for open space advocates.
 - Falcone Field was selected as it had unlimited parking, close proximity and high visibility from Route 1.
 - Strong communication effort was launched, with articles in newspaper.
 - Market failed to capture the community interest and attract a local group of followers.
- c. Taste of Charlestown – (10) food tasting
- Tastings were wildly popular with market attendees.
 - Tastings were held at both vendors booths and at the CLT market table.
 - By attracting individuals to market table, land trust interns, board members and volunteers were then able to discuss the importance of agriculture to local economy, public health and promote the RIDEM “Get Fresh” campaign
 - Tastings included; lettuce, strawberries, blueberries, apples, honey, tomatoes, squash, cucumbers, beets and more.
- d. Cooking Demonstrations – (5)

- The cooking demonstrations were led by interns, volunteers, market participants, executive director and board members.
- All demonstrations were held at all location.
- Focus was to engage audience and discuss local food production and need for farmland preservation.
- Focus was on cold, easier to prepare food. Fruit and garden salads, cucumber salad, strawberry short cake, blueberry cobbler, sliced tomato w/ fresh basil.

e. Farm Tours (open to public) (5)

Organized (5) separate farm tours. Tours included a variety of activities including; Bonfire (w/ locally produced soup), Walks and narrated talks about the history of farm and surrounding area, and an Open Space and Food Production Celebration. Rented vans to transport individuals to the local farms.

Appendix C
Charlestown Land Trust
Charlestown Farmers' Market
Specialty Crop

Satisfaction Questionnaire

The Charlestown Farmers' Market was a great success this summer! Thank you for your incredible participation and support. As the season ends, we'd like you to answer a brief questionnaire about the Farmers' Market for future years. We value your opinion and hope to improve your market next summer. Please take a few minutes to consider the following questions and answers.

1. Would you want the market to open before June 21st? Yes
No
a. If so, when would be a beneficial opening date?
2. Would you want the market to close after September 1st? Yes No
a. If so, when would be a beneficial closing date?
3. Would you be interested in having the market start at 8:00am? Or 8:30am?
4. What did you like best about the market?
5. What did you like least about the market?
6. How could we improve the market?
7. Do you know of anyone that would be interested in helping organize the market and promote "Specialty Crops" for next year?
8. What is your favorite Specialty Crop?

Thank you again for your dedication to helping the Charlestown Farmers' Market. If you have any questions please call 401.364.9124 x23.

Appendix D
Charlestown Land Trust
Charlestown Farmers' Market Vendor/Product Listing
2011 / 2012

Vendors**Product**

1	Baffoni Poultry	Veggies, poultry & eggs
2	Browning Homestead	meats
3	Burnside Acres	veggies & herbs
4	Carpenter Farm	veggies+bakery+condiments
5	Carpenters Gristmill	cornmeal Jonnycakes; vegetables
6	Great Harvest	bakery
7	Jerry's Berries	Berries & berry bushes
8	Local Catch	fin fish and lobster
9	Narrow Lane Orchard	fruit
0	Ninigret Oysters	oysters
1	One Love Farm	veggies + gelato
2	Poblano Farm	salsa and sauces
3	Provençal Bakery	Artisan breads
4	South County Honey	honey + beeswax prod
5	Stoney Hill Cattle	meats
6	Barefoot Diversified	natural centerpieces
7	Carolina Fiber & Fiction	spinners & handwoven items
8	Catboat Jon's Buckets	wooden buckets
9	Charlestown Artisans	
0	Hannah's Farm Alpacas	alpaca products
1	Haven Nursery	perennials
2	Johnny's Barking Bakery	dog cookies + stuff
3	Worm Lady	worms+ composting stuff

4	MIO Bags	oilcloth bags + accessories
5	Manna Farm	worms+ composting stuff
6	South County Flowers	Cut flowers

Increasing the Competitiveness of New England Specialty Crops Through the Harvest New England Association.

Project Summary

New Englanders seldom think of their region as being plentiful and offering a diverse selection of agricultural specialty crops. Through increased use of the Harvest New England (HNE) logo by producers, wholesalers, and grocery stores, residents of New England will have an increased awareness and greater knowledge of the availability of regional produce.

The HNE logo will be promoted to potential users, which include all specialty crop producers and distributors, and consumers at a variety of venues and opportunities. These venues will include the 2011 and 2013 Harvest New England Agricultural Marketing Conference and Trade Show, a complete redesign of the Harvest New England website, developing specification sheets for using the HNE logo, and installing light post banners on the Avenue of States during the Big E.

Project Approach

- 2011 and 2013 Harvest New England Agricultural Marketing Conference and Trade Show.
 - In 2011, 392 specialty crop producers and 483 in 2013 were educated on how use the HNE logo and better market their agricultural specialty crop products to New England consumers. In 2011, 54 scholarships were awarded to specialty crop producers from around New England who expressed hardships and could not have attended the conference otherwise.
 - The conference received great responses and feedback. The conference evaluation in 2013 asked attendees that participated in both 2011 and 2013 conferences if they had an increase in sales as a result of marketing techniques learned at the conference. 78% of respondents said they did have an increase in sales thereby solely enhancing the competitiveness of specialty crops in New England.
- Harvest New England website.
 - The website was made more user-friendly for both for the consumers as well as producer, wholesalers, etc. The logo can now be easily downloaded by specialty crop producers, wholesalers, and grocery stores. On the homepage, an overview of

the program and drop down menus leading both consumers and producers to information has been added. New “Consumer Pages” providing information on locating New England specialty crop products, seasonality guide, and links to pertinent information such as the New England departments of agriculture websites have been added.

- A “Producers Page” was also added and includes information on using the Harvest New England logo, logo sheets, links to other webpages including the New England departments of agriculture websites, extension, among others. This is also the area where HNE can post timely information for the various specialty crop industries.
- An events page was established. This is where the Harvest New England biennial conference can be highlighted along with any other relevant specialty crop-focused conferences.
- Spec sheets for the HNE logo.
 - Spec sheets for the HNE logo will be completed by September 29, 2013. These will encourage a consistent use of the logo by producers, wholesalers, and grocery stores.
- 28 light post banners on the Avenue of States at the Eastern States Exposition during the Big E were installed in 2011. They remained up for the 2012 fair and are anticipated to be up for the 2013 fair as well.
 - This increased the visibility of the logo by 1,201,428 New England consumers in 2011 and 1,365,896 in 2013 during the height of the harvest season in the region.. Attendance in 2013 was report to be the highest ever since the exposition started in 1917.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved

HNE ensured these funds solely enhanced the competitiveness of New England specialty crops through the following procedures:

- *2011 and 2013 HNE Conference:* Only specialty crop producers were given access to the HNE logo and only speakers pertaining to specialty crops received honorarium and other associated fees from these funds. Only specialty crop producers were awarded scholarships which were determined by the **application submitted**. In addition, additional funds were available to cover any expenses where non-specialty crop producers benefited or had the potential to benefit.
- *Harvest New England website update:* A disclaimer on the website will be added specifying only specialty crop producers can utilize the HNE logo when marketing their product(s) regionally. Prior to downloading the HNE logo, producers will be required to fill out an online form that will ask them their basic contact info and to list the general products for which the HNE logo will be used on.
- *Spec sheets for HNE logo:* A disclaimer will be added that specifies only specialty crop producers can utilize the HNE logo when marketing their product(s) regionally. Prior to downloading the HNE logo spec sheets,

producers will be required to fill out an online form that will ask them their basic contact info and to list the general products for which the HNE logo will be used on.

- *Light post banners during the Big E:* In addition to the logo, the banners will have the website and encourage consumers to purchase New England fresh fruits, vegetables, and other specialty crops.

GOAL 1: To educate producers on how to use the HNE logo and better market their agricultural specialty crop products through the 2011 and 2013 Harvest New England Agricultural Marketing Conference and Trade Show.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE: Specific questions on the evaluation form asked if specialty crop producers were better aware of how to use the HNE logo and market their specialty crop products as a result of attending the conference.

BENCHMARK: Approximately 550 of the 800 attendees at the 2009 conference were specialty crop producers.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES: A committee of representatives from around New England, in addition to all of the HNE board members, participated in brainstorming, planning, promoting, and executing the conference.

ORIGINAL TARGET: At least 550 specialty crop producers will attend the conference the 2011 and 2013 conference. A minimum of 10 scholarships will be awarded to specialty crop producers at the 2011 conference.

ACTUAL TARGET ACHIEVED: In 2011, 392 specialty crop producers and 483 in 2013 attended the conference. 875 specialty crop producers in the end benefited from attending the HNE Conference.

54 scholarships were awarded to specialty crop producers.

At the 2013 conference 78% of respondents said they had an increase in sales as a result of marketing techniques learned at the 2011 and 2013 conference.

GOAL 2: To make the HNE website more user friendly and have a place where the logo can easily be downloaded by specialty crop producers as a result of updating and redesigning the site.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE: The number of logo downloads from the redesigned HNE website.

BENCHMARK: There is no benchmark to compare to at this time.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES: A subcommittee of the HNE board of directors solicited three website firms and selected the most appropriate bidder. Website redesign and content was discussed and developed by the subcommittee and hired firm.

ORIGINAL TARGET: A total of 50 downloads of the HNE logo per year will happen from

	the website.
ACTUAL TARGET ACHIEVED:	The information is still being collected at this time. However, it doesn't appear we'll meet the target of 50 downloads per year.
GOAL 3:	To develop a specifications sheet which will give users guidelines on how to properly use the HNE logo.
PERFORMANCE MEASURE:	The number of requests or downloads of the spec sheet from the HNE website
BENCHMARK:	There is no benchmark to compare to at this time.
SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES:	A subcommittee of the HNE board of directors updated the existing specifications sheets and worked with the website firm to have them added to the website in addition to the online form.
ORIGINAL TARGET:	A total of 50 downloads or requests of the spec sheet for the HNE logo per year.
ACTUAL TARGET ACHIEVED:	The information is still being collected at this time. However, it doesn't appear we'll meet the target of 50 downloads per year.
GOAL 4:	To increase visibility of the logo to New England consumers during the height of the harvest season in New England as a result of producing light post banners to be on display during the Eastern States Exposition's, Big E.
PERFORMANCE MEASURE:	The number of attendees during the Big E.
BENCHMARK:	In 2009, 1.26 million people attended the Big E.
SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES:	A New Hampshire company was hired to design and print the light post banners. Eastern States Exposition staff installed the banners prior to the 2011 Big E.
ORIGINAL TARGET:	To have at least five, up to 12, light posts banners developed with the HNE logo, promoting the purchase of specialty crops.
ACTUAL TARGET ACHIEVED:	28 light post banners were installed for the 2011 Big E. They were also on display for the 2012 Big E. This allowed a total of 2,567,324 people to view the banners.

Beneficiaries

Specialty crop producers throughout New England had and still have the opportunity to benefit from using the logo to promote their New England Grown products. A total of 875 specialty crop producers benefited from attending the HNE Conference in 2011 and 2013.

2.5 million people were exposed to the HNE logo at the 2011 and 2012 Big E. This raised awareness of the logo and availability of New England grown specialty crops.

The 2011 New England Agricultural Statistics reported that specialty crop sales increased by 97% since 2009. While this cannot be attributed solely to this project, it can be said this project is a contributing factor.

Lessoned Learned

- 2011 and 2013 Harvest New England Conference:
 - Conference planning and execution went quite smoothly both years with no serious problems or delays occurring.
- Harvest New England Website:
 - The HNE website is a work in progress. While serious headway has been made and the redesigned site will be live long before the end of the program year, the time commitment was seriously underestimated.
- Specification Sheets for the HNE Logo:
 - Spec sheets were another project where the time was seriously underestimated. Once finalized they will be posted to the HNE logo page on the HNE website as soon as possible.
- Light Post Banners at the Big E
 - This project was completed without and problems or delays.

Contact Person

Jaime L. Smith, Connecticut Department of Agriculture, 860-713-2559,
jaime.smith@ct.gov

Additional Information

[2011 Harvest New England Agricultural Marketing Conference and Trade Show](#)
[2013 Harvest New England Agricultural Marketing Conference and Trade Show](#)

Harvest New England Website: www.harvestnewengland.org

Light post banners on the Avenue of States:

