

Achieving Success Utilizing Comprehensive Learning Strategies with Missouri Beginning Socially Disadvantaged and Veteran Farmers

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Introduction:

University of Missouri Extension with assistance of the USDA mobilized current and prospective Missouri beginning socially disadvantaged and veteran farmers and ranchers by delivering multifaceted agriculture education programming. The 3-year program provided in person hands-on classes utilizing the experiential learning model, agriculture focused team-to-one technical and business consulting, classroom workshops, and farm tours to learn with and from successful farmers.

Reach:

Farmer participants* included:

1,710 Beginning farmers

1,160 Veteran farmers

691 Socially Disadvantaged

2022: 512 Beginning farmers, 395 Veteran farmers, 109 Socially Disadvantaged farmers
2023: 768 Beginning farmers, 505 Veteran farmers, 236 Socially Disadvantaged farmers
2024: 430 Beginning farmers, 263 Veteran farmers, 346 Socially Disadvantaged farmers

* Participants self identified as beginning, veteran, and/or socially disadvantaged

Objectives:

- Assist, own, and operate successful agricultural businesses.
- Improve participation in USDA programs.
- Build relationships between current and prospective farmers and USDA local, state, and national representatives.
- Assist in reaching current and prospective socially disadvantaged and veteran farmers and ranchers or forest landowners in a linguistically appropriate manner.
- Address issues and remove barriers to increase participation in extension programming and educational events.



Veteran beginning farmer and team-to-one coaching client collecting honey. Team-to-one coaching builds trust and establishes long lasting relationships.



Armed to Farm producer tour. The Armed to Farm workshops combine in-class and outdoor activities targeted towards veteran farmers.



Tomato school demonstration at Heru Farms with Tyrean Lewis, beginning farmer consultant. Farm tours allow participants to see practical application of growing techniques. Interactions with peers are important to build community and networks.



On-farm poultry processing workshop participants learning by doing. These workshops allow individuals to gain valuable hands-on experiences.

Outcomes:

Short-term outcomes were tracked and measured using post-surveys at each event. Post-survey data indicated participants increased their knowledge. Workshops, classes, trainings and team-to-one coaching all were useful and supportive of farmers.

Long-term outcomes and measurable impacts include the project assisting beginning socially disadvantaged and veteran farmers and ranchers to have greater on-farm income, greater diversification of farm products, enhanced farm sustainability and better stewardship of farm resources.

Impacts:

Financial Impacts



Five farmers secured a grant from the Missouri foundation for health for \$210,000. Total funding \$1,050,000.



An urban produce farmer received \$29,084.99 in equipment from Missouri vocational rehabilitation to support on farm operations.



A beginner farmer received \$14,995 sustainable agriculture research and education (SARE) grant funding to increase production of morel mushrooms.

Participant Quotes

"This was a great workshop because it had many different topics that were relatable and applicable for future reference."

"Today was amazing, thank you so much."

"I will do a better job of keeping track of my sales and costs."

Long-term Relationship Building



297 Team-to-one coaching sessions with \$10,900 of technical and business consultations



10 agriculture jobs created by participants thru hiring employees



24 first time grant applicants