

Small Farms Program

Project Work Teams

Worksite CSA's in the Southern Adirondacks – Final Report 2012

Submitted: October 31, 2012

1. Describe project activities and partner involvement:

Teresa Whalen*, southern region coordinator for Adirondack Harvest, and Laura McDermott, regional vegetable specialist with Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) Capital District Vegetable and Small Fruit Program (CDVSFP) and Stephen Hadcock, CCE Columbia county, conducted trainings for those interested businesses and farmers in the southern Adirondack region (Warren, Washington and Saratoga counties). Three official trainings were held in Glens Falls, Greenwich and Warrensburg. One large worksite Wellness Open House was attended in Fort Edward. The contact list has been attached and is color coded for the worksites, farmers and the agency personnel.

Teresa and Laura worked with the interested businesses and with Adam Hainer to help move the project forward. Site coordinators Becky Miklanis, April Fiorentino and Elizabeth Parsons were instrumental in helping Adam get the CSA's off the ground.

By early June shares were being distributed and this continued into the middle of October.

A survey monkey was distributed during the last week of share distribution in hopes that we could capture subscriber satisfaction with the Worksite CSA distribution.

2. Describe any outcomes from these activities

- 21 prospective workplaces attended training activities
- 38 potential farms attended training activities.
- 1 employee Worksite Wellness open house attracted over 200 potential customers that rated the Worksite CSA information booth as the most interesting in the entire open house.
- 3 worksites hosted Worksite CSA's
- 50 workers subscribed to a CSA
- 1 farmer was able to deliver subscriptions to the Worksite CSA drop-offs
- 2 brochures were developed to inform businesses and farmers of this potential marketing option.
- 1 Activity List was developed for farmers preparing to offer a Worksite CSA.

3. Describe any activities, plans, or other projects that have resulted from your efforts through this grant.

CCE Clinton County educator and executive director, Amy Ivy, is applying for a NESARE Community Development grant to further explore, educate and foster Worksite CSA's in the northeastern corridor of NYS.

CCE CDVSFP has invited Adam Hainer, Juniper Hill Farm, to talk about his experiences as the farmer offering a Worksite CSA at the annual grower winter meeting in February, 2013.

4. Describe any outreach activities completed (print materials, links, videos, or press):

Attached, please find:

- 2 brochures that are print-ready to assist CCE associations in fostering Worksite CSA's in their region.
- 1 Activity Checklist for farmers as they prepare to offer a Worksite CSA.
- One powerpoint presentation that could be edited and used to conduct trainings.
- One press release

5. Do you have any additional project materials to share? (Evaluation summaries or PowerPoint presentations?)

Yes – we developed a PowerPoint as part of our training. I have attached that as a PDF document.

Our evaluation was of the 50 subscribers to the Worksite CSA. That summary is as follows:

We had a 20% survey response.

- Of the responders, 44.4% had no prior knowledge of CSA's while 55.6% had heard of the CSA concept before this season. None of the respondents had ever before subscribed to a CSA.
- When comparing the perceived value of the Worksite CSA products, 77% said that the CSA had a better value than supermarket produce. 44.5% said that the product was of equal value to farm stand and farmers' market produce.
- When comparing the perceived quality of the Worksite CSA produce, 100% of the respondents said that the CSA produce exceeded the quality of supermarket produce, while 44.4% said that the quality of the CSA produce was equal to that at a farm stand or farmers' market.
- Perhaps most importantly, 44.4% of the respondents said that their weekly consumption of vegetables increased dramatically due to the CSA membership, while 55.6% said that their consumption increased somewhat due to being a CSA member. This means that all responders saw an increase in fresh vegetable consumption.
- 77.8% of responders said they would definitely join a CSA again in the future. 11.1% said that they will not join a CSA in the future, and 11.1% said that they did not know if they would join a CSA in the future.
- The following comments were made when asked to share challenges or experiences:
 - very enjoyable and great veggies! Looking forward to next year. Thanks
 - Were a few issues with website including some odd discrepancy with the balance remaining at the end. Ultimately it showed a NEGATIVE balance at the end which I don't think was correct. Did not hear back when I questioned the farm but they did not ask me for more money, either.
 - Very convenient, drop of at work. I loved the variety and being able to choose from veggies that I wouldn't ordinarily purchase in the store.

- The pricing on their website isn't in sync. They claim I owe more money when I stayed within my share cost all summer. Very disappointing!!!
- Surprises was the high quality of the product and the abundance.
- The only difficulty that I ran into is that sometimes an item that I ordered would not be available on the day of delivery. Credit was not automatically given to my account, and I would have to email. The last few times it happened, I didn't even bother. Overall, this was a great first experience!
- Juniper Hill was fantastic!

6. How successful do you think you were in achieving your intended outcomes? What lessons can you share? Keys to success? Pitfalls? (include any evaluation forms used)

To get more farmers and businesses on board, the educational piece MUST be done earlier in the year – potentially starting in the fall when the grower may have some storage vegetables to bring along to an informational event preferably sponsored by the worksite. This would mean that the grower would need to initiate contact perhaps as early as October in order to schedule events for November/December to market shares for distribution in the following growing season

VERY important to identify a site coordinator to help the grower move this project forward. We were so lucky to have three dynamic and interested people to help us – the importance of these folks was not anticipated.

Overall, we were very happy with the outcomes of this grant – surprised really with how easy it was to get businesses to attend the training events. Logistics of actually getting the CSA's implemented required a lot more time and a great deal of flexibility on the part of the farmer.

**Cornell Small Farm Program
Work Team Participation Form**

Please list names and contact information for those who participated in your project (sign up sheets may be attached, if available).

Name	Phone	Address	Email	Role (participant, planning team, speaker, etc)
Teresa Whalen	518-466-5497	43 Orton Drive Warrensburgh, NY 12885	taawhalen@yahoo.com	Co-coordinator – contacted businesses& worked with site coordinators
Adam Hainer	518-524-5652	Juniper Hill Farm PO Box 11 Westport, NY 12993	juniperhillfarm@gmail.com	Farmer that delivered CSA subscriptions. Adam also presented at two of the general info meetings.
Becky Miklanis		Tribune Media, Glens Falls, NY	becky.mikalinis@gmail.com	Volunteer Site coordinator
Elizabeth Parsons		GenPak, Glens Falls, NY	eparsons@genpak.com	Volunteer site coordinator
April Fiorentino		NYS DEC, Warrensburgh, NY	alfioren@gw.dec.state.ny.us	Volunteer site coordinator
Terri Jamison	518-668-4334	Lake George, NY	terrilynnjamison@gmail.com	Provided brochure layout and advice from customer perspective
Laura McDermott	518-746-2560	415 Lower Main street, Hudson Falls, NY 12839	Lgm4@cornell.edu	Project coordinator – worked to educate farmers re: potential market opportunity
Ted Blomgren	518-692-3188	Windflower Farm Easton, NY	tedblomgren@gmail.com	Provided oversight and advice for project

* *Specific duties of project partner, Adirondack Harvest Southern Chapter Coordinator, Teresa Whalen included the following:*

- Developing contact lists of farmers in the Adirondack Region and large to medium sized employers in the greater Glens Falls area. (February/March)

- Writing and distribution of initial press release to Adirondack Harvest website, regional media, agricultural list serves, employers in Warren, Washington and Saratoga counties, economic development groups, and local food and sustainable agricultural organizations and initiative. (March)
- Introducing the Workplace CSA concept to employers via e-mail and follow up phone calling to appropriate worksite representatives. (March/April)
- Scheduling, organizing and promoting informational presentations for farmers, worksite representatives and the general public. (March/April/May)
- Offering worksite specific presentations, matching local farmers with local employers and tailoring the method of distribution to the particular business environment. (April/May)
- Employee Outreach – Washington County Wellness Celebration (May)
- Community Outreach – non-profit organizational meetings, local agriculture events (Agricultural Documentary Film Series, farmers’ markets, Warrensburgh Museum Exhibit Opening “Rural Agriculture – The Past 200 Years”, Warren County Rural Heritage Festival). (April/May/June/July/August)
- Promoting via press releases of the Workplace CSA concept with input from participants – farmers and employers/employees. (September)