“Vacant to Vibrant” Urban Agriculture Project Inspires Youth Entrepreneurs
IPM Adoption

Brad Bergefurd, Suzanne Mills-Wasniak, and Tony Nye
Where is Dayton, Ohio
Dayton, Ohio Facts 2009

Dayton is located in Montgomery County

Montgomery County is 1/3 rural; 2/3 urban

Dayton’s population is declining; ~ 140,000

Over 15,000 excess housing units

Over 6000 vacant lots
“Vacant to Vibrant”
Urban Agriculture Pilot Project

- Result of an internal city discussion on what to do with the vacant lots
- Urban Agriculture was one of the options
- OSU Extension Montgomery County Agriculture / Natural Resources contacted
- OSU Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program asked to become involved
Getting Started 2009

• July 16th and 17th over 1000 transplants and row crops were planted.

• Crops: tomatoes, peppers, zucchini, eggplant, special zucchini, green beans, cabbage, basil, cucumbers, melons, pumpkins, okra, Swiss chard, beets, romaine lettuce, followed later by leaf lettuce

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OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

First Site 2009
Planting 2009
City Planner has been involved
Learning 2009
Produce 2009
Collaborating Partners 2009

City Officials, Neighborhood Representatives, OSU Extension and Sudan/Somali Refugees
City Officials 2009
National Origins of Non-U.S. Native Participants in "Vacant to Vibrant" Pilot Project
(n = 249)

Number of Individuals

National Origins

Egypt | Ethiopia | Ghana | Iraq | Jordan | Lebanon | Libya | Palestine | Somalia | Sudan | Syria | Yemen

The Ohio State University
College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences
“Vacant to Vibrant” Dayton, Ohio Urban Agriculture Pilot Project

PARTNERS

- Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)
- Catholic Social Services Miami Valley & Islamic Federation
- Sudanese & Somali Refugees
- Wright-Dunbar Neighborhood Residents

CITY OF DAYTON AND OSUE AG/NR

OBJECTIVES

- To utilize vacant urban lots for agricultural production as a means to decrease incidence of “food deserts” in Dayton ethnic neighborhoods
- To improve the health and well-being of Dayton urban Middle-Eastern families through access to, preparation and consumption of locally grown produce

OUTPUTS

PROJECT EXPANSION/OUTREACH
- City of Dayton Guidelines for Urban Agriculture
- Four Season Garden Club Grant Outreach into Middle Eastern and Latino Neighborhoods

MARKETING
- Dayton Public Television
- Dayton Daily News
- Farm World Magazine

PRESENTATIONS
- State EFNEP Conferences; OSU Extension Hunger Class;
- Ag/NR Professional Conferences; Cleveland, Tulsa, Toledo;
- Farm Science Review

OUTCOMES

1. Implementation of first steps to achieve an environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable agricultural response to urban challenges
2. Eighty (80) ethnic families consumed approximately 1000 pounds of locally grown fruits and vegetables to improve their nutritional well-being
3. Transition of one city-owned vacant property to a vibrant, productive and green neighborhood resource.
Lessons Learned 2009

- Establishing a market and neighborhood acceptance is critical
- Water is a limiting resource
- Infrastructure must be in place to provide adequate water flow
- Labor force and lot size must match
- Nutrition education is vital
City Initiatives 2010

- Lot Links using the Real Estate Acquisition Program with Montgomery County
- Urban Agriculture Ordinances
Water System 2010
2010 Field Day
2012 Soxx Technology
2012 Soxx Technology
2012 Wesley Community Youth Center
2012 Wesley Community Youth Center
Working and Learning IPM Practices
2012 Wesley Center

Priority Board Chairwoman, Wesley Center Project funders meet with Missouri Educators
City of Dayton Director of Planning and Community Development visits Wesley Center
2013 Wesley Center

Produce sold to Second Harvest Foodbank
“Vacant to Vibrant”
Urban Agriculture Pilot Project

“In 2009, “Vacant to Vibrant Urban Agriculture Project” was started as a partnership between the City of Dayton and OSU Extension Montgomery County to pilot economically sustainable urban agriculture practices. As the project has evolved other partners have been added. The goals of the project were to: 1) bring fresh produce to inner-city Dayton families; 2) promote economic self-sufficiency; 3) reuse vacant, abandoned land.” Aaron Sorrell, City of Dayton Director Planning and Community Development
In 2013 “Vacant to Vibrant” Dayton, Ohio Urban Agriculture Pilot Project removed the word Pilot from it’s name
2014 partnered with Jim Jasinski Ohio IPM Program Coordinator
New sites for 2015 development identified
New sites for development
Thank You Questions?