

What Does It Take:

Making Nutritious Food Accessible to Immigrants and Refugees Living in Lewiston, Maine.

Presented to Sherry Russell and Local Food for Lewiston
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This project, conducted by students of Community Based Research in Environmental Studies in conjunction with Local Food for Lewiston as a part of the Lewiston Community Food Assessment, sought to find innovative programs that address food insecurity among immigrant and refugee populations across the United States. We first identified some of the major drivers of food insecurity among immigrants and refugee communities generally, and then programs in Lewiston already in place that serve local refugee and immigrants – in particular, the 4,000 Somalis who have moved to Lewiston in the last decade. We defined food insecurity as the unavailability “of and assured access to sufficient food that is nutritionally adequate, culturally acceptable, safe, and which is obtained in socially acceptable ways” (Gorton et al 2010, 1), and innovative programs as programs that address a food-related issue and are not federally funded or broad-based. Because we were specifically looking for innovative programs with approaches that could potentially be implemented in Lewiston, we defined a program as relevant to Lewiston if it dealt with a refugee and/or immigrant population. We examined existing peer-reviewed literature and new coverage on health, food security, and cultural acclimation issues in immigrant populations in the United States.

After conducting initial research, we developed a search methodology that was carried out in three phases. Phase I was a national search, using the search engine Google™, that sought to identify immigrant and refugee populations across the country. We divided the country into four regions – West, Midwest, Northeast, and South – and used uniform search terms to identify whether immigrant or refugee populations were present and where in the state they were located based on the top ten search results for each state. These served as an indicator of the potential presence of innovative and relevant programs in these locations. Phase II, then, consisted of a focused search for innovative and relevant programs in each municipality where refugee communities had been identified. Once a list of these programs was compiled, we selected 16 programs that seemed especially innovative and showed the greatest potential for possessing relevant programming. For Phase III, we selected four particular programs of interest and attempted to set up interviews in order to learn more about the logistics of creating, expanding and sustaining those programs.

We were able to schedule two of the four desired interview subjects, and used those to address the “what does it take?” question posed to us by our community partner as the key question to be addressed. We then conducted semi-structured interviews with leaders of the two programs, Denver Urban Gardens and the New Entry Sustainable Farming Project. This process revealed that though the programs were very different in scale, staffing numbers, reach and funding, they identified many similar challenges in working with immigrant and refugee populations to address food insecurity in their communities. These primarily included literacy and physical access to services.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Food insecurity, or the unavailability “of and assured access to sufficient food that is nutritionally adequate, culturally acceptable, safe, and which is obtained in socially acceptable ways” (Gorton et al 2010, 1), is an issue facing immigrant and refugee populations in the United States (Piwowarczyk et al 2008). Lewiston is home to approximately 4,000 resettled Somali refugees (Ellison 2009), who make up about ten percent of the city’s total population. While food insecurity affects individuals at different levels, from the personal to the household, community, and state (Chilton & Rose 2009), this is particularly true of immigrant and refugee groups, who as non-naturalized legal U.S. residents face a host of difficulties, some unique, in accessing food. The primary way to gather information concerning food insecurity in any population is to gather firsthand knowledge from the community under study, and for immigrant and refugee groups this involves identifying a) where immigrant and refugee groups are located, and b) the drivers of food insecurity within those populations.

Understanding the context in which food insecurity occurs requires examination of the various ways in which the unique concerns of the immigrant and refugee groups are addressed. There is a host of information regarding aid and relocation programs for refugees in the United States, including nonprofit and government services. The programs all, in some way, seek to lay a foundation for self-sufficiency and cultural acclimation, and food security is a major component of those goals. The drivers of food insecurity in refugee and immigrant populations include factors as variable as poverty, illiteracy, cultural difference, income and expense, integration into established communities and transportation access (Franzen & Smith 2009, Hadley et al 2010, Oyangen 2009, Piwowarczyk et al 2008, Willis & Buck 2007). The unique characteristic of these concerns are their systemic nature, which often make them difficult to address in the first place. Identifying solutions to the problems that propagate food insecurity in refugee groups presents a major challenge, while establishing, funding, sustaining successful programs to address these issues presents an entirely different challenge. The goal of this project is to provide Local Food for Lewiston with examples of how other communities throughout the country work to combat food insecurity in refugee and immigrant populations. The focus of the report will provide information on relevant, innovative programs in other communities throughout the country that have been successful in addressing food insecurity in refugee and immigrant populations similar to that in Lewiston.

Our definition of innovative programing refers to programs that address a food-related issue (i.e. food security, nutrition) and are not federally funded or broad based (i.e. WIC, TANF, or food banks/pantries), and these innovative programs were relevant to our project if they dealt with a refugee and/or immigrant population. Although food insecurity is prevalent in Lewiston, there are locally based programs already in place that fall into the latter two categories and help individuals and families in the city who are food insecure, including immigrants and refugees. These include the New American Sustainable Agricultural Project (NASAP), the Farmer’s Market at Kennedy Park, and Lots to Gardens. NASAP works with new immigrants to help them

establish successful farming businesses. The Farmer's Market at Kennedy Parks meets once a week, year around to provide the local community with fresh produce, and several of the market vendors are Somali immigrants who work with NASAP. Lots to Gardens works with the local community to convert vacant lots to community gardens and established a plot at the Hillview Housing Project, where many Somalis in Lewiston live. These types of programs provide a solid foundation for the transplant of innovative approaches developed in other communities. As such, they served as points of reference for the development of a systematic search for innovative programs across the country that have been successful in combating food insecurity in refugee and immigrant populations in the U.S. These searches served as the foundation of our study.

II. METHODS

We relied on the common search engine Google™ to conduct all searches, and began by dividing the U.S. into four regions between researchers. For example, the group identified the states qualifying as part of the southern region, and one researcher was assigned the south. This process was repeated for each state, until all were assigned to a specific region, and each region was assigned to a researcher. Once assigned their region, each researcher was responsible for conducting as comprehensive a search as possible for major refugee and immigrant populations living in each state within their region. The purpose of these searches were to identify places where programming directed at addressing food insecurity in refugee and immigrant populations was likely in place. Once these basic searches were conducted, more directed searches could be executed, with a clear direction in place.

Phase I: Identifying Refugee Populations Across the United States

The process of running these searches was simple. We used “refugees in [state name]” as a search term. Immediately, number of total sites that arose when the search was conducted were recorded. Each of us then examined the first ten results, copying and pasting the URL for the article into a word document to be saved as a record. The researcher would examine each article of the first ten, and record a short summary of the article's content. For efficiency, the summary would be based solely on the homepage of the result. Because Google™ is a general database designed to handle institutional websites, news article, and blog entries, many very different types of information arose from conducting a search such as this. When examining for content, we were responsible for noting several things. The first was whether the result was relevant to the project or not, i.e. if a refugee community was identified and located in the United States. For those that were, the question became one of what type of result is under examination. Is it a newspaper article, blog entry, resource website? Next, what population is identified in the source (eg. Somali Bantu, Bangladeshi, Hmong, Bhutanese)? Finally, a very brief summary of the main points of the result was included.

Because the results varied greatly by state, recording empirical data such as the total number of results generated by the search and the number of different types of results (news

articles, program websites, blog entries) allowed us to gain an understanding for whether or not the first 10 results were representative of the state in question. Should the data indicate that the first 10 results are not sufficient, we could choose to extend the results to the first 20 results generated. The decision to extend the results considered was based on test searches conducted on the state of Maine, where researchers had the most comprehensive understanding of the refugee and immigrant populations in the state. Generally, search results appeared in a general pattern. News articles appeared first, followed by a mix of government office publications and non-profit organizations. Blog entries and personal websites generally began to appear after most meaningful information had already been thoroughly reported. This theory was tested on Massachusetts to control for Maine's small size and relatively homogenous population. The same trend proved true. Thus, researchers concluded that the presence of blog entries and personal websites as search results signaled the end of information relevant to the study.

Phase II: Identifying Relevant and Innovative Programming

Once refugee populations of interest were identified in each state, consideration of programming in each state could begin. In some cases, the results of phase I searches identified programs addressing food insecurity in refugee populations, however, in most cases phase I searches did not identify programs of interest. Standardization in phase II searches was profoundly more difficult than instituting formalized surveys in phase I. A certain amount of variability does exist in these searches. It is very tempting to move through web resources for different programs in real time, but this process does not fit with reproducibility goals.

Searches in phase II target the geographic location of the immigrant and refugee group under study. GoogleTM was again used as the search engine for its ability to provide information from a great diversity of sources. Searches were slightly less standardized, but sought to turn up programs in these cities relating to refugee and immigrant populations. Because immigrant and refugee populations had already been identified in these populations, search terms did not need to refer to immigrants and refugees specifically. The researchers accepted the inference that refugees and immigrants as well as members of the native population would use food resource programs in cities with significant refugee populations. The specific search terms used in every phase II search are- food security programs in [city identified as having refugee/immigrant population], nutrition programs in [city identified as having refugee/immigrant population], and emergency food provider in [city identified as having refugee/immigrant population]. It is important to note that numerical total results returned figures for nutrition programs are skewed as nutrition programs can also be applied to nutrition schools for those looking to become professionals in this field. Thus this figure is artificially inflated. However, researchers were able to use their own judgment and include search terms directly related to immigrants and refugees in situations where reported results seemed to contain gaps in programming.

The overall research goal of the project greatly informed the processing of results generated by search criteria. The final of the three required terms required the most consideration of the major research goals. Basic emergency food providers such as traditional soup kitchens,

food pantries, and survival centers who truly offered no services extending beyond the standard models for emergency food providers were disqualified from further investigation. The study attempts to identify particularly innovative programming and bring fresh ideas to the effort to address food insecurity in refugee/immigrant populations, thus these types of programs were disqualified.

For search results not disqualified under this reasoning, the same statistical results were recorded as were recorded in phase I, the total number of results generated and the types of documents reported. The top ten results generated were considered, the URLs were copied into a word document, and the researcher assigned to the region wrote a brief summary of the organization/program. For the construction of the summary, researchers were given considerable freedom to explore the website in question. Often, to discover the specific programming offered by an organization required significant amounts of navigation through the website, away from main homepages. The same criteria for extending the study beyond the top 10 results applied, with both conditions still providing concrete guidelines. Researchers also maintained notes on the programs under question at their own discretion. The purpose of the notes, as with the phase I searches, was to identify particularly analogous or interesting programs.

Phase III: Narrowing Program Results and Conducting Interviews

Researcher notes provided the basis for the next stage of the study. Based on the results of the phases I and II, researchers identified specific programs for further exploration. For each region, a list of programs was developed detailing resources for immigrants and refugees on a state-by-state basis. Exploration of the programs designed to combat food insecurity was done on an informal basis once the program lists were compiled.

Because of time restraints, each group member selected programs of interest, four programs from each region identified by researchers as being particularly innovative and with high potential for success in Lewiston, for closer examination. The definition of “innovative” described in the introduction of this report was applied to all programs on the list, and those that best fit that definition were selected for further study. Highlights of these programs were presented to the community partner at the mid-semester meeting. From this group of 16 programs, four were selected as programs that we thought especially effective for the interview aspect of the study.

Interviews with specific program leaders comprised the final step of phase III. Based on feedback received at the mid-semester meeting, the interview stage of the project sought to answer the “what does it take?” guiding question provided by our community partner. To find this detailed information, leaders/employees of these four programs were contacted to schedule phone interviews in early November, with the goal of identifying the logistical components of those programs that enabled them to be successful. Two of the four groups represented innovative programming in the farming sector, while two represented innovative programs in other types of non-profit organizations. Because of scheduling difficulties, two interviews were

scheduled, both with the farming groups. The nature of these scheduling difficulties, and the information learned from the scheduling process, will be presented in the discussion section.

General categories for questions included specific sources of funding, how funding was obtained and from where, how volunteers were recruited, and creative ways that challenges were addressed. Interviews were conducted in according to a semi-formal structure. The interviewer had a list of specific questions and topics to be addressed, but was free to deviate from the list to delve into more other topics not listed as they came up. A specific list of questions asked in interviews is included in Appendix B. The NESFP interview was scheduled for one hour, and the DUG interview was scheduled for a half hour. Both interviews covered a wide range of topics and questions. Both interviews also incorporated the pre-determined topics prepared by group members as well as other topics that came up over the course of the interview.

The completion of the three phase search and study process provided the research group with a wide variety of information from very different types of sources across the country. The search is replicable, allowing future groups be monitor changes in programming without repeating the entire process. The full results of our phase I and phase II searches can be found in Appendix C.

III. RESULTS

This nation-wide search presented our group with a number of innovative programs that attempt to address the food-related concerns of immigrants and refugees. As mentioned before, the phase I of our search was broad, but helped elucidate specific communities and refugee/immigrant populations within each state. Each group member created a URL document displaying the results of their first and second phase searches (See Appendix). The first and second phases provided us with a general list of organizations that dealt with issues regarding food and immigrants/refugees. We were able to narrow the results of our preliminary search by applying our definition of relevance from the introduction. While reading the first ten articles and websites about specific programs that work with immigrants and refugees in states across the country, we were careful to identify the specific immigrant and/or refugee population(s) as well as the community(s) they lived in. Each group member further investigated at least three relevant programs from each of the four regions of the United States that seemed particularly unique. The Learning Kitchen in Burlington Vermont, for example, was one of the innovative programs that came up from the searches for food insecurity programs and nutrition programs. The Learning Kitchen assists Somali Bantu immigrants by teaching them how to shop for food on a budget, cook with unfamiliar foods and groceries often given out at food pantries, and how to use kitchen appliances. It is led by volunteers and works in partnership with the University of Vermont. We compiled this information and presented a total of (number of programs) to our community partner that we considered being both relevant and unique (See Appendix).

After meeting with our community partner, we attempted to contact these programs to conduct semi-structured interviews. Two programs, Denver Urban Gardens (DUG) and the New

Entry Sustainable Farming Project (NESFP) responded to our interest. We preformed semi-structured interviews with an employee from each program. The lists of questions we developed were specific to each program. These questions are attached (See Appendix). The first interview was with NESFP and took forty-nine minutes. We contacted DUG the following day. After completing the interviews and copying them to separate disks, each group member transcribed a different section of an interview. The final transcriptions are attached (See Appendix). We read the transcripts, paying attention to recurring themes and ideas as well as comments that we thought were relevant to our central focus. We developed nine codes from these themes and applied them to the interviews in order to interpret the information. Coding revealed several similarities as well as differences between DUG and NESFP (Fig. 1).

A Logistical Comparison: New Entry Sustainable Farming Project and Denver Urban Gardens

		New Entry Sustainable Farming Project	Denver Urban Gardens
Operating Budget		750,000\$	40,000\$
Staffing	Full Time Staff	3	2
	Part time staff/interns	4	4
	Volunteers	No	Yes
Funding Sources	Federal	Yes	No
	Donations/Donor Funds	Yes	Yes
	CSA	Yes	Yes
	Corporate	No	Yes
	Faith Based Organization	No	Yes
	Municipal	No	Yes
	Local Non-profits	No	Yes
Non-monetary partnerships	Faith based organizations	Yes	Yes
	Local Non-profits	Yes	Yes
	Educational Institutions	Yes	No

Figure 1- Comparison of major program characteristics between DUG and NESFP program logistics. The figure provides a summary of the detailed information collected during interviews of the two organizations.

The organizations -- Denver Urban Gardens in Denver, Colorado and the New Entry Sustainable Farming Project in Lowell, Massachusetts -- have similar staff numbers, but are different in funding, scale, approach and the populations they serve. DUG works with a handful of Somali immigrants at their CSA, Delaney Farms, as well as a host of non-immigrant paying and working shareholders; New Entry, while based in Lowell, teaches agricultural training and business management skills to immigrants from 15 different countries across the state of

Massachusetts. As a result, each organization faces different challenges when addressing their respective immigrant and refugee populations.

The primary challenge that Denver Urban Gardens experiences when working with refugees and immigrants is literacy. Immigrants and refugees are often illiterate in both their native dialect as well as the host country's language. They arrive in the United States without knowing how to speak English, the dominant language, and therefore are unable to converse with the majority of the population. Denver Urban Gardens finds this particularly challenging when attempting to address the needs of their immigrant and refugee members. Since the languages are distinct and mutually incomprehensible, it is difficult to find a medium that both the organization and the community members can use to relate.

New Entry Sustainable Farming Project has come up with several solutions to the literacy challenge. Their primary focus is outreach. The program has an outreach coordinator who goes into communities, speaks with residents, and relates their concerns to the organization. Furthermore, the coordinator often brings information regarding the program, which is translated into different languages, as well as visuals into refugee and immigrant communities; "So we have an outreach coordinator who goes to community events and brings visual aid with him and talks to people one-on-one and frequently touches base with immigrants and refugees who wouldn't otherwise have any reason to connect with us..." This allows immigrants and refugees with significant language barriers the opportunity to learn about NESFP's programs, and how they can attend to their food-related concerns. The program also disseminates information in translation via the internet and publications. Their efforts have allowed them to reach a large and diverse group of people through outreach.

The results of our project provide the community partner with areas to consider for expansion and a more detailed understanding of the resources utilized by other organizations to implement successful food security programs for immigrant and refugee communities in areas analogous to Lewiston, Maine.

IV. DISCUSSION: OUTCOMES AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Searches

The methods used to conduct our searches reflect the complex and fluid nature of refugee and immigrant populations. Immigrant and refugee populations are, by nature, unsettled groups with fluid ties to place. Immigrant and refugee groups are likely to move around more than other groups as they search for an appropriate place to call home. Many Somali families in Lewiston, for instance, did not arrive directly from refugee camps in Africa, but selected the city as a secondary location for resettlement after coming to the U.S. for its low crime rate and perceived availability of jobs. Since the first families arrived in Lewiston, almost 4,000 individuals have followed. There is no official way of tracking this migration, and once these refugees left their official city of resettlement (Atlanta, Georgia for many Lewiston Somalis), their movements become difficult to track.

For a study attempting to gather information regarding innovative programs addressing food insecurity in refugee populations, this presented a problem. Programs addressing food insecurity in refugee and immigrant populations are bound to be clustered in communities with large immigrant and refugee populations. However, identifying these communities presented a major challenge, as there is no systematic data, such as current census population statistics, to indicate where these populations, and this the most innovative programs, might be. The researchers entered the research process with several leads, mainly knowledge of Hmong populations in Lowell, Massachusetts and Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota. However, since word of mouth is an inherently unreliable method for a project attempting to gain a comprehensive understanding of programs currently in existence for refugee and immigrant populations, we realized a need to develop a comprehensive search protocol. The methodology used to conduct research for this project was thus specifically designed to address this challenge.

The goal of our Phase I search was to assure that certain populations were not being overlooked simply because researchers were unaware of their existence. In order to identify programs, immigrant and refugee populations had to be identified; the process we developed allowed for the comparison of the populations under study to the Somali population in Lewiston. Certain groups proved to have more in common with the Lewiston Somalis than others, and particular comparisons of interest were groups experiencing significant trauma in their homeland, groups having spent significant amounts of time in refugee camps (>7 years) and groups without a cultural tradition of formal education and literacy.

The initial issue with the Phase I search was the difficulty in contextualizing immigrant and refugee communities in cities and towns in other parts of the country to even determine if their needs were comparable. The needs and resources of the Lewiston refugee and immigrant population may be much different than those of the refugee and immigrant population in other parts of the country. For instance, the length of the growing seasons is a limitation for the refugee and immigrant population in Lewiston, whereas California's much longer season allows for farming and garden focused programs to operate nearly yearround. Still, there may be other ways in which programs that serve refugee and immigrant populations in California are relevant in Maine, so we didn't want to discount them completely.

In addition, the proportionality of results ended up fairly skewed; even though the search protocol was highly methodical, states where higher populations and more developed social services existed would likely have turned up more useful programs if we had looked beyond just the top ten results. For example, the New Hampshire search generates ~7,890 results, the Maine search generates ~679,000 results, and the New York search generates ~8,530,000 results. Examining the top 10 results for New Hampshire represents a much larger proportion of total results than does examining the top 10 results out of New York's 1,550,000 results generated. Hypothetically, based on the consideration of the proportion of total results considered, the examination of the types of articles examined the study should have been extended to the top 30 or 40 results in a uniform manner. Because of time constraints, we were not able to make our

national search proportionally consistent. Thus, we may have missed some useful innovative programs in our searches that simply may not have come up in the first ten results.

Another contributor to the possible exclusion of a relevant program was that any innovative programs, per our definition, that exist and don't have a website would have been automatically excluded from our searches. In reality there may be innovative programs across the country that address food insecurity in refugee and immigrant populations that don't have a website. Thus, we don't have the ability to find these programs and seek more information about them. In Phase II, our searches would only turn up certain kinds of results because of the kinds of programs that would use key terms, such as "nutrition," "emergency food provider," or "food security" to define themselves. For example, if a program was food-related but only talked about addressing "hunger," it probably wouldn't have shown in one our searches.

The major, overarching issue we came across in conducting the systematic search was finding detailed data on the programs, communities and immigrant populations without being able to take a closer look at all of their respective dimensions. In addition, in many cases the precise location of these communities within the identified regions was unknown. This is important in the context of our project because it is possible that programs could be located nowhere near the refugee and immigrant populations they seek to serve, which adds to the limited access already experience by these groups as a result of cultural barriers. We were unable to judge the connectivity of these far flung groups to the resources in their communities.

Scheduling Interviews

As described in the Methods section, four programs were selected for interviews. Denver Urban Gardens of Denver, Colorado, New Entry Sustainable Farming Project (NESFP) of Lowell, Massachusetts, The Learning Kitchen of Burlington, Vermont, and the Refugee Nutritionist employed and facilitated by the Heartland Alliance of Chicago, Illinois. Organizations were approached for interviews via email, with The Learning Kitchen and Heartland Alliance receiving follow up phone calls when emails to the organizations email accounts went un-answered. All organization contact information was obtained from the organizations web sites.

The process for setting up the interview with Denver Urban Gardens (DUG) was unique in that originally, DUG was not selected as an organization to interview. Somali Bantu Farming Council of Colorado was the organization of focus. However, when emails to the council went unanswered, additional research showed that DUG was the contact organization for the council. When contacted for assistance setting up an interview with the council, DUG employees explained that the council had disbanded in 2007, but that DUG was beginning to reform the group in the coming year. Based on that phone call with a staff member, DUG was selected not only for the innovative programming they continued to offer even after the council had disbanded. DUG also offered a unique perspective on the challenges facing organizations working with large refugee and immigrant populations.

The organizations were contacted in early November, with the goal of scheduling interviews in the week before Thanksgiving. For both DUG and NESFP, this timing worked very well. The busy summer months and harvest time periods were over, and while both groups remained busy, the times of highest need for their organizations had passed.

For The Learning Kitchen and Heartland Alliance, this was not the case. The lead up to the Thanksgiving and Holiday season is an incredibly stressful and busy time for these organizations. As their operations are not based in farming, and are instead based on donations of both food products and money from the communities in which they work, both programs were stretched to capacity when contacted for interviews.

The Heartland Alliance tried very hard to accommodate our request for an interview. We spoke with several staff members from different parts of the organization. Unfortunately we were unable to get an interview with a staff member with the capacity to answer the questions we needed the answers to. The refugee nutritionist is only one person seeking to assist a very large population with many needs. The nutritionist and the staff assisting her manage extremely busy schedules, and it proved impossible to schedule an hour-long interview until after the new year.

The Learning Kitchen presented a similar situation. The limitations of the program became clear as the scheduling process proceeded. Numerous attempts to contact the organization through email went unanswered, and messages left on the organization's phone system were also unanswered. Several weeks later, the organization established contact, offering to schedule interviews after the holidays. They also explained that the busy holiday schedule had stretched their staff, and they were unable to get back to us in time.

The process of attempting to schedule interviews foreshadowed challenges facing non-profit organizations attempting to combat food insecurity in immigrant and refugee populations. Many of the challenges that prevented organizations from scheduling interviews were later echoed by the organizations we were able to schedule interviews with. The issue of staffing, discussed in detail in the coding section, commonly arose as an issue identified by all four organizations. The staff members that were interviewed were essentially self-selected; we spoke to the people best able to answer our questions, and the employees of the organization able to make time in their busy schedules for the interviews. For both DUG and NESFP, the limited number of employees working for the organizations create a high level of awareness among staff for all aspects of the operation of the organization.

Interview Design

The main goal of conducting the interviews was to gather detailed information about organizational operations not typically found on an organization's website. Guided by our communities partners over arching question, "what does it take?", we designed interviews that focused on determining the logistics of developing and operating complex non-profit organizations serving diverse populations. Interviews were conducted in a conversational style designed to make the interviewee feel comfortable and respected. Adjustments were made to interview topics based on the ability of the staff member to answer questions. For example, if a

staff member had only been at an organization for the last few years, and was not employed at the time the organization was started, they often felt unqualified to offer opinions and information concerning the start up process. Thus, interviews flowed with the topics and questions staff members felt most comfortable discussing.

Interview Coding

We developed nine codes after a preliminary reading of the two interview transcripts. The codes refer to parallel themes found in both transcripts that are relevant to our central question, “what does it take” to make these programs successes. The codes include: personal relationships, staffing, accessibility, challenges working with immigrants, programming gaps, effectiveness, program logistics, strategies, and financial support.

Personal relationships refer to the one-on-one interactions, friendships and mutual trust that supported these programs. Relationships helped make the programs durable, even when overextended and lacking sufficient funding. The personal relationships provided the programs with depth and texture. For example, the interviewee from the DUG project said that fostering relationships has made the program effective; “...the most effective piece I would really say is building relationships... I think the community piece is extremely important to creating a special program. Because I don’t think that you can offer, with such small farming, without the support of so many people. I think that would probably be the most important element.” Personal relationships create a social support network that is not reliant on material or monetary exchange.

We found *staffing* another relevant theme. Staffing is important because successful programs need enough personnel to carry out daily administrative tasks as well as address the food concerns of refugees and immigrants. Without enough people working, the programs would certainly not be as effective at making nutritious food more accessible to refugees and immigrant populations; DUG in particular was heavily reliant on voluntary support, stating that “there’s no way that we could accomplish the work without our volunteer base...” (NESFP). We realized that there are three important groups of staff members: leaders, support staff and, as mentioned in the quote above, volunteers. Leaders are people who initiated the program and/or are were currently in the position of directing a specific part of the program; New Entry “hired a person on our staff... to jumpstart this initiative for us and develop the resources around, or rather make the purchases that are required in order to set up this livestock program.” Both leaders and volunteers are vital in building a sustainable and capable program.

Despite efforts to make nutritious more accessible to their respective immigrant and refugee clients, these programs identified several *challenges* in working with these groups. Our third code addresses these perceived obstacles. NESFP clearly expressed that literacy was the most significant barrier to establishing relationships with immigrants and refugees. Many recent immigrants in Lewiston come from Somalia or refugee camps in neighboring countries and speak a distinct Somali language. This language, which formerly provided a sense of security, competency and identity in Somalia, becomes a limitation in the American setting. “...It’s hard to connect with immigrants and refugee if we don’t have a relationship with them. It’s very, very

difficult.” The interviewee noted that this difficulty resulted from the difference in languages. Immigrants and refugees who could converse freely in their home country are no longer able to talk about their daily lives or make known their wants and needs. Furthermore, some recently resettled Somali immigrants are not even literate in their own language. They are thus unable to relate to English speaking members of the communities they have relocated to. NESFP cited this as being a challenge to their outreach efforts. This constraint as a source of insecurity builds on the anxiety caused by resettlement and makes immigrants and refugees more vulnerable to other challenges, such as food insecurity.

Refugees and immigrants are likely to be food insecure because they are unable to access the food they need or is culturally appropriate. We determined that *transportation* is a threat to accessibility. Immigrants and refugees begin to rebuild their livelihoods in the United States without the amenities that many privileged, native-born citizens often take for granted. A car, for example, makes it easy to travel from home to distant food stores. Since the nearest supermarkets that offer a variety of nutritious foods are across the bridge in Auburn, immigrants and refugees living in Lewiston must have a means of transport to access healthy food stores. Their accessibility is dependent on other community members or public transportation. The interviewee from the Denver Urban Gardens program expressed a similar concern; “I think it is especially challenging for families to worry about the transportation piece.” The focus of our project is to identify the ways in which programs have made nutritious food more accessible to immigrants and refugees. Therefore, we also highlighted the specific strategies and efforts DUG and New Entry are currently doing to improve accessibility. The price of nutritious food is rising making it increasingly difficult for those with low-incomes to acquire healthy food items; “As I’m sure you now, healthy foods are more costly than unhealthy foods. So that would be a major issue facing most families that I know” (DUG).

We developed four codes that reveal how these programs are working towards making their programs more accessible to refugees and immigrants: *effectiveness*, *program logistics*, *strategies*, and *financial support*. We identified subcategories within each code that explain our interpretation of each.

New Entry Sustainable Farming Project conducted a community needs assessment in 2010 that gathered information through a survey about what participant farmers needed in order to develop their businesses. The needs assessment was an effort to make their program more *effective*. The survey effectively served as a way of relating what the community wanted to program coordinators. Furthermore, many of the original participants were immigrants and refugees. This group of people actually came to the program and expressed their needs; “Those were the people who were coming to us, who were most in need of our services [and] programs.” New Entry addressed the needs of the immigrants and refugees because their communities mobilized and expressed their wants to the organization. New Entry’s outreach efforts evolved as the populations they sought to serve changed.

Another component that has made New Entry effective has been their financial support. They have utilized organizational partnerships as well direct donor funds and foundation grants.

Our group also discovered creative internal sources of funds that each program used to either augment their direct and indirect funding sources or when funds were limited. New Entry offers a farm business planning course that is paid for by participants. They do not exclude interested members who do not have the money to afford the cost of taking the class; “for those folks who, we know based on their income and numbers of people in their family, do not have the capacity to pay, we offer scholarships to those folks.” This allowed for greater participation and therefore increased accessibility.

The programs also employed specific *strategies* for making their programs more accessible, which we considered to be need determination, communication, and education. In order to determine needs, the programs relied on communication. We found this code to be applicable to outreach efforts, such as publications and using the internet to reach their constituents. New Entry has an outreach coordinator who works to enhance dialogue between the program and immigrant community members. He goes into communities with visual aids and literature that is written in simple terms so that people who have difficulties understanding English can still gain an idea of what the program has to offer. Denver Urban Gardens, on the other hand, identified communication issues as the result of the presence of two simultaneous lines of communication, internal and external, which made coordination with the Somali Bantu Farming Council difficult. The interviewee expressed a concern that although there was conversation going on within the program, communication strategies did not seem to translate into the community; “...it wasn’t so much that our communication was down, it was outside communication.” She identified a need for open dialogue at multiple levels both within and outside the programs in order for the programs to be successful.

Finally, we found education to be a specific strategy towards increasing accessibility. Both programs offered technical farm skills training, while additionally offering distinctly different services: for instance, New Entry conducts courses on farm business planning, and DUG offers cooking classes utilizing produce grown at the CSA. Fundamentally, both programs work towards educating immigrants and refugees about the new food environment and how to become self-sufficient.

We finally were interested in the *logistical* aspects of each program, such as budgets, number of staff members, work shifts, and specialized skill sets. This information shows what each program currently requires in order to maintain their efforts. It is not enough, however, to consider what may be necessary to make these programs viable long-term. We found the operating budgets to be markedly different, reflecting the distinct scales (see Fig. 1). Specialized skill sets refers to the ways in which the programs separate certain functions among community partners who are most competent in particular areas. This allows the programs to take on several initiatives at once and still operate effectively. Denver Urban Gardens, for example, relies on a partnership with Lutheran Family Services to address the logistic of funding; “the new refugee program will not require funding because Lutheran Family Services will take on that piece.” By not having to worry about whether the program has enough funds, Denver Urban Gardens is able to extend their services without compromising the quality of their efforts.

The final codes considers *programming gaps* or parts of each program that seemed to be deficient. Programming gaps are a concern because they question the durability of the programs as well as whether the programs are achieving their purported goals. Both programs consider themselves overextended. Before the financial partnership with Lutheran Family Services was formed, DUG's partnership with the Somali Bantu Farming Council, was "really large before, and probably focusing on more things than we [they] should have."

New Entry's primary obstacle is limited funding. New Entry Sustainable Farming Project is heavily dependent on a single donor; "Right now, though we have somewhat of a diverse range of funders, it's not diverse enough. We are still over-reliant on our USDA federal and state funding forces." New Entry would like to expand their funding sources so if the state cannot support the program in the future, then New Entry will be able to continue its efforts. A diversity of funding partners and institutions creates a reliable safety net.

A final gap we identified is bridging differences between populations served. Refugees and immigrants are a diverse group of people with different needs and concerns, and while "it's great that we deal with so many different cultures, languages, backgrounds"; "there are so many other needs in low income communities and we hope to build our program, but it will never be enough due to the amount of need." These gaps arise when the programs do not attend to a specific concern of the communities they serve.

The nine codes discussed above reveal the intricacies of establishing an innovative nutrition program in immigrant and refugee communities analogous to Lewiston. The information supporting these codes is useful to consider when further developing Lewiston's Local Food for Lewiston program. They reveal the accomplishments of each program as well as challenges they confront. The codes elucidate what it will take for Lewiston's current initiative to be able to make nutritious food more accessible to the immigrant and refugee community in the future.

V. NEXT STEPS

With the results of our research and interview process in mind, we have compiled a list both recommendations for further study related to issues of food insecurity in Lewiston's refugee and immigrant population, and suggestions for actions that might be taken to enhance programs that already exist in Lewiston.

In-depth Local Program Analysis

One thing that we think would be especially valuable would be a comprehensive analysis of the approaches and goals of the services available to refugees and immigrants in Lewiston. Because of time constraints and the scale of our project, we were only able to conduct a cursory overview of the kinds of programs Lewiston has in place. A community research project focused solely on identifying the opportunities within (and among) projects like Lots to Gardens, the New American Sustainable Agriculture Project, and Catholic Charities Refugee and Immigration

Services would be able to give the foundational work that we conducted a fuller frame in which to implement useful program enhancements.

Refugee Needs Assessment

One of the most viable and useful programs that was brought to our attention was the New Entry Sustainable Farming Project's local farmer need assessment. By surveying over 200 farmers in the region, New Entry was able to take the desires of the community and develop a conference around the issues that the farmers had identified as the greatest gaps in their collective knowledge base. In conducting this assessment, NESFP had a difficult time ensuring the participation of immigrant and refugee communities because it was reliant on a e-mail survey and thus required a) English skills and b) internet accessibility. Even though these communities ended up being by and large excluded from the assessment, we think the goal -- determining what the gaps are in local farmers' agricultural educations, what they want to learn and how they want to learn it -- is something that would be extremely beneficial in the context of Local Food for Lewiston's goals in addressing food insecurity among local Somalis. The lack of technological and linguistic literacy are common and major hurdles in service providers abilities to contact and work with immigrant communities, but they are negotiable; all that is required is developing creative outreach approaches. Our suggestion for approaching the community about food access-related issues are derived from community-based approaches utilized by researchers who have worked with both Somali and other immigrant communities (Grigg-Saito et al 2008, Hadley et al 2010). Primarily, this would require an approach that avoids reliance on literacy by conversing directly with immigrants: in focus groups and/or individual interviews, in translation. Because the Somali population of Lewiston is a linguistically homogeneous group, inclusion of immigrants and refugees would be much more feasible than it was for New Entry, which works with immigrants from all over the world who speak many different languages.

Culinary Cultural Orientation

Because Lewiston already has infrastructure geared toward addressing food insecurity in the immigrant and refugee population, we suggest that one way to build upon the existing resources is to host "learning tours" -- guiding around Lewiston/Auburn that would identify and provide information about stores, community gardens, health services, events, farmers markets etc. in the area. This would serve as an excellent opportunity to enable and encourage self-sufficiency, by increasing cultural literacy of Lewiston's food geography simply and early in the resettlement process.

Developing Communication Media In Translation

Because immigrants and refugees often have low levels of English literacy -- and, for that matter, reading and writing skills in their native languages -- alternate means of reaching those populations are crucial. In Lowell's Cambodian community, the use of radio programs, audiotapes for individual and radio use, local cable TV, and written media in translation have

proven to be useful tools in reaching groups with linguistic barriers. The first local Somali language radio program, “The Somali Show,” began airing in October of 2010 on WEZR AM radio; while this is a significant start, we believe there is even greater potential for the expansion of mediated communication with the Somali community, particularly in raising awareness of available services and food-oriented community development in the local region.

Programmatic Partnership Between Service Providers

In terms of encouraging longevity and effectiveness of organizations that address what they see as the needs of the immigrants and refugees in their communities, our conversations with DUG and NESFP revealed that collaboration with other service providers for funding and non-monetary support was crucial. DUG in particular found themselves understaffed, underfunded, and thus overextended in their attempt to directly deliver many different services to Denver’s Somali population, but in partnering with Lutheran Family Services they are receiving indirect federal TANF funding that enables them to restart a program that will allow them to work with Somalis again. Furthermore, through their community partner shares at Delaney Farms the CSA is able to indirectly serve communities in need, and in working with WIC encourage cultural food literacy. New Entry is a much bigger program, but they stressed the importance of the strategic planning assistance they receive from the Friedman School at Tufts University, which helps with direction and research, and the Lowell nonprofit Community Teamwork Inc., which assists with the logistics of community outreach. From what we understand, the programs in Lewiston tend to be fairly contained, and greatly expand their reach and capacity through the development of programmatic alliances.

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APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Denver Urban Gardens (Denver, CO): Partnership with Somali Bantu Farmers and Why It Worked/Didn't Work?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

From the immigrant farming website:

http://www.immigrantfarming.org/_webapp_2877411/Somali_Bantu_Farming_Council_of_Colorado

SBFCC will focus on agricultural education and employment *while providing food security* for their families and staying connected as a community.

The Somali Bantu Farming Council of Colorado (SBFCC) encourages Somali Bantu refugees now resettling in Denver, Colorado to draw on their deep *agricultural heritage and experience* to have an opportunity to become for profit farmers in America.

Currently the community *farms their own plots* at Denver Urban Gardens DeLaney Farms. They will be harvesting a variety of organic produce including tomatoes, squash, pumpkins, peppers, greens and mint. The community will *sell their produce* at Stapleton Farmers Market, as well as several local restaurants and caterers. Participants *receive training* in horticulture, agriculture business, nutrition, and more.

The vision of the SBFCC is to sell organically grown produce to local buyers, and one day own or lease farm land to farm collectively in Colorado.

QUESTIONS.

INITIALS. : Support (money, people, skills) -- where does it come from? What support did you need/have to get (the organization) started?

Numbers.

Did you have a starting grant? If so how much was it?

What is the program's current operating budget?

How many staff members does DUG have?

How many people does the program serve?

Non-numbers.

What immigrant/refugee communities do/have you worked with?

Does your organization have other branches in your city/county/state/across the country? If so, how many?

Is the project conducted in coalition with other entities/partner programs?

Is this organization faith-based or affiliated with a religious institution?

How is the organization funded?

private donation

government

corporate

foundations

educational institutions

What was required initially to make the project viable for funding?

GENERAL. Contextualized food insecurity in Denver/Colorado

What are the major issues surrounding food insecurity or access in your region?

What approaches have been successful in addressing hunger and food insecurity in your region?

Do you know of other programs that address hunger and food insecurity in immigrant and refugee populations in your region? How successful are the approaches of these programs?

SPECIFIC. How the Denver Urban Gardens/Somali Bantu Partnership functioned/s, strategies and suggestions

When was the program started/how long did the program last?

What were the goals of the program? (What were you hoping to achieve?)

How did the program get started? Who was involved?

What are some of the most effective strategies DUG developed in garnering support? Participation?

What were the biggest challenges the program confronted in working with refugees and immigrants? (What is being changed in terms of creating the new partnership?)

Have DUGs goals for the program changed since it started? If so, how and why?

What have been DUGs greatest successes so far?

Are there services that DUGs would like to include or offer that it doesn't currently? How would these complement the existing program?

Do you think the partnership between the SBFCC and DUG achieved it's mission? How do you know?

If not, what are the obstacles?

If so, what comes next?

New Entry Sustainable Farming Project: What does it take to establish and maintain a wide range of programming to a large, disparate, and diverse immigrant communities?

QUESTIONS.

INITIALS. : Support (money, people, skills) -- where does it come from? What support did you need/have to get (the organization) started?

Numbers.

Did you have a starting grant? If so how much was it?

What is the program's current operating budget?

How many staff members does New Entry have?

How many people does the program serve?

Non-numbers.

What immigrant/refugee communities do/have you worked with?

Does your organization have other branches in your city/county/state/across the country? If so, how many?

Is the project conducted in coalition with other entities/partner programs?

Is this organization faith-based or affiliated with a religious institution?

How is the organization funded?

private donation

government

corporate

foundations

educational institutions

What was required initially to make the project viable for funding?

GENERAL. Contextualized food insecurity in Massachusetts

What are the major issues surrounding food insecurity or access in your region?

What approaches have been successful in addressing hunger and food insecurity in your region?

Do you know of other programs that address hunger and food insecurity in immigrant and refugee populations in your region? How successful are the approaches of these programs?

SPECIFIC. How New Entry functions, strategies and suggestions

When was the program started?

What were the initial goals of the program? (What were you hoping to achieve?)

How did the program get started? Who was involved?

What are some of the most effective strategies New Entry developed in garnering support? Participation?

What were the biggest challenges the program confronted in working with refugees and immigrants?

Have New Entry's goals for the program changed since it started? If so, how and why?

What have been New Entry's greatest successes so far?

Are there services that New Entry would like to include or offer that it doesn't currently? How would these complement the existing program?

Do you think New Entry is achieving mission? How do you know?

If not, what are the obstacles?

If so, what comes next?

APPENDIX C: QUATITATIVE RESULTS

For spreadsheet data- see enclosed DVD.

APPENDIX D: PRELIMINARY FINDINGS: REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT FARMING (FOOD SECURITY) PROGRAMS IN THE U.S.

PRIVATE ENTERPRISE VS. COLLECTIVE AGRICULTURE

- skill building: economic development/management, farm operation, enhanced viability
- land ownership: borrowed --> collective --> private
- independent subsistence vs. integration

Non-profit Farmer Training Programs (private enterprise and collective agriculture)

- specific programs for refugee women

University Extension Programs (private enterprise)

Community Garden Projects (collective agriculture/semi-private ownership)

Resource networks (nutrition education, food preparation, transportation)

- radio
- specialized programs for elderly refugees, children

PROGRAMS:

WEST

Portland, Oregon: Mercy Corps New American Agricultural Project and Emerging Farmer Training Program @ Zenger Farm

The New American Agriculture Project helps recent refugees and immigrants start small-scale farm enterprises in the greater Portland area. We also assist our new farmers in marketing nutritious food at local outlets in the Pacific Northwest.

The Zenger Emerging Farmer Training and Outreach Program is a collaborative partnership between Friends of Zenger Farm (FZF), Oregon State University Extension Service (OSUES), 47th Ave Farm, Mercycorps Northwest, The Immigrant Refugee Community Organization (IRCO) and other community partners. The project provides technical, educational and linguistic resources to immigrant and refugee growers, market vendors and supporting enterprises.

Grower outreach, program development and partner coordination is provided by project lead, Friends of Zenger Farm (FZF). Technical training in agricultural production techniques is provided by Oregon State University Extension Service (OSUES) and 47th Ave Farm covering farming techniques, crop diversity and specialty crops. Outreach and community support for immigrant and refugee farmer training needs is provided by the Immigrant Refugee Community

Organization (IRCO) and other community partners. Farm business development and asset management tools and training is provided by Mercy Corps Northwest.

Refugee communities served: Cuba, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Nepal, Russia, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

San Diego, California: New Roots Community Farm

Located on a small triangular lot located at 54th Street and Chollas Parkway in City Heights, a grass roots effort has taken hold to create a community farm for the surrounding neighborhood. Spearheaded by San Diego's Somali Bantu Community Organization, this farm plot will be the first of its kind for this neighborhood. It will provide fresh fruits and vegetables to the community and may also provide an economic opportunity to sell the produce local businesses.

Beginning in 2006, Hamadi Jumale, a Somali refugee, teamed with the San Diego office of the International Rescue Committee (IRC), a non-governmental agency that assists refugees worldwide, to find and acquire a parcel of land that would give the women of his community an opportunity to produce something. Amy Lint, IRC's New Roots Farm Coordinator and others who have worked closely with Jumale say that in addition to creating a much-needed outlet for the talents of the Bantu women, his efforts have established a link to their fading culture.

Open since mid-July [2010], the New Roots Community Farm is a raw patch of land located on 2.2 acres of city property with the potential to supplement the diets of hundreds if not thousands of low-income individuals living in greater San Diego. Several other communities, including Vietnamese, Cambodian and Guatemalan groups, are taking part in the farm. This is an enormous opportunity for a community that does not always have even their basic needs met. These farms plots will provide not only sustenance but will also carry forth the tradition of numerous cultures who call City Heights home.

Refugee communities served: Somalia, Cambodia, Burma, Uganda, Congo, Kenya, Mexico, Vietnam and Guatemala

Denver, Colorado: Somali Bantu Farming Council of Colorado

Since arriving in Denver, Colorado in 2003, the Somali Bantu have participated in the development of the East 13th Avenue Community Garden. Their fierce determination to pursue farming as a means of income and lifestyle led them to create a formal advisory council. The Somali Bantu Farming Council of Colorado (SBFCC) encourages Somali Bantu refugees resettling in Denver, Colorado to use their centuries-old knowledge and experience in farming to become the next generation of organic farmers in America. Participants are exploring

agricultural-related employment opportunities while learning about climate and organic farming techniques, with an eye toward ownership of farm land in Colorado. SBFCC will be farming at Delaney Farms, an organic co-op farm operated by Denver Urban Gardens. SBFCC will focus on agricultural education and employment while providing food security for their families and staying connected as a community.

Refugee communities served: Somali Bantu

MIDWEST

St. Croix, Minnesota: The Minnesota Food Association and Big River Farms Immigrant Training Program

The Minnesota Food Association is a statewide nonprofit organization that works to create a coalition of informed and connected urban and rural people to build a sustainable food system in Minnesota. In the past 20 years new immigrants have moved into Minnesota in increasing numbers. Many of these new residents are refugees, and are victims of violence and political upheaval in their homeland. Many have significant roots in agriculture, both as a means of providing food for the table and as a source of income. The New Immigrant Agriculture Project addresses economic, health, safety and nutrition concerns related to food production and agriculture for new immigrant residents in Minnesota. The New Immigrant Agriculture Project targets members of the Hmong, African and Latino communities, to help these new immigrants augment their household food needs and income through individual and community gardens, microfarming plots and small farms. The goal is that participating immigrant farmers will eventually have their own farms and will be involved in the mainstream of the agriculture in Minnesota.

Refugee communities served: Hmong, Mexican, ??

Hunger Solutions Minnesota

Hunger Solutions Minnesota is a comprehensive hunger relief organization that works to end hunger in Minnesota. We take action to assure food security for all Minnesotans by supporting agencies that provide food to those in need, advancing sound public policy, and guiding grassroots advocacy.

“Keeping Food on the Table”, is a quarterly review of the state of hunger in Minnesota. The review looks at food shelf usage, food stamps, federal commodities, suburban hunger and other factors contributing to the rising issue of hunger in Minnesota.

The Voice of Hunger Network is the grassroots advocacy arm of Hunger Solutions Minnesota. A network of people who work to end hunger in MN by motivating decision-makers to take supportive action on state and national hunger policy issues.

Kansas City, Kansas: New Roots For Refugees

Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas resettles refugees in the Kansas City area, offering case management, job development, English as a Second Language, and hope for those who have suffered too long. New Roots for Refugees is a program started by Catholic Charities in partnership with the Kansas City Center for Urban Agriculture to help refugee women put down those new roots, through helping them to start their own small farm businesses growing and selling vegetables.

New Roots builds on the strengths and experience that the refugees already possess. Farming is a familiar livelihood that offers them some measure of self-determination and self-sufficiency, healthy food for their families, extra income, and a context for settling into their new communities. Agriculture allows them to put down new roots, metaphorically and literally, and to become citizens who produce and give to their new communities.

In the New Roots Program, participants start farming with significant training and support. As their farm businesses become established and they develop more skills, they will move to greater financial and managerial independence. Eventually they will be able to move onto their own piece of land and operate independently.

Refugee communities served: Burmese

Kansas Food Security Task Force

The Kansas Food Security Task Force was formed in 2006 as a sub-committee of the Kansas Food Policy Council. Its task is to study the issues of food insecurity and hunger among Kansas households, and to recommend to the Governor steps that might be taken toward reducing hunger and food insecurity levels. Members include representatives from each of the state agencies responsible for administering federally-funded nutrition assistance programs (Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Kansas Department on Aging, Kansas Department of Education), Kansas State University and K-State research and Extension, the major Food Bank providers in the state, representatives of faith-based organizations with an expressed interest in reducing hunger, and other interested parties.

Chicago, Illinois: The CSA Learning Center

In 2005, the CSA Learning Center launched a pilot program to provide access to agricultural and farm business training to beginning refugee and immigrant farmers in the Chicago region. The pilot program engaged immigrant farmers from South and Central America, Eastern Europe, and West and Central Africa. By connecting with the field days and Farm Beginnings course offered through the Collaborative Regional Alliance for Farmer Training (CRAFT), the pilot program offers advanced training and mentorship to gardeners and farmers working with urban agriculture projects in Chicago. Through funding from the USDA-Risk Management Agency, we developed Farm Dreams, a single session risk and resource assessment course designed to assist potential farmers make decisions about their farm business goals. In the near future, the CSA Learning Center plans to offer access to advanced farmer training, land, and markets in Chicago through an urban farmer incubation center in partnership with other organizations, including Growing Home, Inc.

Refugee communities served: ??? (multiple)

Refugee Nutritionist, Heartland Alliance
Chicago, Illinois

http://chicagoist.com/2010/01/12/health_for_all_refugees_in_chicago.php

The Heartland Alliance, a group advocating for the refugee populations of Chicago, Illinois, has a position within their organization for a nutritionist who serves as a “health coordinator” of all services available to the major refugee populations of Chicago. In this capacity, the refugee nutritionist is responsible for working with community members to determine what the specific needs of the refugee group are. The RN is available to provide information to refugees about adapting to the new food environment in the United States. The RN is responsible for communicating and coordinating special dietary needs of specific groups. Refugees and refugee concerns are the only falling under the scope of responsibility for this position, which is incredibly rare. In most circumstance, refugees have no guidance as to how to adapt to an entirely new “food culture”. There is no counseling for how to deal with new appliances, tools, ingredients, and ways of distribution. The RN is a resource for all of these issues. The RN is also a coordinator between medical personnel and food security providers in terms of addressing specific dietary needs of newly arrived refugees. Similarly, the RN is available to help solve religious food requirements for newly arrived groups. The RN is a position entirely devoted to the maintenance and understanding of the breadth and depth of the scope of food insecurity as it relates to the refugee populations of Chicago.

Groups Served- Iraqi, Bhutanese, Bhurmese

EAST

Lowell, Massachusetts: New Entry Sustainable Farming Project

We provide constructive environments and strategies that support new producers and create opportunities for them to strengthen agricultural capacities, share learning experiences, and build better communities. We provide access to information, resources, training and technical assistance so that producers can grow healthy, local, fresher food for consumers.

The Agriculture, Food, and Environment (AFE) Program of the Gerald J. and Dorothy R. Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University initiated New Entry, and the project continues to be an integral part of the school's academic program. New Entry provides opportunities for student involvement via internships, directed study, and research, while AFE faculty foster curriculum connections in class discussions, coursework, and hands-on laboratories in the fields.

New Entry staff are employees of Tufts University and Community Teamwork, Inc., but the project extends well beyond these institutions. Project partners include federal and state government agencies, universities, local farmers, and multiple community-based organizations. New Entry provides services for beginning farmers such as locating farmland, education, training, business/enterprise development, and production and marketing assistance. The project provides opportunities for economically disadvantaged farmers, preserves farmland, and promotes New England agriculture. The New Entry Programs section and the New Entry Organizational Structure provide more detail on specific initiatives.

New Entry began in 1998. New Entry is one of the first initiatives nationwide to assist immigrants and refugees to develop commercial farming opportunities. Our work focuses primarily in the Lowell and Worcester sections of Massachusetts because of their population makeup, a strong interest in agriculture among immigrant and refugee residents, and the support of community organizations.

Refugee communities served: Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Liberia, Ghana, Cameroon, Lebanon, Colombia, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Poland, Haiti, Kenya, Burundi, and Vietnam

The Learning Kitchen/Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program
Burlington, Vermont
<https://www.uvm.edu/extension/food/?Page=grow.html>

The Learning Kitchen/EFNEP offer cooking classes run by trained chefs and nutritionists designed to teach low income heads of household how to cook healthy and nutritious meals on a limited budget. The classes also highlight how to use certain ingredients that are often available at food pantries, but that may be difficult to use to construct a full meal. The websites of these organizations offer databases of recipes for these often difficult ingredients, and strive to provide

accessible cooking tips and instructions to allow food insecure families and individuals to make the most of the foods that are accessible to them. The classes are often modified to suit the needs of the group and fit the availability of the food pantry. Examples of class customization involve classes geared towards individuals facing both food insecurity and diabetes. These individuals received specific instruction in how to utilize limited budgets and resources to maximize their access to foods that meet their specific nutritional needs. Another example is newly arrived Somali Bantu refugees arriving in the United States from various refugee camps. These participants were taught not only how to shop on a budget and buy food that maximize nutrition and value, and how to cook unfamiliar foods often given out by food pantries, but also how to use potentially unfamiliar appliances, tools, and packaging to produce nutritious meals for their families. This program is conducted through a partnership between the University of Vermont Cooperative Extension and The Learning Kitchen. Volunteers chefs and nutritionists, as well as nutritionists employed by the state and local hospitals volunteer time, facilities vary based on the location of the group for which the class is designed. Food sources vary.

Groups Served- Bhutanese, Somali Bantu, general community

SOUTH Georgia

The listings below are posted online by Somali Community Office Nationwide, located in Utah. These organizations do not explicitly address the issue of food insecurity among immigrant and refugee populations. They do provide other supportive services, such as resettlement assistance, which are certainly relevant to the needs of immigrants and refugees and are connected to developing a sense of food security. Although I have not found the demographic data for Clarkston, it seems apparent by the number of Somali organizations listed that the city of Clarkston is similar to Lewiston:

- Somali Bantu Community Organization, Clarkston
- Sool Sanaag Haud Development Agency, Stone Mountain
- Georgia Somali Community, Clarkston
- United Somali Community of Georgia, Tucker
- African Community and Refugee Center, Clarkston
- Somali Brava and Hinterland Community Association of Atlanta, Lilburn
- Somali American Community Center Inc., Clarkston

Clarkston Community Center: (<http://www.clarkstoncommunitycenter.org/>)

Community center offers health and food related resources as well as transportation information for older refugees from Sudan, Ethiopia, Vietnam, and Somalia. Clarkston Community Center also support a health collaborative and community garden. Both services are available to immigrants and refugees. The health collaborative is a forum for community members to discuss public issues, such as transportation, medical availability, and cultural issues.

The community garden is partnered with Atlanta Community Food Bank Community's Gardens Project and Refugee Family Services.

Broadcast Services:

Qaran Radio (<http://www.qaranradio.com/>)

Sagal Radio Services (<http://www.sagalradio.net/>)

Community-based non-profit organization which broadcasts radio programs in several different languages including: Somali, Swahili, Bhutanese-Nepali. Radio programs make public service announcements regarding safety and health. Radio and television broadcasting may be an innovative tool for addressing immigrant and refugee food needs in Lewiston. Programs could be announced in Somali (and other foreign languages) for the immigrant and refugee populations.

Southeast Immigrant Farm Partners in collaboration with Glover Family Farms, Douglasville.

Hispanic families that participate in this project live in low income housing in the Fairburn area with limited access to land or garden plots to raise vegetables. As these families want to utilize their farming skills and pass this knowledge on to their children, this project will provide them with access to land on the 40-acre Glover Family Farms, as well as training in sustainable and organic growing practices, direct marketing outlets, and the chance to network with other Hispanic immigrant populations that have expressed interest in agriculture both to augment household food security as well as a direct livelihood strategy. This project provides the opportunity for participants to increase their household incomes, and one of the long range goals is for participating immigrants to acquire land to raise their own agricultural products. This last goal expands the ideal of food security to include the notion of food sovereignty, which can be understood as being able to produce their own food as a distinct community.

Tennessee

Community Food Advocates (<http://www.communityfoodadvocates.org/>)

Community Food Advocates provides three programs that specifically address food insecurity in and around Nashville. These services include: Food Stamp Outreach, Re/Storing Nashville, and Growing Healthy Kids. Re/Storing Nashville uniquely discusses "food deserts" in urban communities. "Food deserts" characterize communities that lack affordable food shopping centers, such as a supermarkets and grocery stores. Oftentimes, food deserts are instead populated by fast-food joints. Without access to affordable and healthy markets, residents are left no choice when deciding what to feed their families.

Food Stamp Outreach and Advocacy

Through SNAP/Food Stamp Outreach and Advocacy, Community Food Advocates aims to improve access to food for low-income and vulnerable people. The federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), commonly known as the Food Stamp program, provides individuals and families experiencing poverty with resources to help them purchase food. The

goal of SNAP/Food Stamp Outreach is to help increase program participation and advise individuals about eligibility. SNAP/Food Stamp Outreach targets five specific populations with information about SNAP/Food Stamps: Refugees and immigrants, seniors and people with disabilities, the “working poor,” or underemployed, people in transition from incarceration to the community, and people who are homeless. Through presentations, distribution of outreach brochures and one-on-one “pre-screenings,” Community Food Advocates informs potentially eligible people about SNAP/Food Stamps.

Re/Storing Nashville (<http://www.restoringnashville.org/>)

Re/Storing Nashville is building a grassroots movement to ensure that all residents have access to affordable, healthy foods. Leaders are promoting a city-wide campaign to address issues facing food deserts in Nashville. Program also works to reduce health risk in three identified “food deserts”: East Nashville/Cayce Homes, Edgehill, and North Nashville/Charlotte Ave. Re/Storing Nashville looks to create more direct public transportation routes to existing grocery stores from underserved areas, develop tax and zoning incentives to bring grocery stores to neighborhoods without them, and educate the city residents about “food deserts.”

Growing Healthy Kids (<http://www.foodsecuritypartners.org/growing-healthy-kids/index.php>)

Growing Healthy Kids provides food systems and food justice education. Growing Healthy Kids provides technical assistance and mini-grants to school gardens. Growing Healthy Kids is building parent and teacher leadership to advocate for meaningful changes to school foods including farm-to-school and the elimination of unhealthy snacks and competitive foods.

APPENDIX E: FULL LIST OF RELEVANT PROGRAMS FROM PHASE II SEARCH

APPENDIX E: FULL LIST OF SEARCH RESULTS IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL PROGRAMS RELEVANT IN ADDRESSING REFUGEE FOOD INSECURITY IN THE U.S.

NORTHEAST:

search terms: food insecurity refugee MAINE

RESULTS

Maine Marks

<http://www.mainemarks.org/indicators2007/ind55.html>

Eat Maine Foods!

<http://www.eatmainefoods.org/forum/topics/2003922:Topic:6890>

Good Shepherd Food Bank

http://gsfb.org/hunger/hunger_statistics.php

New American Sustainable Agriculture Project

http://www.immigrantfarming.org/webapp_2765322/New_American_Sustainable_Agriculture_Project

Refugee Services- Portland

<http://www.portlandmaine.gov/hhs/ssrefugee.asp>

search terms: food insecurity refugee LEWISTON

RESULTS

Downtown Education Collaborative

<http://www.declewiston.org/charts.htm>

Catholic Charities- Lewiston, ME

http://www.ccmaine.org/info.php?info_id=73

search terms: food insecurity refugee PORTLAND MAINE

RESULTS

Catholic Charities- Portland, ME

http://www.ccmaine.org/info.php?info_id=73

New American Sustainable Agriculture Project

http://www.immigrantfarming.org/webapp_2765322/New_American_Sustainable_Agriculture_Project

search terms: food insecurity refugee CONCORD NEW HAMPSHIRE

RESULTS

Church World Service

http://www.churchworldservice.org/site/PageServer?pagename=action_what_assist_contact_net_work

Lutheran Social Services

<http://www.lssne.org/About-LSS/LSS-in-the-News/Worcester-Telegram---Gazette-%281%29.aspx>

search terms: food insecurity refugee NASHUA NEW HAMPSHIRE

RESULTS

Food Solutions in New England

<http://www.foodsolutionsne.org/>

Church World Service

http://www.churchworldservice.org/site/PageServer?pagename=action_what_assist_contact_net_work

Lutheran Social Services

<http://www.lssne.org/About-LSS/LSS-in-the-News/Worcester-Telegram---Gazette-%281%29.aspx>

search terms: food insecurity refugee BURLINGTON VERMONT

RESULTS

Community Food Security Coalition

http://www.foodsecurity.org/cfa_outsideca.html

Vermont Bhutanese Association

<http://vermont-bhutanese-association.blogspot.com/>

search terms: food insecurity refugee CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS

RESULTS

none

search terms: food insecurity refugee ANSONIA CONNECTICUT

RESULTS

Kid Care Network

http://www.kidcarect.org/content/publish/resources_valley.shtml

search terms: food insecurity refugee HARTFORD CONNECTICUT

RESULTS

Community Food Security Coalition- Hartford

http://www.foodsecurity.org/cfa_outsideca.html

search terms: food insecurity refugee RHODE ISLAND

RESULTS

Farm Fresh Rhode Island

<http://www.farmfreshri.org/about/about.php>

search terms: food insecurity refugee NEW YORK CITY

RESULTS

Heifer Urban Garden Project

<http://www.heifer.org/site/c.edJRKQNiFiG/b.734899/>

Health For All

http://chicagoist.com/2010/01/12/health_for_all_refugees_in_chicago.php

search terms: food insecurity refugee OSWEGO NEW YORK

RESULTS

Oswego Center for Sustainable Living

<http://www.oswego-cfsl.com/>

search terms: food insecurity refugee NEW JERSEY

RESULTS

none

search terms: food insecurity refugee PENNSYLVANIA

RESULTS

Hunger and Food Insecurity in Pennsylvania

http://www.pahunger.org/html/hunger/ana_hungernpa.html

Church World Service

<http://www.churchworldservice.org/site/PageServer>

SOUTH:

search terms: Food security programs and refugees in TEXAS

RESULTS

None

search terms: Immigrants and Refugees in TENNESSEE

RESULTS

Tennessee Immigrant Refugee:

www.tnimmigrant.org

Somali Community Center of Nashville:

www.sccnashville.org

Nashville International Center for Empowerment:

www.empowernashville.org

search terms: Food Assistance for immigrants and refugees in TENNESSEE

RESULTS

Community Food Advocates:

www.communityfoodadvocates.org

Food Stamp Outreach and Advocacy

Re/Storing Nashville

Angel Food Ministries:

www.angelfoodministries.com

search terms: Food Insecurity refugees in TENNESSEE

RESULTS

Community Based Food System Monitoring System, Knoxville

search terms: Food security programs and refugees in SOUTH CAROLINA

RESULTS

Clemson University Extension – “Food safety, Nutrition, Health” Service

search terms: Immigrants and Refugees in NORTH CAROLINA

RESULTS

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program:

www.cmseniorcenter.org

search terms: Food Assistance for immigrants and refugees in MISSOURI

RESULTS

African Mutual Assistance Association of Missouri, St. Louis:

www.amaamus.org

Somali Foundation, Kansas City

Kansas City Urban Development Project:

<http://www.kccua.org/>

search terms: Immigrants and Refugees in GEORGIA

RESULTS

Somali Bantu Community Organization, Clarkston

Georgia Somali Community Inc., Clarkston

United Somali Community of Gerorgia, Tucker

African Community & Refugee Center, Clarkston

Somali Brava and Hinterland Community Association of Atlanta

search terms: Food acculturation in FLORIDA

RESULTS

Bread of the Mighty Food Bank, Gainesville:

www.breadofthemighty.org

University of Florida IFAS Extension

http://www.immigrantfarming.org/project_profiles.html

New Farmworker Association of Florida

Fellsmere Community Farm Project

search terms: Somali Immigrants and Refugees in MARYLAND

RESULTS

The Somali American Community Association Inc.

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service:

www.lirs.org

Maryland Hunger Solutions, Baltimore

search terms: African Immigrants and Refugees in DELAWARE

RESULTS

None

search terms: Immigrants and Refugees in VIRGINIA

RESULTS

Refugee and Immigrant Services, Richmond (part of Commonwealth Catholic Charities):

www.risva.org

Somali Family Care Network Inc., Fairfax

Search terms: Immigrant and Refugee food assistance programs in VIRGINIA

RESULTS

Center for Multicultural Human Services, Falls Church:

www.cmhsweb.org

search terms: Immigrant and Refugees food insecurity in WEST VIRGINIA

RESULTS

Congressional Hunger Center:

www.hungercenter.org

“Partner Organizations”

search terms: Food Security ALABAMA

RESULTS

CROP Walk

Home Grown Alabama

Growing Together

Cantebury Chapel Project

Deacons Deli – Food Pantry

David City Garden Project, Tuscaloosa:

www.alabamapossible.org

search terms: Food Security LOUISIANA

RESULTS

New Orleans Food and Farm Network

search terms: Food Help for Immigrants in MISSISSIPPI

RESULTS

No programs identified

Relevant articles:

Study about dietary acculturation of Hispanic immigrants in Mississippi:

http://www.scielo.org/scielo.php?pid=S0036-36342005000500005&script=sci_arttext

“Food help for refugees in Mississippi” – approximately 70 Sudanese refugees resettled in Jackson, Mississippi:

<http://www.globalsecurity.org/org/news/2004/041129-sudan.htm>

MIDWEST:

search terms: food insecurity refugee DETROIT MICHIGAN STATE

RESULTS

Family Independence Program for families in need:

<http://www.theinfocenter.info/pubs/eg/3.pdf>

Information about receiving emergency relief:

<http://www.theinfocenter.info/pubs/eg/3.pdf>

search terms: food insecurity refugee CHICAGO ILLINOIS STATE

RESULTS

Interfaith Refugee & Immigration Ministries

<http://www.irim.org/>

search terms: food insecurity refugee MINNEAPOLIS MINNESOTA STATE

RESULTS

World Relief Minnesota

<http://www.worldreliefmn.org/resources/services-for-refugees/>

search terms: food insecurity refugee GRAND FORKS NORTH DAKOTA STATE

RESULTS

Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota

<http://www.lssnd.org/newamericans/index.html>

search terms: food insecurity refugee ST. LOUIS MISSOURI STATE

RESULTS

Catholic Charities Archdiocese of Saint Louis

<http://www.ccstl.org/services/family-and-community/151-catholic-refugee-services.html>

search terms: food insecurity refugee IOWA CITY IOWA STATE

RESULTS

None

search terms: food insecurity refugee LA CROSSE WISCONSIN STATE

RESULTS

Directory for Family Connections in Wisconsin

http://www.familyconnectionsswwi.org/?page_id=25

search terms: food insecurity refugee FORT WAYNE INDIANA STATE

RESULTS

None

search terms: food insecurity refugee CLEVELAND OHIO STATE

RESULTS

None

search terms: food insecurity refugee LINCOLN NEBRASKA STATE

RESULTS

Nebraska Food Cooperative

<http://www.nebraskafood.org/>

search terms: food insecurity refugee KANSAS CITY KANSAS STATE

RESULTS

Urban Grown

<http://www.kccua.org/ug-4-08.htm>

search terms: food insecurity refugee SOUTH DAKOTA STATE

RESULTS

None

search terms: food insecurity refugee OKLAHOMA CITY OKLAHOMA STATE

RESULTS

Catholic Charities Archdiocese of Oklahoma City

<http://www.catholiccharitiesok.org/index.php?id=28>

search terms: food insecurity refugee LITTLE ROCK ARKANSAS STATE

RESULTS

None

WEST:

search terms: food insecurity refugee WASHINGTON STATE:

RESULTS

Washington state food assistance and refugees/immigrants:

<http://lettucelink.blogspot.com/2010/12/threats-to-food-security-for-immigrants.html>

Statewide programs seeking to address food insecurity in low-income communities:

<http://depts.washington.edu/waaction/action/n2/index.html>

information about receiving Refugee Cash Assistance (RAC):

<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/manuals/eaz/sections/Ref-C-Cash.shtml>

search terms: food insecurity refugee SEATTLE WASHINGTON STATE:

RESULTS

Refugee Empowerment Agricultural Program (REAP):

<http://www.urbanfarmhub.org/2010/12/ohio-city-farm-helps-newcomers-adapt/>

search terms: food insecurity refugee PORTLAND OREGON:

RESULTS

community food security coalition:

<http://www.foodsecurity.org/>

Somali Bantu Refugee Food Security, Training and Community Building Project (2004):

<http://www.heifer.org/site/c.edJRKQNiFiG/b.734899/>

Government Assistance through IRCO: <http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/assistance/refugee/self-sufficiency.shtml>

New American Agriculture Project:

http://www.edibleportland.com/2008/03/growing_new_roo.html

<http://www.mercycorpsnw.org/what-we-do/new-american-agricultural-project/>

Zenger Farm:

<http://www.zengerfarm.org/emerging-farmer-training-program>

search terms: food insecurity refugee SALT LAKE CITY UTAH:

RESULTS

article on refugee community gardening in Salt Lake City:

<http://www.deseretnews.com/article/700031382/A-miracle-garden-in-South-Salt-Lake.html>

proposal for creation of a microfarm educational program:

<http://refugee.utah.gov/home/documents/microtrainingfarmrfp.pdf>

(also a branch in Kansas:

<http://newrootsforrefugees.blogspot.com/>

<http://www.grist.org/article/Kansas-City-pioneers-new-models-for-urban-farms>)

(urban farms article: <http://www.grist.org/article/food-urban-farms-around-america-are-breaking-through-concrete-and-hit/PALL>)

search terms: food insecurity refugee IDAHO:

RESULTS

Global Gardens Refugee Agricultural Project (Boise, Star, Eagle)

http://www.idahorefugees.org/Home/Global_Gardens/

The Abundance Project (IRC)

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=85508273528&v=wall&viewas=0>

Backyard Harvest (Moscow)

<http://www.backyardharvest.org/Moscow,ID>

(Also a branch in Santa Barbara, CA:

http://www.backyardharvest.org/Santa_Barbara,CA)

search terms: food insecurity refugee SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA:

RESULTS

International Rescue Committee (IRC):

<http://ircsandiego.blogspot.com/p/food-security.html>

search terms: food insecurity refugee OAKLAND CALIFORNIA:

RESULTS

Refugee garden in Oakland:

http://www.insidebayarea.com/top-stories/ci_16299545

search terms: food insecurity refugee LONG BEACH CALIFORNIA:

RESULTS

none

search terms: food insecurity refugee DENVER COLORADO:

RESULTS

Somali Bantu Farming Council:

http://www.immigrantfarming.org/_webapp_2877411/Somali_Bantu_Farming_Council_of_Colorado

search terms: food insecurity refugee BOULDER COLORADO:

RESULTS

none

search terms: food insecurity refugee PHOENIX ARIZONA:

RESULTS

IRC Phoenix:

<http://www.theirc.org/us-program/us-phoenix-az/programs>

search terms: food insecurity refugee TUCSON ARIZONA:

RESULTS

Iskash*taa Refugee Harvesting Network

<http://www.iskashitaa.org/>

APPENDIX F: DENVER URBAN GARDENS INTERVIEW WITH HEATHER DE LONG: TRANSCRIPT

MN: Hi, my name is Molly and I'm calling from Bates College, I'm calling about your phone interview for the refugee and immigrant food immigration study. I'm going to be interviewing you instead of Lily. She is feeling a little sick today, but we are members of the same group. If it's ok with you, I'm going to turn on our recording equipment. You might get a little static. Can you hear me? Heather?

H: I can barely hear you.

MN: Can you hear me now?

H: Yes.

MN: So, just a refresher, we are at Bates College doing a study on immigrant and refugee food insecurity and programs that seek to address it across the country. We have some questions for you about the organization that you work for.

H: Sure.

MN: I'd like to start out by asking you about major issues regarding food insecurity in the Denver, CO area. Can you just give me some general background about that?

H: I'm sorry, about...can you repeat that?

MN: Yeah, can you just give us some background and context for food insecurity in immigrant populations in the Denver area?

H: you know, I can tell you from what I'm familiar with.

MN: Yeah, definitely.

H: You know, a lot of issues around food deserts, and access to healthy food, and Denver is extremely large, there are a lot of refugees that are displaced here in Denver that might not have access to grocery stores or farmers markets within a reasonable walking distance. I think it is especially challenging for families, to worry about the transportation piece.

MN: Yeah, definitely.

H: As well as the financial piece. As I'm sure you now, healthy foods are more costly than unhealthy foods. So that would be the major issue facing most families that I know.

MN: Thank you so much, can you tell me a little bit about the program you work with and how you guys work to address those kinds of issues?

H: Mhmm. I work for Denver Urban Gardens. We run programs and outreach for Delaney community farms, a CFA program. First just a little about DUG, we just broke ground on our 100th community garden.

MN: Wow.

H: Yeah, it is our 25th anniversary. It's very exciting. And so, we do have a lot of refugee families that are participating in those gardens and we also have a free seeds and transplant program where people can fill out an application and request a certain number. 7 seed packets and 7 packs of transplants. And that is cut in half from last year, our funding was cut, but it is still a pretty successful and helpful program. You just fill out an application and when the seeds are ready they will be at our distribution center. So that is one way. And then, in the past, as I told your fellow classmate we used to have a refugee farming program at Delaney -- I'm sorry, I'm echoing.

MN: No, its fine.

H: We used to have a refugee-farming program and it did end several years ago. But we are restarting that this coming season. We are working with Lutheran Family Services, bringing on five refugee individuals, who will be able to work at Delaney as interns and receive food. And Lutheran family services will provide their token, TANIF money, are hopes are they will provide not only food and a community but also skills to help people gain employment in the field, whether it is in a greenhouse or in a garden shop or down other avenues that they might discover.

MN: yeah, that sounds great. Can you tell me a little more about how you guys were able to being restarting this program? Like where you got your funding from and, just bringing that program back?

H: Yeah, actually it was pretty amazing how it came together. One of the reasons that we haven't been able to restart the program for the last couple years has been the issue of funding. And we have been working with a specific group of people in the past, the Somali Bantu, and there is a lot of different things to take in to consideration. And our program was really large before, and probably focusing on more things than we should have. So we were looking to partner with someone who could take on the other pieces. So that they could take on those other areas in which they have knowledge, such as TANIF. And now we are still wrapping our heads around some of the issues. And actually, Lutheran Family Services actually approached us.

MN: Oh wow.

H: Yeah, so we have been trying to talk to people for years about whom we could partner with. And we never spoke with them, but then they approached us. They said well, if you can do this piece and we can handle that. So, it is where we are most knowledgeable, in training interns. We have lots and lots of experience with that. And so we are specifically able to concentrate on that

and provide food, while other people take on the funding aspect, and bus tokens, and making sure that they receive their TANIF money. So that is not a piece that we have to do. And, like I said, partnering with someone who has knowledge in that area. So it came together pretty naturally where people are able to work on the areas that they are best, or most knowledgeable in. so we don't really have to worry about funding or the grant piece at this point, which is pretty wonderful.

MN: That's amazing. So, just so I'm sure that I am getting this right -- so through the partnership, your organization has been able to take on the gardening and farming education. And the LFS is working on the actual logistical support aspects of the program?

H: Yeah, well, will be doing. In the future.

MN: Yeah.

H: We are picking the five individuals who will participate in the program in February.

MN: OK, thank you so much. Can you tell me a little more about how the old version of the program that focused on Somali Bantus and what the major challenges that you guys faced with that were?

H: Sure. In that situation, they approached us. I lived in West Africa for a few years working on agriculture issues and Somali Bantus are from east Africa. They heard that a girl who used to live in Africa was working on agriculture and then they came to me. That's pretty much how it came together.

MN: Oh wow.

H: Yeah, but it was really pretty large. And I was the only person at the time working on the farm, the only full time employee. I was the farm manager. We have a lot of other programs as well. We have a CFA that supports our shareholder members, we also have a WIC program where women, infants, and children clients can come to the farm and work for an hour in exchange for a bag of produce. We support other community programs as well, with other non-profits that work to support in need populations as well. where our food goes to that organization and they distribute it to their clientele. So we have a lot of other things going on as well. And, at the time, we had worked with the Bantus to try and figure out a program that was doable. And, we had a specific number of individuals that we are working with. They had a larger farming council. and communication was extremely difficult. So we had the five who we had chosen for the program that would come to the farm but some days another hundred people would come to the farm.

MN: Oh, wow.

H: So any day the rest of our programs and the interns and WIC and sometimes a 150 Somali Bantu would be at the farm. Wanting to work, wanting food.

MN: Wow.

H: And we didn't really have funding for it, but the first year it. Actually, if I could backtrack. The first year worked out really well. That first year they worked at the farm, I would say, gaining skills. Ah, that might not be totally accurate. These people are extremely skilled in agriculture, just not necessarily being skilled in Colorado agriculture. Which is very different from where they came from and where they were farming. And also just getting to know people in the community, because it is really difficult for refugees who arrive in the states and immediately need to get jobs, which is very difficult. So this allowed them to meet all sorts of people.

MN: Absolutely.

H: So that was really important. And just getting people involved and connected to the community. So the first year went really well. The second year people started using our program as a model. Which is interesting, because we were only a year into it. but it was at the time when refugee farming was becoming more popular, and -- not trendy, but definitely more people were interested in it, and doing it. So we had a lot of people coming to us about funding, and people were reaching out to the Somali Bantu separately, and talking to them about helping them get a farm in the future and this and that. So it wasn't so much that our communication was down, it was outside communication. I think that they started hoping for funding to have their own farm, and their own land. And all these things that actually are pretty complicated, because there was not that time to built relationships between those other organizations and the Somali Bantu. It's just that those relationships are slow, and a product of trust and understanding...

MN: Yeah.

H: I don't think how complicated these issues can be was entire conveyed -- I think that things just got really complicated. And all of a sudden we were doing all our programs and ESL classes at the farm, and nutrition programs at the farm, and business classes. And we were doing all this, myself and another woman I work with. And doing all the paper work, and food stamp applications, and it just got much larger than we had to capacity to run it.

As well as there was internal conflict within the group themselves. Who was the leader? And who makes the decisions? And who was the person to go to within the farming council? The combination of all of these things lead to us having to postpone the program all together. It definitely was not moving in a direction that was productive, or sustainable. And it was really unfortunate the way that it happened. But we took a step back from it and one of the men who was an elder leader for the community. It was about a year that I didn't see anyone. But it was this elderly man, Hamadi, has been coming any way to the farm this year. He just started

showing up again, and I'm very close with his children and have been throughout the year. And his kids told me that he didn't really care about the council at this point, that he just cared about being able to get outside, and work, and he cared about food. And also his mental state, he needed to be able to work outside and connect with the land. More important than anything else that had gone on with their council. So he ended up working at the farm all this past year, and we got him a small stipend. Again, really small. But, it wasn't in our budget at all, he just started showing up. But he will be a part of our program next year. So there has been a continued relationship with people that wasn't even planned for.

MN: It sounds like you guys run a ton of programming designed at addressing food insecurity. Can you give me a rundown of all the programs that you offer?

HDL: I can tell you from (about) the farm. For the farm specifically we'll be starting the refugee farming program, and then there's WICK -- are you familiar with WICK?

MN: I'm familiar with WICK, but I was intrigued by your description of it. Mothers and children can come to the farm and work for an hour and they receive a bag of produce?

HDL: Right. We have a partnership with the Tri-County Health Department, and they've been very supportive -- they've definitely been in our funding this year because it's been such a successful program. In the past, when I first started working for Denver Urban Gardens five years ago, on Tuesdays and Saturdays clients were able to come to the farm, and these are women who qualify for WICK who are at -- I'm not sure, it's poverty level but I don't know the exact amount -- it's women who are low-income with children under the age of 5 that qualify for WICK, which is a government funded program. Through this partnership with Denver Urban Gardens and Tri-county Health Department, women are able to come Tuesdays and Saturdays and work for one hour in exchange for a bag of food. So they're in the community, meeting people, gaining knowledge in gardening and agriculture, and learning different skills. Then we harvest on site with them, or if (...) the day before, it depends on what food we have at the time, but they take the same amount of food -- a half share -- as one of our shareholders. We have half share members and whole share members, and they take the amount of a half share. They can come both days if they wish. There's not a cap on that.

One of the things that I saw was women would come and if they weren't familiar with the food they wouldn't take it. Or they just wouldn't come back because there was a communication barrier, or just a barrier within different groups of people out there because there are a lot of different ethnic, socioeconomic groups, I think because of the people who buy sustainable and organic the CSA can be intimidating sometimes. So we started another program, where myself and my intern go into the WICK clinic once a week during the growing season and provide cooking demonstrations based on what we have that week. Really really simple recipes, like if you come out to the farm this week you'll definitely receive this and here's an example of how to use it. We provide people with recipes in Spanish and in English. Since then, five years ago, I

would see maybe 1-2 families per work day, and this year we averaged 16 families per work day. A lot of those families are returning twice a week, coming Tuesday/Saturday, and I think a lot that has to do with outreach (...) but also connecting with people more. Going into the clinic people see my face, they see my intern's face; if they come out to the farm they know they have lots of people that they already feel comfortable with, that they've made a connection with.

So we do that. Then we have what are called community partner shares, where people can purchase a share for an organization and then it goes to their clients. So we work with Project Angel Heart; they deliver breakfast lunch and dinner to the homes of people who are terminally ill with various cancers or HIV/AIDS or any number of diseases. Most of the people are low income, don't have family to help them, don't have transportation. The executive chef there who is part of our program (...) Organics, uses our food for people who have specific dietary restrictions or who are vegetarian or just offer different items. He just believes in the power of organic and healthy foods, keeping people's health and immune systems high. So that's a really great program, and we deliver once a week to them throughout the growing season and then any extra donations we have as well. Our other partner groups are Colorado Aid Project, we also deliver once a week to them, and that food goes to their food pantry, and clients can come in once a week. They're given a certain ration: like, this week this is how much food we have, this is how many clients we expect, so you can have two tomatoes, four carrots, or whatever it is. We also work with the Gathering Place, which is a non-profit here, it's a (...) facility for homeless women and their children. They have a lot of programs there: a lot of education programs helping people study for the GED, and art classes, but one of the programs that they offer as well provides breakfast lunch and dinner in their facility. Our food also goes to them.

MN: This is a really impressive complement of programming. How do you accommodate all of this stuff with the varied growing season? How do you accomplish all of these things when it's not summer or the time of year when you're harvesting?

HDL: Well, those (programs) are specific to the growing season. Then we offer classes throughout the season -- this year we had probably too many -- we offer lots of classes on preserving food, and it's a five dollar suggested donation from people that are not members of the farm but it's free to any of our members, including the clients. If anybody came and didn't have the five dollars then we would waive the fee, but we do a lot classes on food preservation so in times of surplus we do encourage people to try to preserve their food to make that harvest longer. Obviously we just don't want anybody to waste any food at all. So we do that, and then during the off-season, a lot of our time is just planning for the following season.

MN: So how many people does it take to make all of this happen?

HDL: It's myself, and Fatimah _____ (from website) who is the operations coordinator, so she's our farmer. She has three interns who work full time at the farm throughout the season, 32 hours a week, and I have an intern as well for 32 hours a week, and myself and my intern are at

the farm several days a week but we're not there every day because we're in the office, at clinics. Then we have a ton of volunteers throughout the season. There's no way that we could accomplish the work without our volunteer base, hundreds and hundreds of volunteers throughout the season -- partnerships that we've had for years with large groups or corporate organizations that come for work days, and just individuals from the community. Also, all of our shareholder members are required to do monthly work hours, whether you're a paid shareholder or a working shareholder. You know, we have a staff of two, and then our interns; it's really the community providing support for the program that make that happen, as far as actually growing the food. The programmatic staff is myself and Fatimah.

MN: That's really cool. Can you tell me a little about where you get the funding to offer all these programs?

HDL: Let's see. As I said before, the new refugee program will not require funding because Lutheran Family Services will take on that piece; the WICK program, funding comes from Tri-County health department; all of the community partner shares, the organizations themselves raise money to support their shares -- but I also go out into the community and try to raise money as well, provide presentations to corporate organizations to sponsor a share; our classes, the people I reach out to provide the classes do them for free, people that are highly knowledgeable in their area offer those pro bono to us; our shareholders obviously pay, themselves.

Any time that we operate at a loss at Delaney, which is pretty common, funding comes from various sources: SCFC which is the Scientific Cultural ___ Facility, we get a good amount of money from them every year to operate our program, and then other parts come from our general operating funds from Denver Urban Gardens. But we do try to operate within the limits of the revenue that we have.

MN: can you give me an idea of what your annual budget is?

HDL: At Delaney, not including staff salary, we operate at under I think 40,000.

MN: Wow. You do a lot of programming for that.

HDL: Yeah. It's a lot of work for not a lot of money and somehow we make it happen. We also have a farmstand every Friday where we sell our surplus for donations and that kind of goes back into the pot, we definitely are trying to raise money any place that we can. I'd say we've raised a little over 30,000 dollars for our shareholders -- not raise money, but the shareholders pay into the farm thirty, thirty five thousand, and then (there's) an extra 10,000 for the community partner shares and WICK program. But that's it.

MN: are there any programs that you aren't currently able to offer but that you're interested in implementing in the future?

HDL: If you'd asked me this a month ago I would've said the refugee-farming program. Magically, that's come back to fruition.

MN: Well that's pretty exciting.

HDL: Yeah it's really exciting. At this point that program might evolve into something else, but I think we're probably at capacity for what we're able to manage.

MN: I can see how that would be true. Just in conclusion, can you give me an overview of what the most effective strategies that you guys have used have been?

HDL: At the farm specifically or for Denver Urban Gardens?

MN: At the farm specifically.

HDL: You know, the most effective piece I would really say is building relationships. Taking time to be sure that our own members understand our program and all the different things that we do, and just having lots of years to make connections with people and build trust with our WICK clients and with our shareholders and with refugee farmers. And supporting our volunteers where we're able. People come out and volunteer and we give them food where we can. I don't know, I think the community piece is extremely important to creating a special program. Because I don't think that you can offer, with such small farming, without the support of so many people. I think that would probably be the most important element.

APPENDIX G: NEW ENTRY SUSTAINABLE FARMING PROJECT INTERVIEW WITH KIMBERLEY FITCH: TRANSCRIPT

Lily: We are doing a national search for programs that address food insecurity, food access, and immigrant and refugee communities across the United States. We are specifically interested in programs that address immigrant and refugee populations, so that is how we found your organization. We are especially interested in the logistical components of how this stuff works. So we have some general questions related to numbers of your organization and the support that is necessary to get programs like yours off the ground. We also have some questions about contextualizing food insecurity in the regions that you serve, so Massachusetts specifically. We also have questions about the program's function based on your experience.

Starting with our numbers-based questions, did you have a starting grant to get the program started initially?

Lowell: I have been with the program for about five and half years. The program has been around for about twelve years and for about ten of those years we had a grant from US Department of Risk Management Agency, and other USDA agencies that are interested in assisting people that are socially and economically disadvantaged and gaining opportunities in farming.

I should add that we have diversified and we have grown and very much, changed from its roots in certain ways. We have a more diversified type of funds including from USDA and state agencies and funds from private foundations as well as donor funds, and we currently run a community supported agriculture program. Even though this is 2010, we expect to use some retained earnings from that program to fund our programs in the future.

Lily: You covered most of the funding sources we were going to ask about and so the other two we were going to check into were educational institutions and corporate institutions.

Lowell: What a great question. Currently, we do not receive any funding from educational institutions. However, we are set up to have a joint partnership between Tufts University Freedman School in Boston and a local community action group in Lowell called Community Teamwork, Inc. Both of those entities are set up to help us in many ways although they do not provide any direct funding. They help us with strategic planning and direction and we have an office set up in Boston at the Freedman School. The community action group helps with community outreach. As far as with the corporations there is a lot of opportunity that we need to do more of. We haven't done enough of that.

Lily: Are there others besides those partnerships?

Lowell: Those are most important, but we have many partnerships with individuals and other organizations. For example, we just got a grant from a federal agency, which will fund an initiative to get a livestock training on our farms and to provide training for others around the state. This allows us to bring our knowledge, expertise and our educational program to others around the state and outside our

immediate area. So for example, we will be working with a group called Lutheran Social Services from Worcester and Springfield and working with their clients and educating them about livestock, and how to raise livestock, and how to start businesses with livestock. We are also working with another group in Holyoke and doing the same thing with them from that grant, so that may have more of an impact.

Lily: That is fantastic. So you are working with Lutheran Social Services, but that is not faith based, correct?

Lowell: No, they are assisting recent immigrant population through charities.

Lily: Yes, we have a similar group. Catholic Charities helping with recent immigrants in Lewiston.

Lowell: Yes, we are aware of them and work closely with them as well.

Lily: Do you have branches throughout the state?

Lowell: Right now we have three core full time people and four part time people. So we do not have the capacity at this point. That is why it is so important to work with partnerships in order to train people, so that they may train other people in areas such as developing livestock and agriculture businesses and farms.

Lily: What is the current operating budget?

Lowell: It is \$750,000.

Lily: How many people does the program serve?

Lowell: That is difficult to calculate and everyone we serve is important, so I will give you an idea by describing the Farm Business Planning Program. We connect with folks who are looking to learn about putting together a detailed business plan for running a farm. We have a six-week program to provide them the technical assistance to get help with the challenges they have with managing pests, weeds, irrigation, etc. It is an intensive program and we work closely with the people and have an ongoing relationship with them. They are able to lease land from us for up to three years. After that we help them find independent land from us so that they may continue independently. We started that program in 2004 and have graduated about 100 people from that program. We also have a program where we conduct workshops and curriculum around livestock. We cover beef cattle, swine, poultry, sheep, goat, how to process chickens about 250 people have gone through that. It is less formal and people can take workshops when they come up. We also help people with land to connect with people who want to farm. We are continually looking to cultivate new land and want a map of all farmable land. We are getting interns to help us with this, as it is a really long process. We want to provide one on one assistance to people that want to farm on farmable land.

Lily: That is really great. What immigrant and refugee communities have you worked with?

Lowell: The interesting thing is that we work with immigrants and refugees in the Merrimack Valley region where we have people coming to us from all over the world. We have people from Vietnam, Western Africa, Puerto Rico, South America, and Central American.

Lily: Do you specialize your programs for people of different parts of the world?

Lowell: What we do is we put out publications in plain language for everyone to understand. Some have limited English capacity so we try to accommodate for them. We demonstrate how to use the equipment in other parts of the state that can absorb things visually so that we can accommodate those that have limited English proficiency.

Lily: The starting funds –what was required initially to make sure the program was viable for funding?

Lowell: That is a great question. I don't know if I am qualified to answer that question, I wasn't here at that time. I don't want to give you false information. In my experience, what makes the program viable is a heavy social mission that funders connect to. Our program helps socially and economically disadvantaged. We help many people get additional earning beyond their regular jobs. We operated a multi-farmer CSA. Farmers connect directly to customers so that they may overcome challenges. The CSA is going into the sixth year and this CSA not only fills a gap between farmers and consumers, but there is also a growing demand just to access locally produced food. The CSA, for the first time, broke even last year, and for the first time we believe we will make a profit in order for some unrestricted funds to be used for our educational programs. In addition to that, the CSA is also very important because not only is it serving people that have the capacity to pay for locally produced healthy vegetables for their families, but also it helps to get these foods into low-income communities. We ask our shareowners to donate to help get locally produced foods for those that cannot afford to do so. With this funding we are able to now touch and help out many, many families in the Boston area. We also work with WIC offices and establish partnerships with municipalities to get food into the hands of low-income seniors, moms and infants who are in need. When funders hear that story, then what we do becomes even more important and compelling.

Lily: Do you have a suggestion of who we can talk to about the initial viability question?

Lowell: Our program director is crazy busy, but you may get her via email. Let her know that I suggested that you go to her. I can give you her email right now. It is Jennifer.hashley@tufts.edu.

Lily: Great. Thank you so much. We have just a few questions about food insecurity in the Eastern Massachusetts region. What do you see as the major issues around food insecurity and access in your region?

Lowell: Great question. Right now what I see is a lack of small-scale farmers to meet the current needs. Just speaking from our experience we have been taking baby steps to get locally produced food for access. It is really expensive to join the CSA. Right now it is \$750 for a share. So people have to pay that up front, and that allows up to eighteen weeks of fresh vegetables, but most people cannot afford that so the first couple of years of the CSA program we were only accommodating people who could afford that.

We were not comfortable with that, so we worked to get the food into communities where there was a food deficit. Through establishing relationships we were able to get the funds to get food into the low-income communities. This is such a little baby step. There are so many other needs in the low income communities and we hope to build our program, but it will never be enough due to the amount of need. If other folks could follow our lead by establishing a relationship with the paying customers in order to service low income communities, we would love that. But whatever we do is never going to be enough, you know there is just so much need out there, and you know and if other folks can kind of follow our lead, other CSAs maybe can follow our lead and you use us as a model for establishing relationships with paying customers and then leveraging that to receive donations from these people to set up ways to be able to service low income folks, that would be great. I would love it, I would love it.

Lily: Wonderful. So when you when you talk about serving low income communities as well as communities who can afford it to begin with, does that in anyway include the immigrant and refugee populations?

Lowell: Yeah, that's a great question. Sure. A number of the folks who we are serving right now in East Boston are immigrants, and many are not. And through, just through our education programs, and our technical assistance programs, a number of our farmers who are immigrants and refugees sell into their communities, and they make money through partnerships, through their churches and other organizations that they belong to, to sell directly into their communities. We have a farmers market in Lowell during the growing season and one of our farmers whose name is (name), he is from Cambodia. He sells, you know he sells to anybody who comes to his booth at the farmers market, but most of his customers are Cambodian folks. And if you even try to approach his booth on s farmer's market day there are so many people surrounding him, looking for what he grows because he grows a lot of things native to his homeland and there is big demand for that from the immigrants who live in Lowell, and even if I go to try and buy something from him, I have to wait a long time, I have try and get through this wall of people who are all clamoring for his beautiful, delicious, locally grown, ethnic produce. So he sells to people who are immigrants in his community and he makes food accessible and he makes money through doing that.

Lily: That's really, really, great. That is such an encouraging thing to hear. Do you know of other programs that address, other than the ones we have talked about of course already obviously, do you know of other programs that address hunger and food insecurity in immigrant and refugee populations in the regions where your organization operates? And how successful would you say these approaches have been?

Lowell: Yeah, so another organization that sort of stemmed out of our model is called the Bolton Flats Organization and you might want to reach out to them to talk with them about their challenges and successes and so on. You can Google them to find, you know I am sure they are online, but they're out of Lancaster Mass, which is not that far away and they work with Hmong population out there and actually that program is sort off an off shoot of our program. We, back in 2004, educated a lot of those Hmong farmers who are on that land and since they have sort of broken off to establish their own project, so... most of their activity is out of the Fitchburg area and so I think they have been successful, but they sort of have a different direction I think in approaching their, you know, the demands for locally produced food

in their area. I know they have a lot, a lot of farmer, farmer market activity - heavy, heavy farmer market activity. Another project is called Noitas Rasas, which I mentioned earlier; they are one of our funding partners. They're project is out in Holliock Mass and they're also online, so you might want to email them and touch base if you need more information with how they operate, but they have mainly a Spanish speaking clientele. And so in both cases, of Bolton Flats and Nuestras Raices, they have a pretty homogenous population that they service, so in a way, that sort off makes things easier for service delivery, whereas we're... its great that we deal with so many different cultures, languages, backgrounds, but it makes it a little bit of a challenge to try and draw people together and to feel as part of one community. So that is always a challenge we have had with our program.

Lily: That's great! ... So... (Let's see, we have covered a lot of this stuff already which is great), so (when the program started, how long its been). I guess we've probably touched on this like fairly well, but just to sort of get it all out in the open what the goals are of the... I guess we've talked about the mission but if there are some specific goals other than what we have already talked about that you could lay out for us?

Lowell: Yeah, so you know, in addition to continuing to grow some of our core programs so that we have... so that our expertise and our education is as impactful as it can be, we want to draw in as many people to take advantage of what we have to offer as possible. So we're always looking for ways to reach out to more people and draw more people into our programs. One of our initiatives that we started last year is a distant learning initiative and we are taking our farm business-planning course, our six-week course, and putting that online. Right now people actually have to come to a classroom in Lowell to take that course, but in the future our goal is to have that course available, accessible to anyone from anywhere at any time. So we have, you know, made a lot of progress in getting this pilot program going and we expect within 2011 that we will have something online out there as a test to sort of jump start that learning initiative. Also we are starting, for 2011, a beginning farmer agricultural alliance, where we are going to coordinate groups of people all over Massachusetts and based on a needs assessment that we did last year, try to provide them with resources and information on how they can best educate farmers in their programs or if they're individuals, how they can best grow their businesses. We are going to establish a way for people to be able talk to one another through this alliance and meet with one another through this alliance, and since we have already developed lots of training materials, which we've been tweaking and have evolved throughout the years, we're going to try to find a way to make our expertise available to other folks. So that's definitely an objective starting in 2011, to develop this alliance.

Lily: Excellent.

Lowell: We're also... and I've brushed on this, but we're also looking to develop on one of our training farms, which in the... as farm as our history is concerned, have been used to grow vegetables, produce vegetables and fruits on our farms, we're going to create a livestock production site on one of those training sites. That involves a lot of capital investment and a lot of focus and time and energy and effort. So we have hired a person on our staff, a new person on our staff, who actually went to our farm business planning course, to jumpstart this initiative for us and develop the resources around, or rather make the purchases that are required in order to set up this livestock program. And we have the funding for it, but

now we just recently hired a staff person so that we can follow through with our program. That's an objective for, starting in 2011.

And then the last one I will talk about is our CSA. This year, for 2010, we actually broke even for the first time. In the past, the CSA has been subsidized through small foundation grants, but next year we hope to be able to for the first time see a profit in our CSA and be able to use some earnings from that program to use towards, apply towards our education program, which is where, sort of where the farmers start before they can, are eligible to grow for the CSA. This is where they get all of their initial training.

Lily: Alright, this is really... we're really gettin' somewhere now. ... sooo... I guess so we've talked a little bit about, the... the next question is about the effective strategies that you've developed in garnering support for the organization, but we've covered that pretty thoroughly I think in the questions about funding, but what about participation? What's... how do you get... how do you... do you recruit people to participate?

Lowell: Yeah, yeah so we use this multi-faceted approach to reach people. And I'll just tell you a little bit about our history, starting back in 2004 when we first started our farm business planning class, through 2008 all of our participants were either immigrants or refugees. Those were the people who were coming to us, who were most in need of our services, programs. And starting around 2009, we started to hear from a lot of voices who were US-born folks, who were saying 'look, you guys provide these great services to immigrants and refugees, would you consider providing the same services to us?' We started hearing this more and more frequently, we're not really sure why, but suddenly we started to hear these voices and we started to pay attention to them and we started to conduct our trainings and welcome a more diverse audience in and open our trainings up to everyone. So now, as far as our outreach is concerned, we have a really multi-faceted approach because we want to be able to find the folks who, traditionally, we've had to use more grassroots effort to connect with, as well as folks who are internet savvy -- who use Facebook and twitter and blogs and so forth. So we are using all these different outreach techniques. We have our outreach coordinator who goes to community events and brings visual aids with him and talks to people one-on-one and frequently touches base with immigrants and refugees who wouldn't otherwise have any reason to connect with us through computer means, their own computers, people that are not computer literate. Some of the people who we work with are not even literate in their own language. So it makes connections challenging, but we do what we can to dig deep and find folks who... through our partners in Lowell and the Merrimack Valley region, we try to connect with people as much as possible through grassroots community events.

We also have an online database where we keep all of our contact information for folks who have email. We have over four thousand people in our database who want to learn about our programs and services in various areas. Some people want to learn about our farm employment program, some folks want to learn about our explore farming curriculum, some folks want to learn about our livestock curriculum. Everybody, you know, has a different vision for their farm. So we keep in touch with these folks and we email them about trainings whenever they come up. Right now, I am planning for a major farmer-to-farmer conference. We did a survey during the summer, last summer, which connected to lots of farmers, almost 200 farmers in Massachusetts, and what we heard back from them was that they want to learn from their peers about specific areas of farming where they're most challenged right now. People want to

learn about livestock production, they want to learn about business and financial planning, and they want to learn about soil health for their farms. So we put together these great panels of farmers, who have expertise and experience in these areas, and they are going to speak at the conference. So right now, we are doing outreach for this conference and we are going to have an article that announces the conference in the Boston Globe next week. That's one way that we reach out and do outreach to folks – we put the announcement in all kinds of different, both online and print, publications to reach as many people as possible who might be interested in learning from their peers about these areas. So our outreach is just everywhere – we try to do as much as possible: we have Facebook account for our organization, we have twitter accounts for our organization and we have a blog, and our, we have our website as well.

Lily: You mentioned some of the challenges that the program has experienced in working with immigrants and refugees, the language, and computer literacy, and basic literacy. Are there other ones too? Or, do you want to expand on those a little bit?

Lowell: Yeah, funding has always been a challenge for us. Right now, though we have somewhat of a diverse range of funders, it's not diverse enough. We are still over-reliant on our USDA -- federal and state funding forces, let's put it that way. We are working on changing the balance so that we have more of a donor funder base and a private foundation funder base. It's an uphill battle. We have a long way to go with that and we're working on different strategies to get there, but it's a very, very important goal of ours and we're always looking for new funding strengths.

Lily: Wonderful. What would you say have been the greatest successes so far of the organization?

Lowell: Yeah... Hang on one second, just checking the time here. Sorry.

Lily: Oh, yeah.

Lowell: Ok, ... I'm just... you know I can talk for about four or five more minutes. So I can talk about that or whatever you want me to, if its, whatever question you think is most important for me to answer in the next four, four minutes or so.

Lily: Ok, how about, I have a couple of questions that have come up throughout the course of the interview.

Lowell: Ok. Sure, sure.

Lily: We have mostly covered the other stuff, so I will go straight to these things. ... so I was wondering about the cost of participating in your programs. Do people who participate in the training programs have to, have to pay for them? Or...

Lowell: Yeah, yeah. So we... again our funding is limited and some of these programs that I've talked about, such as the farm business planning course, right now, for the year 2011, we only have funding for that thing for the next sixth months or so and then that funding goes away and we use to have a lot more funding to cover that. So it's really important for us to have our consumers contribute towards their

education in some way, and people have different capacity to do that and we realize that and now, especially now that our, the farmers who are coming to us are pretty heterogeneous in terms of their backgrounds and what they have for their vocations, some people have more capacity to pay than others. So for those folks who -- we know based on their income and numbers of people in their family -- do not have the capacity to pay, we offer scholarships for those folks. But, it's kind of like the folks who can pay help to offset the cost for those who can't. It's kind of like college.

Lily: We know how that goes. That's great. And so, I guess the last thing I wanted to make sure I asked you about, you mentioned with the, the Beginning Farmer Agricultural Alliance came out of a needs assessment. Could you talk a little bit more about the needs assessment? Because that seems like something that could be really relevant to our project, that hasn't been actually conducted yet.

Lowell: Yeah, sure, so we did this survey to individual farmers, almost 200 of them, and we asked them a lot of questions. We asked them first of all what their greatest needs are for learning to make their businesses successful, and how they liked to learn. In other words, do they want to take courses on the internet? Do they want to take courses offered by community organizations nearby? Do they want to learn from other farmers, how do they want to learn, do they want to learn from reading publications?

So what we found, what fell out of that survey, was that they want to learn from their peers. That was loud and clear. And then we asked them, well, you know, if they want to learn from their peers, in what way? Do you want to learn from something they have written or from having discussions with them and we decided since folks wanted to learn from having discussion with their peers, that we sort of formulate this conference around that. And then we asked them what, you know, specifically what areas they were looking to learn in, what were their weakest areas and that's why we came up with this, these three major topic areas that we're going to introduce during the conference: soil health, business planning, and livestock. And we asked them number of other things also around what the gaps are in their education. But it was very helpful because we just took those results and applied it directly to this conference.

Lily: Wonderful.

Lowell: So, yeah.

Lily: So is that an internal assessment or is that something that's published?

Lowell: ... you know I... that's a good question as to whether or not that information is public. I could find out and get back to you. I don't know if that is something we are publishing right now, I am not sure.

Lily: Ok. Great. I would really appreciate that because I think that could be useful just in terms of -- part of what we've found really difficult in our part of this project, this larger community assessment, is figuring out what the needs of immigrant and refugee communities are in this way, even just in Lewiston. I mean there's very little information available that's specific to us, so that's very useful.

Lowell: And I should say, to qualify this survey, if you're looking for responses from immigrants and refugee populations, as far as what the farmers are looking for, most of the... since this survey was done

via email, most of what the responses and feedback that we're getting back were from probably white farmers. And I think, I believe we did ask that question, I think we did ask that question about if most of them were white farmers because the folks... it can be very, it can be a challenge, outside of our basic farmer group -- which we have a very good hold of what our needs are in terms of the people who are coming to us and coming to us directly looking for education -- but outside of that group, it's hard to connect with immigrants and refugees if we don't have a relationship with them. It's very, very difficult.

Lily: Right. Do you think it's primarily a literacy barrier that way?

Lowell: Yes. Definitely.

Lily: Ok. Interesting. Well, I think we can sort of bring it to a close here. Sorry, we kept you over.

Lowell: No! It's Ok, it's Ok. I want to help, it was helpful and that your project goes well.

Lily: Yeah, Thank you.

Lily: So far, so good. (Laugh)

Lowell: Ok. Great! Well feel free to call or email if you have any other questions.

Lily: Excellent! I definitely will

Lily: Thank you so much

Lowell: Yup, thank you. Yup, bye-bye

Lily: Alright, bye.