



**Healthy Foods, Healthy Lives Institute
Community-University Research Grants
Awarded Fall 2013 Grant Cycle**

COMMUNITY-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP GRANTS

“Evaluating Food Safety and Health Impacts of an Alternative Poultry Production Model”

Amount Awarded: \$48,795

Timeframe: January 8, 2014 – January 1, 2015

Community Partner: Reginaldo Haslett-Marroquin, Chief Operating Officer Main Street Project

University Partner: Greg Schweser, Associate Program Director - Sustainable Local Foods, UMN Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships

Abstract: The University of Minnesota Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships -- a University of Minnesota Extension program -- will partner with Main Street Project -- a sustainable food and agriculture nonprofit organization in Northfield, Minnesota -- to research and verify food safety and nutritional health aspects of an innovative poultry production system that is accessible to low-income and beginning farmers at various scales (as a side-business or a full family operation). This production method is designed to produce a natural poultry product using the Label Rouge bird made popular by pastured poultry enthusiasts in France; incorporates an alternative feeding system of forages and sprouted grain on small plots; aims to improve soil health for crops by incorporating poultry and perennials in the same system; utilizes polycultures to naturally control pests and reduce the need for chemical pesticides and fertilizers; and increases long-term overall production potential by stacking agricultural enterprises on the same land including perennial fruit and nut crops. This model was developed by Main Street Project to create an avenue into agricultural entrepreneurship for low-income immigrants via high quality, sustainable agricultural production for local food markets and values-based consumers. This production model has an opportunity to be adopted by many farmers looking for sustainable alternative production methods but must first be shown to produce products that are safe for human consumption via sufficient nutrient management and appropriate harvesting techniques.

“Building Capacity for Small, Immigrant and Minority Farmers to Participate in Institutional and Wholesale Produce Markets in Minnesota”

Amount Awarded: \$49,675

Timeframe: February 1, 2014 – January 31, 2015

Community Partner: Andrea Northup, Farm to School Coordinator, Minneapolis Public Schools, Culinary & Nutrition Services Department

University Partner: Annalisa Hultberg (MS), Research Fellow, Bioproducts & Biosystems Engineering Department

Abstract: The proposed project is a partnership between Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) Culinary & Nutrition Services and the University of Minnesota’s On-Farm Food Safety program to expand the procurement of fresh produce from small, beginning, immigrant and/or minority farmers in the region for Minneapolis students in school meals. MPS recently completed its pilot season of procuring produce directly from local small, beginning, immigrant and/or minority farmers. The initial

experience indicated that most of these farmers were not prepared to sell to a large institutional buyer such as MPS. They lacked knowledge of Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and on-farm food safety standards, how to meet product and packaging specifications, and customer service skills, among other areas. The proposed project will enhance these farmers' capacity to meet MPS and other institutional buyer requirements via a series of engagements between MPS Culinary & Nutrition Services staff, University of Minnesota and farmers. The project will include facilitated conversations, workshops, one-on-one technical support, and ongoing assistance for farmers. The project will allow these farmers who otherwise may be shut out of the institutional marketplace due to lack of food safety expertise, awareness of customer service norms, or knowledge of wholesale packing standards, to enter booming institutional markets looking to purchase more local foods, such as MPS or other wholesale produce distributors or institutional buyers. The proposed project would also provide a forum for connecting farmer partners directly with Minneapolis Public School students and classrooms to deepen students' understanding of where food comes from, and add meaning and value to institutional school sales for farmers. The outcomes of the project will be more safe, healthful, local food served in MPS meals; increased economic security and produce sales for regional farmers; increased purchases by wholesale buyers from small, beginning, immigrant and/or minority farmers in the region; and heightened sense of connection to farmers and where food comes from among consumers, particularly students at MPS.

“Integrated Fish, Plant and Algal Production System: Growing Vertical”

Amount Awarded: \$25,000

Timeframe: February 1, 2014 – January 31, 2015

Community Partner: Lana Fralich, Silver Bay, MN City Administrator

University Partner: Michael T. Mageau, Director, Center for Sustainable Community Development (CSCD), Director, Environment and Sustainability Program

Abstract: For the past five years UMD's CSCD and the City of Silver Bay have worked together to launch an integrated fish, produce, and algal closed-loop food production system today known as "Victus Farms" (www.victusfarms.org). This project focused on proving a system that can produce food and biofuel, create jobs, expand educational research, and demonstrate economic viability. The ultimate goal is for this project to expand into the private markets where communities will benefit from a tax base and jobs and the university system will enhance their research and education curriculum. After the first year of startup, this project holds true to that concept. We are currently working on a commercial scale facility with interested private parties; however, vertical systems are the focus of many investors we are working with. A vertical closed-loop system has not been proven in comparison to our current closed-loop "raft" system. Therefore, we plan to use the HFHL fund to integrate a new "vertical" system into our existing "raft" system to determine the most viable and economical operation (i.e: an entire "raft closed-loop system", or an entire "vertical closed-loop system, or a facility that has a combination of both). Vertical column construction will take place in January, and the six-week experiments will begin in February of 2014, and be repeated quarterly. Finally, economic impacts will be calculated in November/December of 2014. We will then integrate the technical knowledge, economic performance and project development information into our existing commercial business plans for those academic peers, businesses and communities interested in expanding and/or duplicating methods to help launch similar projects, starting with those businesses and communities who are already seeking a similar project

“A University-Community Partnership to Sustainably Improve Food Safety and Security in Uganda”

Amount Awarded: \$25,000

Timeframe: March 3, 2014 – March 2, 2015

Community Partners: Andrew Tamale Coordinator, One Health Residency COVAB, Makerere University, Uganda

Samuel Majalija, Associate Professor, Focal Person, OHCEA, COVAB, Makerere University, Uganda

Francis Ejobi, Chair, Department of Biosecurity, Ecosystems and Veterinary Public Health COVAB, Makerere University, Uganda

Lawrence Mugisha, Director, Conservation & Ecosystem Health Alliance Hoima District, Uganda

University Partners: Katey Pelican, Assistant Professor, Veterinary Preventative Medicine, College of Veterinary Medicine, U of M

Cheryl Robertson, Associate Professor, School of Nursing, U of M

Fred Rose, Acara Director, Institute on the Environment, U of M

MacDonald Farnham, Assistant Professor, Veterinary Preventative Medicine, College of Veterinary Medicine, U of M

Innocent Rwego (in Uganda), Assistant Professor, Veterinary Preventative Medicine, College of Veterinary Medicine, U of M

Shaun Kennedy, Associate Professor, Veterinary Preventative Medicine, College of Veterinary Medicine, U of M

Abstract: Food security and safety in Africa is in a period of dramatic change. In Uganda, urbanization, population growth and the resulting growth in the economic sector is driving the emergence of a middle class that is enjoying unprecedented access to safe food. However, these changes are not reaching rural communities in Uganda where unsafe and insufficient food are common challenges. In the United States, land grant universities, like the University of Minnesota have driven change in rural communities through an integration of innovation, education and outreach particularly in the technology and agricultural sectors. In Africa, universities are poised to drive a similar innovation revolution for rural communities. To drive this change, the University of Minnesota is already partnering with Makerere University, the non-profit Conservation & Ecosystem Health Alliance and the communities of Hoima and Kasese Districts to establish a One Health Demonstration Site to integrate research, education and outreach and address challenges at the intersection of animals, humans and the environment. We propose to build on this Demonstration Site partnership to create an “Innovation Collaborative” that will partner communities in need with teams of students, community leaders, faculty, local government and private sector partners to identify food-related challenges and develop and seed social business ventures to address those needs. Ultimately, this partnership will result in better trained and more relevant student graduates, a university more relevant to the challenges facing the region and, most importantly, a community with improved health and food security achieved by community-driven innovation and growth in the private sector.