Objectives

• Provide an overview of UNC SNAP-Ed’s Community Garden program
• Be a resource for other researchers and implementers interested in community gardening
Community Gardens as PSE

SNAP-Ed 2016 Guidance: Providing obesity prevention interventions at settings such as schools, child care sites, community centers, places of worship, community gardens, farmers markets, food retail venues, or other settings with a low-income population of 50 percent or greater

Community gardens can improve:

- Access to healthy foods
- Social capital
- Crime reduction
- Lower stress levels
- Neighborhood revitalization and beautification
- Self-efficacy in growing food
UNC’s SNAP-Ed Program

[Map showing counties in North Carolina with specific areas highlighted: Rockingham, Orange, Warren, Sampson, Lenoir, and Duplin.]
UNC’s Community Garden Program

Goal: Promote gardening among SNAP recipients and educate and provide garden produce to take home for no cost

- 6 counties, 18 gardens (16 rural, 2 semi-urban)

- Funding for:
  - Garden manager (stipend)
  - Supplies and materials
  - Educators
  - Promotion (branding and materials)

- Workshop topics include:
  - Gardening 101
  - Nutrition
  - Composting
Garden Locations

Public Housing (2)
Churches (3)
Habitat for Humanity neighborhoods (2)
Senior Centers (3)
Community Development Orgs (5)
Mobile Home Park (1)
Tribal Association (1)
Substance Abuse Recovery Home (1)
REM MS CO

Rockingham County

- A transitional home for adults suffering from substance abuse
- Partner with a local church to use part of their land for a garden
- The garden has become a primary tool for teaching skills in leadership, scheduling, responsibility, self-sufficiency, and team work
- The residents asked for additional programming in food preservation, menu planning, and seasonal meal prep
- REMMSCO has applied for additional funding to support expanded programming around the garden
Evaluation

- Participant pre/post surveys
- Garden yield
- Type of produce
- Interviews with garden managers
Results

Survey Results, 2015:

◦ 30% of participants reported increase in fruit and vegetable consumption
◦ 96.6% responded that they would like to participate in the garden next year
◦ 100% of workshop participants reported gaining practical knowledge at the workshops

Garden Yield

◦ 2,750 lbs in 2014
◦ 21,770 lbs in 2015
Results

Manager Interviews

“Had a late time getting started, but once things started going it picked up. We were featured on the front page of the local newspaper for the medicine wheel we incorporated in the garden. The garden includes elements of Cohari culture.”

(ATTRIBUTE THIS QUOTE TO SOMEONE)
What we’ve learned

• Consistent participation and outreach- biggest challenge!
• Working with municipalities
• Distrust of surveys
• New funding area (PSE)
• Sensitivity of gardening in the south
• Success lies in the market manager
• Buy-in takes time
• Start small
Looking forward: New for 2016

- Social marketing campaign
- Fold the garden into broader programming
- Ongoing support for the garden manager (planting guide and schedule, easy-to-understand vegetable nutrition info, strategies in community organizing, etc.)
- Sustainability?
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