



**Healthy Foods, Healthy Lives Institute
Community-University Research Grants
Awarded Fall 2014**

“Expanding and sharing a program to ready small, diverse and immigrant fruit and vegetable farmers for sales to Minneapolis Public Schools and other institutional markets”

Amount Awarded: \$47,784.00

Timeframe: January 1, 2015 – December 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

Focus of the Project:

This community-university collaboration will expand and share the innovative Minneapolis Public School (MPS) Farm to School procurement and education program. Year 1 of this project made it possible for MPS to purchase over 29,000 pounds of produce from local sustainable farmers in the fall of 2014, an increase of over 40% from the fall of 2013. With the support of HFHL, in the fall 2015, MPS will support even more farmers – buying approximately 45,000 lbs. of local produce from small, local farmers, increasing the amount of sustainably-grown, fresh, local produce that 24,000 Minneapolis school children eat each day in their school meals on the salad bars, in entrees, and in side dishes. The next phase of the project will build on the model created in Year 1 to provide important and needed continuing food safety education with a focus on immigrant farmers and farmer cooperatives, buy additional produce quantities/varieties, and create a Toolkit to share the lessons-learned so that other school districts and institutions can implement a similar program of farmer education, increasing the supply of fresh, local, safe produce and improving the health of consumers across the region.

“Developing a Bi-cultural and Bi-lingual Beekeeping Training Curriculum for Hmong Mixed Fruits and Vegetables Growers”

Amount Awarded: \$49,733.90

Timeframe: February 23, 2015 – February 22, 2016

Community Partner: Pakou Hang, Executive Director, Hmong American Farmers Association

University Partner: Marla Spivak, McKnight Professor in Entomology, Director, U of M Bee Lab

Focus of the Project:

This project seeks to unite the Hmong American Farmers Association (HAFA), a membership and community-based, social justice nonprofit, and the renowned Bee Lab at the University of Minnesota in an innovative research project that will develop a bi-cultural and bi-lingual beekeeping training curriculum for Hmong vegetable and fruit growers; train a new cohort of young, bi-lingual Hmong trainers in beekeeping; and teach beekeeping to and pilot the start of at least 10 hives for a cohort of Hmong full-time farmers, many of whom are older and immigrants. In the past couple of

years, the capacity of the staff and community supporters of the Bee Lab have been overwhelmed with the increasing interest in beekeeping. Unfortunately they have not had the capacity or the cultural expertise and networks to reach out to and support the large, immigrant farming community in Minnesota, many of whom are fruit and vegetable growers. This project will be beneficial to both the academic and the Hmong farming communities because it will create a first-of-its-kind curriculum intended for non-English speaking farmers; it will develop a first-of-its kind cohort of young, bright, bi-lingual and bi-cultural trainers well versed in beekeeping who can teach English speaking learners as well as Hmong speaking learners in Minnesota or across the country; and lastly, it will teach beekeeping to at least 10 fulltime Hmong farmers who can use the knowledge to grow more produce, add bee related value added products to their operations, and support a healthier ecosystem on their farms.

This project will span two years and incorporate both field and classroom components. In the first year, HAFA staff will be trained by Bee Lab experts and will experiment with keeping some hives on the HAFA Farm, a 155-acre research and incubator fruit and vegetable farm in Dakota County. The first draft of the training curriculum will be developed by the end of the first year and tested and refined in the second year with the training of new trainers and the teaching of the curriculum to older, Hmong fulltime farmers. In the second year, the project will also involve at least 10 Hmong farmers keeping their own hives and experimenting with value added bee-related products such as honey, bees wax and mead. By the end of the second year, the training curriculum and a train-the-trainer manual will be finalized and made available through the Bee Lab and HAFA's extensive networks to Hmong farmers in Minnesota and across the country.

“Abolishing Food Deserts for People and Pollinators”

Amount Awarded: \$49,074.66

Timeframe: February 23, 2015 – February 22, 2016

Community Partner: Mark-Peter Lundquist, Vice-President of Outreach, Urban Ventures

University Partner: Rebecca Masterman, Associate Program Director, U of M Bee Lab - Bee Squad

Focus of the Project:

Pollinators and the Phillips neighborhood in South Minneapolis share a single, solvable problem: insufficient access to nutritious food. For people, this means hunger, obesity, and diabetes, among other health problems. For pollinators, this means weaker immune systems, and a lower threshold for pathogens and diseases. We are proposing a system whereby these two communities--people and pollinators—help each other to abolish “food deserts.”

Urban Ventures, already a leader in promoting food justice in South Minneapolis communities, and the UMN Bee Lab, an international leader in native and honey bee research, will come together with one main goal: to create a thriving and mutually beneficial green space for people and pollinators. This partnership, called the The Community Apiary Project, will train new leaders in the fields of sustainable urban food production and beekeeping, and continue research in and outreach for pollinator health through collaborative, citizen-science projects and public events.

There is currently no beekeeping training program in the Twin Cities accessible to low-income people. Drawing on Urban Ventures' successful initiatives for fighting hunger and malnutrition in South Minneapolis and the University of Minnesota's expertise in beekeeping and pest management, we will build an accessible beekeeping and greenhouse-management training program. By setting up a long-term apiary and equipment for honey extraction, and by increasing Urban Ventures' capacity for food production, we will give Phillips neighborhood community

members the tools they need to obtain and sustain jobs in honey and food production, so that they can create positive changes in the health of their families and communities. This project is designed with a comprehensive public/ community component for people of all ages to learn how pollinators affect food. Programming will include talks, classes, bee safaris, seed planting and honey extracting events.
