

FY 2014

\$50,001 to Reach Out West End, Upland, CA, to develop and expand three CSA programs in low-income areas of Southern California.

**Final Report**

Farmers Market Promotion Program  
Final Performance Report  
For the Period of October 1, 2014- September 30, 2016

Date: Final Report 2014-2016  
Recipient Name: Reach Out  
Project Title: Inland Farm Share Project  
Grant Number: 14-FMPPX-CA-0021  
Project Location: San Bernardino and Jurupa Valley, CA  
Year of Grant Award: 2014  
Amount Awarded: \$50,001  
Contact: Omar Gonzalez; (909) 982-8641; omar@we-reachout.org

Program Summary:

Provide a brief summary regarding the goals and objectives, activities performed, beneficiaries, collaborators, and your most impressive (result) measurement.

One of our main objectives was to increase the access and availability of fresh fruits and vegetables in our region. We were able to increase the availability by focusing on two distinct strategies. In San Bernardino we focused more on Community Shared Agriculture (CSA) model for that community. We were able to provide boxes that were tailored to the community. We realized early on that in that particular community they were not receptive to certain foods that were not common in the Latino and African-American community. So, we started to provide nutritional information, recipes and cooking demos with new produce we were introducing. This subtle change made the introduction of new produce a more impactful manner. We were having families ask for the same produce that a month ago they were rejecting. This allowed us to easily surpass our original goal of 150 CSA boxes in San Bernardino.

For Jurupa Valley, we started out with similar strategies with "The Patch" to provide fresh fruits and vegetables. We were able to partner with Jurupa Valley School District to work on outreach and our coalition (Healthy Jurupa Valley, HJV) made it easier to work with one another. The CSA boxes were being delivered and loose vegetables were being sold. The City of Jurupa Valley and the coalition made the push to turn the "The patch" into a full functioning Farmers Market. It took a year and a half to get the policy changes in the city and to find vendors, partners and a farmer's market manager. In November of 2016 we were able to have our first ever Farmers Market in Jurupa Valley.

Goals and Objectives:

"Describe the general goals and objectives (scope) of the project: Expand the Inland Farm Share Project to serve a minimum of 120 CSA members by September 2016. 2) Implement EBT access at both locations by December 2015 3) Increase marketing and community outreach to low income/low access residents to reach a minimum of 75% of residents by June 2015

Indicate the need for the grant project prior to the implementation of grant activities.

\* Our produce stand in San Bernardino was moved because of the 200 Million dollar redevelopment project. We switched our focus to education and partnered up with partners to continue to serve the area and increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables. This area has the highest crime rate in the county.

\* In Jurupa Valley the city recently became a city. So, it took time to get buy-in and support from citizens who opposed incorporation and those who wanted to be under county rule. Jurupa Valley is a rural community with no downtown or centralized gathering area. Both of the cities are mostly Latino and low socioeconomic regions and communities.

#### Activities:

Describe the activities used to achieve the goals and objectives. This should include measurement of any baseline data. Include significant contribution/roles(s) of project partners.

- For our initiative we were able to partner with Orange Grove Farmers, Gaytan Farm and Sanchez Farms to provide produce for our initiatives in both cities. Combined we were able to sell over 426 boxes since we began our initiative
- The farmers market in Jurupa Valley is in the final stages of being EBT and WIC certified
- The Farmers Market has over 17 vendors
- We saw an increase in purchasing loose vegetables that weren't part of their normal diet
- For our initiatives we had partners from: San Bernardino Public Health, El Sol Community Group, Supervisor Gonzales, Assemblywoman Miller, City of San Bernardino, Sheriff Department, City of Jurupa Valley, Mayor Laura Roughton, Jurupa Valley Parks, Jurupa Valley School District and community members, parents, youth and community nonprofits.

#### Accomplishments:

"Describe what was accomplished during the entire project using measurable results. Provide baseline data and actual completed project data, i.e., "before and after" measurements. Include a summary of the required metrics (before and after) (FMPP Guidelines/Announcement). Be comprehensive, descriptive and detailed in regard to each accomplishment. These may include unfavorable or unusual developments, as well. If developed with grant funds, provide website addresses and links to any materials made available via the Internet.

- We were able to distribute over 426 CSA Boxes in our region
- We passed policies in the city of San Bernardino and in Jurupa Valley to increase the access and availability of fresh fruits and vegetables.
- We were able to partner up with local schools to encourage healthy eating campaigns in the surrounding schools
- One of our stipends became the Farmers Market Manager and now runs the Market. She is currently developing a business plan and initiatives to increase the sustainability of the market

- The City of Jurupa Valley assists us in the outreach and marketing of the market.
- We are working with the University of Laverne to capture data for the upcoming year on the market.
- We were printed in the newspaper in Riverside and mentioned on County newsletters.
- We have seen an increase in attendance and in purchasing.
- For our initiative we were able to partner with Orange Grove Farmers, Gaytan Farm and Sanchez Farms to provide produce for our initiatives in both cities. We helped in the marketing of the business and also in the community outreach for each of the farms.
- [https://www.facebook.com/TheValleyPatch/?ref=py\\_c](https://www.facebook.com/TheValleyPatch/?ref=py_c)

#### Beneficiaries:

Our biggest accomplishment was the planning, developing, advocating and community partnership. The City of Jurupa Valley and the Healthy Jurupa Valley Coalition realized a long awaited dream to bring access to healthy fruits and veggies to the residents of Jurupa Valley and neighboring cities. The Farmers Market is being managed by Pauline Cook who co-chairs the Gardens and Market work group, this group worked tirelessly to bring top notch vendors to provide organic and locally grown produce to the city and its locals. The inspiration behind the Valley Patch farmers market was collaboration between the City of Jurupa Valley, Reach Out, the Healthy Jurupa Valley Coalition, and dedicated community members like Ms. Cook. As she describes her passion by saying “to be successful the first thing you do is fall in love with your work. Farming is not just a job, it is a way of life done with love.” The Valley Patch is open every Saturday from 8 am to 1pm and offers up to 20 vendors selling locally produced fruits and vegetables, nuts, teas, eggs, honey and an assortment hand crafted goods .

Since we just opened the market we are still in the process of capturing all the data. We have systems in place to account for how much is being purchased and what is being purchased. It took a year to get the permits and zoning to allow the farmers market in our region. We have excellent city buyin and that allows us to increase our reach and our efforts <http://jurupavalley.org/City-Calendar/ModuleID/739/ItemID/8167/mct/EventDetails>

#### Lessons Learned:

Discuss the lessons that were learned from completing the project. Lessons learned may have influenced the direction of the project, helped improve the process, and/or optimized the results. Sharing these experiences may be quite helpful to those seeking to learn from your experiences and to achieve similar results.

One lesson learned was the importance of location. Even though the community center was the main location for high foot traffic inside, it was not suffice for the need of the Farm Stand Farmshare. Even though flyers, signage, posters and banners were disseminated within our region and surrounding neighborhoods, outside communities were still unaware of the programs implemented close to them. We focused on the dissemination of flyers to businesses and community throughout the month.

Moreover, we used social media to reach out to individuals with access to internet, whether Facebook, twitter or Instagram letting them know of the produce available and prices. Including but not limited to specials on combinations of produce which ultimately would be a better deal for the community.

Reaching out to our residents for education on quality versus quantity was indeed a barrier. WG residents view quantity over quality as better deal for produce on the simple basis of the most they can get for their dollar. Education is still an issue for many residents as they realized how fresh local organic produce assists in having a better mental and emotional state to deal with the everyday situations. We came up with unique and creative ways to reach the community and make it tangible for them. For example, the 99¢ Store sales a bag of nine oranges for one dollar, at the Farm Stand, oranges sale five for a dollar. When residents walked back into WG they passed the Farm Stand and we gave them oranges and asked them to compare the flavor, duration and actual juice quantity of the competitors produce to that of the Farm Stand. Every time residents would come back, they would state, “there was no comparison, the Farm Stand’s produce was of much better quality, lasted longer, juicier and sweeter.”

Another lesson we learned was to allow the community to work at their own pace. We weren’t as quick in some of our deliverables or timetable because our community members and stipends were set on their vision of their own Farmers Market. This made us ensure we had community buy inn which allowed us to use residents as our advocacy partners.

RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA

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## **“The Patch” Brings Life, Fresh Produce and Nutrition to Jurupa Valley’s Food Desert**

### **Intervention Summary**

The gathering of community members, stakeholders and support from the “Healthy Jurupa Valley” initiative linked together to establish “The Patch” produce stand. Within the City of Jurupa Valley, there is a sparse distribution of supermarkets and very few small grocery stores. Community members requested more access to fresh produce at affordable prices. The Healthy Jurupa Valley collaborative met with Jurupa Area Recreation and Parks District Board to allow the local community center as a venue for a temporary produce stand every Friday morning. The proposal was presented and accepted by the board in March of 2015, with the concession of including resident nutrition education activities (provided by NEOP-funded staff) during operating hours.

On April 16, 2015, the grand opening of “The Patch” produce stand was met with remarkable community support. Each week, the Patch flyer was published in the local city newspaper, eventually grasping the attention of the regional Press Enterprise newspaper. To date, the Patch has been successful, with an average of 20-50 customers every Friday picking up a crop box, shopping for produce and receiving valuable nutrition information, recipes and cooking/preparation ideas for the various fruits and vegetables in season.

### **Description of Barriers Encountered and Identified or Proposed Solutions**

The solution to a food desert seemed simple: provide fresh, locally-grown produce. However, immediate barriers surfaced: finding a location zoned to allow for a produce stand, negotiating a reasonable cost for use of property and insurance, finding a grower/vendor that would take a risk in a new area, attracting and retaining customers, building a marketing strategy, and developing a delivery system option.

Customers were delighted about having a new produce stand available in their area; they enjoyed visiting and choosing from the selection of fresh produce. However,

marketing and promotion efforts such as signage and physical location of the stand came into question. Initially, the Patch had a few regular customers visiting, and ideas about moving the location emerged because many people had trouble finding the location, since it wasn't readily visible when driving by. With permission of Jurupa Recreation and Park District, we were allowed to move the stand onto their sidewalk property, adjacent to the main road. The visibility of the Patch was attracting new customers, together with hand painted fruit and vegetable illustrations which had been placed on the sidewalk to direct community members to the patch.

It was recorded in the weekly analysis that the Patch received more foot traffic and new customers. The fruit and vegetable marketing signs were a success. However, the city notified them that the sidewalk area was not permitted. Although the sidewalk location attracted more customers, the Patch moved back into the park to comply with city ordinance. The fruit and vegetable illustrations are still visible from the street.

Traditional NEOP education needed to adapt to the outdoor produce stand environment. Providing relevant nutrition information on weekly produce selections is a challenge, as the farmer often decides which produce is ready to sell the night before or even the same morning of the Patch. Also, the produce stand is not currently certified, and is not eligible to accept CalFresh or WIC at this time, which is a deterrent to the residents we intended to serve.

## **Future Directions/Sustainable Success**

### Short-Term Goals:

- Find a way to attract low-income participants and drive greater sales through improved marketing. Stakeholders such as Reach Out, Healthy Jurupa Valley Gardens and Markets Action Team, Recreation and Parks District help to promote the Patch and conduct regular community outreach.
- Compile a farmer vendor toolbox with a wide variety of nutrition messages, recipes, and shopping/cooking tips that can be displayed or inserted into the produce boxes to match the seasonality and variety of produce and include Harvest of the Month, Produce Quick Tips and other retail program materials.
- Establishing a list of supplementary vendors to meet cultural and seasonal needs to match resident requests for specific produce.

### Long-Term Goals:

- Make the Patch mobile. Work with Jurupa Unified School District, the city's Planning Commission, the Recreation and Parks District, and Environmental Health to take the Patch to communities with the highest need.
- Ultimately replicating the Patch in multiple low-income or low-access locations.
- Meet criteria to become a Certified Farmers Market, and apply for EBT/CalFresh and WIC.

## Contact information about this Narrative

Local Health Department Grant Name: County of Riverside Department of Public Health

Subcontractor: Reach Out

Grant #: 13-20527

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This material was produced by the California Department of Public Health's Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Branch with funding from USDA SNAP-Ed, known in California as CalFresh. These institutions are equal opportunity providers and employers. CalFresh provides assistance to low-income households and can help buy nutritious food for better health. For CalFresh information, call 1-877-847-3663. For important nutrition information, visit [www.CaChampionsForChange.net](http://www.CaChampionsForChange.net).