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To:

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Subject: News from the Kansas City Center for Urban Agriculture

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urban grown

| Planting Schedule 2010 | | | | FEBRUARY | | | | MARCH | | | | | APRIL | | | | MAY | | |
|------------------------|-----------|-------------------|------------------|----------|---|----|----|-------|---|----|----|----|-------|----|----|----|-----|----|----|
| | TOT AL | # wks as tp | # plants per bed | 1 | 8 | 15 | 22 | 1 | 8 | 15 | 22 | 29 | 5 | 12 | 19 | 26 | 3 | 10 | 17 |
| Filet Beans | 8 | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | 1 |
| Tri-Color | 8 | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | 1 |
| Fava | 1 | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| Roots- Carrots, | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

The Newsletter of the Kansas City Center for Urban Agriculture

February 2010

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THANK YOU!

Annual Meeting Turns Into Mini Design Charrette

Urban ag supporters from across the metro share ideas & knowledge.



A discussion group on how to get a garden started was among the most popular at KCCUA's annual meeting.

By Semie Rogers

Fueled by pie and coffee, supporters of urban farming gathered last Saturday to plan neighborhoods across Kansas City full of farms and gardens. KCCUA's Annual Farmers' Meeting took place last Saturday at Masters Community Church in KCK. The meeting had two sections—developing a vision for urban ag in Kansas City and break-out sessions on vegetable production topics.

Katherine Kelly, KCCUA's executive director, challenged the room to envision the impact urban farming and food production could have on our city over the next five years. We split into groups, armed with brightly colored markers and big sheets of paper. The goal: draw our ideas for fresh food everywhere for everyone.

Forty-five minutes later, the wall at the front of the room was plastered with drawings. Carrots grew in lawns. City blocks had markets, farms, and yards full of gardens. Farms of all different kinds took shape. Chickens, even goats, lived in the larger farms, providing protein and fertilizer. Sustainable schoolyards combined recycling, wind energy, composting and vegetable

production.

While the ideas for urban growing were varied, wild and verdant, several themes emerged from the conversation: mixed-use neighborhoods, producer equipment co-ops, urban farming as part of a continuum of sustainable practices, and processing of food for storage were at the top of the list.

Several groups mentioned the Rosedale neighborhood in Kansas City, KS, as a great project to show how a neighborhood focused on health and local food could thrive. Rosedale, with a largely Hispanic population of 14,000, has no grocery store. A Robert Wood Johnson Foundation grant is helping the neighborhood develop gardens, sidewalks, playgrounds and urban farms. One of the groups visioning with us last Saturday suggested a green corridor on Merriam Lane with trails. This corridor would lead to what is currently unused commercial space. They saw unclaimed land used for community gardens, and the commercial space turned into a neighborhood-based food co-op.



Participants in KCCUA's Visioning for Urban Ag exercise share their design with the group.

Growers spoke of sharing major equipment that's beyond the reach of most urban farmers. They envisioned more shared cold storage for produce, and more certified kitchens where they could expand profits by adding value to their farm products.

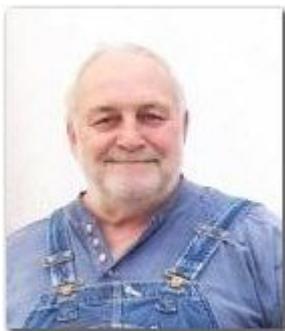
Most groups also integrated other sustainable practices in their visions, like wind turbines, composting, and rainwater collection. And there was a sense of urgency behind all this. The overall mood was: "Lets grow more, in more places, with more people! Now!"

We all filled out cards addressed to ourselves with one thing we were going to do to make our urban farm vision happen and one person we were going to get involved in urban ag. The cards will be mailed back to us in June as a reminder to follow through on our pledge. If you weren't there, you can still join us. Write down your vision for fresh, local food in Kansas City, and one thing you will do this year to make it happen. Write down someone you want to recruit for your effort. Then staple it on the calendar in June (or put it in your Google calendar online). Let us know what happens!

You can reach Semie at semie@kccua.org.

Collecting Vegetable Seeds for Haitian Farmers

Urban farmer Lew Edmister wants to do something about food security in Haiti.



Urban farmer Lew Edmister

Dear Growers, Farmers, Gardeners and all others:

I want you to join me in helping Haitian farmers and gardeners get crops in the ground and easing hunger and suffering by donating seeds to them. I implore you to read through my appeal because it offers you an opportunity to join in and be a part of something very direct, very real and very easy for all of us to do.

It's simple, it's SEEDS FOR HAITI! I want to get food in the form of seeds into the hands of people who are mostly agrarian and know what to do with the seed--they'll grow food for themselves. Granted, it will take some time but it will happen.

I spent a long time sifting through NGOs to find one with a longtime investment in Haiti and at least a passing bit of knowledge about where food comes from: What I found was Hope for Haiti in Naples, FL. I told them what I wanted to do and asked if they could be an on-the-ground distributor. They agreed and we worked out a way to facilitate the project.

Haiti has three growing seasons and the next one begins in about seven weeks, so, in my mind, there's no time to delay. Here's what I, you, we need to do:

Go to your seed boxes and pull out 25 to 30 dollars worth of veggie seeds, pack them up and send them to KCCUA, 4223 Gibbs Rd, KC, KS, 66106 or to me, Lew Edmister, 921B W 17th St, Kansas City, MO, 64108. Every week I'll repack the seeds in bulk and send them to Hope for Haiti. They'll take it from there.

You can email me or call me at (816) 842-4432. You can call KCCUA if you need, but you know how busy they are. This is my project so bother me if you need verification or more information. Volunteer to help if you can. Pass the word. If you know other ag groups or clubs, give them the word. A thousand people with \$25 worth of seed makes a BIG pile of seed - ergo FOOD.

I thank you for your help in advance. Happy growing.

Lew Edmister operates The Herb'n Gardener urban farm in Kansas City, MO. You can also reach him at herbngardener@kc.rr.com.

For 2010 KCCUA Cultivates New Projects And Welcomes New Board

Rapid organizational growth and rising interest in urban ag make life interesting at KCCUA.

By Katherine Kelly

The first crop we put in for a new growing season is garlic. We order the seed garlic mid-summer; the heavy, fragrant shipment arrives in October; we break open the bulbs and plant the biggest cloves deep in the cooling fall soil. And now, as we head into February, the garlic blades are pushing their way through the soil and mulch, green amongst the grays and browns of winter.

KCCUA as an organization goes through a similar cycle. In the fall, as some of our activities come to an end, we start new programs, expand existing ones, and develop plans for the coming growing season. We're now heading into the spring, and the new, sturdy shoots of 2010 are pushing their way into the sun.

(1) Beans n Greens: It is hard for many of us to understand why poor people suffer so disproportionately from obesity, diabetes, and diet related diseases. It is hard for others to understand why farmers don't just sell their produce at lower prices so more people can afford to eat their good food. Beans n Greens seeks to address both sides of this question--the one of access and affordability and the one of farmers needing to make something like a living income from their farm businesses. Through a unique partnership between KCCUA, Kansas City health care foundations, university extension services, social service agencies, seven farmers markets, the CSA Coalition, the Kansas Rural Center, and an in-development Veggie Mobile program, food stamp users will be able to buy fresh produce from local farmers and get a two-for value for their food stamp dollar. Farmers will be able to afford to supply a new customer base, bringing in a new income stream of federal food stamp funds, matched dollar-for-dollar by local foundations. A new group of people get to learn how great fresh, locally grown food tastes, and farmers get to feed people who genuinely need their products. The program is in development, but look for the Beans n Greens logo and benefits to show up at markets and in the community this season.

(2) 2009 was a year where urban farmers got to know their Kansas City, MO, city leaders and began to work with them in support of urban food production. Mayor Mark Funkhouser and Council members Beth Gottstein, John Sharp, Cindy Circo, and Terry Riley all stepped forward to work with us to help the city realize the many health-related, social, and economic benefits of urban agriculture. In 2010, we'll be continuing this good work with the city in the area of city codes and zoning and in city-wide food planning.

(3) Urban Codes Revisions: The process of proposing codes revisions to better support urban food production began last fall and will continue into spring. A strong steering committee that includes city staff Patty Noll, Senior Urban Planner, and Patrick Egberuare and Michael Shumacher of Animal Control is focusing on specific definitions and language, and we anticipate that we'll be heading out into the community and field-testing the proposals within the next two months.

(4) KCMO Food Summit: What is a food system and why should a city care about it? are the questions we'll be addressing hand in hand with the Mayor's office, the city council, and city and neighborhood leadership in 2010. In late May, the city will host a Food Summit looking at ways that a city can positively impact local food production and access to good food for the benefit of its citizens.

There will be much more happening in this coming year--work with individual farmers and farming operations, educational work with communities, growing vegetables, herbs, and a new crop of farm apprentices and volunteers, and all the rest of the wonderful and life-promoting work that farmers are all about and of which KCCUA is privileged to be part.

KCCUA Welcomes New Board Members

At the end of 2009, many of our founding board members rotated off the board, after five full years of board service. Ted Carey, Kwang Kim, Sherri Harvel, Bev Pender, and Julie Xiong provided strong leadership and vision when we started KCCUA and helped guide us through the extraordinary growth of the organization. I wish I had the space here to share with you the special contributions of each of them, but suffice it to say that their unique personalities, experiences, and wisdom shaped and will forever shape KCCUA and the character of urban agriculture in Kansas City.

Anticipating the turn-over we began recruiting new board members in the summer, talking to many old and new friends of the organization, and found an abundance of good candidates. The new board is charged with leading us through the next stage of our development: our operating budget should hit \$500,000 in the next year or so, our staff and our range of activities continue to expand, and we are at the earliest of stages of looking at our need for more and improved working

and production space. I'd like to introduce these new board members to you.

Jill DeWitt, Missouri Audubon Society, Kansas City, MO, has been a long-time environmental and community activist in Missouri.

Shannon Hoffmann, Green Acres Market, Kansas City, MO brings terrific marketing and organic food industry knowledge to us and to our farmers.

Pov Huns, Huns Garden, Kansas City, KS is a strong and innovative urban farmer we've come to know well over the last five years.

Dr. Hasan Naima, Dean of Math & Science and Dean of Technical Education at the Kansas City, KS, Community College offers extraordinary educational leadership as well as degrees in agriculture and agricultural engineering.

Ken Pakula, Leawood, KS, retired from Sprint and a former military officer, is one of KCCUA's strongest supporters and will be sharing his management skills with us as we grow.

David Smith, Assistant to the Superintendent for Communications, School District 500, Kansas City, KS is a KCCF CSA member and community leader with a deep knowledge of social and organizational change and learning.

Gwen Wurst, Community Volunteer, Kansas City, MO, brings excellent organizational and non profit experience to KCCUA, as well as a deep commitment to healthy food and communities.

Tina Wurth, Regional Educator, Lincoln University, Kansas City, MO owns her own successful soap business and has a long history of community education and engagement in Kansas City, MO on the topics of gardening, farming and urban development.

These new board members will join with our continuing board members in leading us into the next five years of promoting farming, food, entrepreneurship and strong communities through urban agriculture. We look forward to working with them!

Reach Katherine at katherine@kccua.org.

Field Notes from the Kansas City Community Farm



Item # 234 on to-do list: clean up pile behind wooden shed.

By Alicia Ellingsworth

Many people have asked me what a farmer does this time of year. While I have enjoyed the slower pace, quieter days and sleeping in on Saturdays (instead of our 4:30 am market call during the season), I have not found it difficult keeping busy.

January is a month of lists. We inventory our seed supply and make a seed order list. We send out renewal forms to CSA members and make a list of replies. We're starting a new pre-paid Market CSA this year, so another list is in order. We've just hired the summer field crew. These folks are real community-minded individuals coming to KCCF with farm experience gained in the region and across the world. They have a to-do list waiting. Seed starting has begun. That g-r-o-w-i-n-g list is filling the

germination room. Community farmers are returning to the greenhouse; so holes have been patched, water pipes mended and new benches have been put into place. Spring cleaning and repair lists are checked off daily.

Our wish list for new projects has also grown. We're looking for willing folks to lend a hand. We'd like some photos taken. We need a lean-to for our worm bins. We'd appreciate some help designing and building a water and top soil collection system to save what is washed off the harvest. We need help reroofing one of the high tunnels that was opened to the elements over the winter. We're planning a small orchard and need some volunteers with shovel experience. A handyperson could build a few new market boxes. In short, I've got a list of jobs if any one reading has some time.

This farm has a wonderful list of volunteers. I find that people come wanting to participate and apologizing for their lack of experience and we find out together how much they really know. One of my best qualities is that I can find something for anyone to do. People come, learn while sharing their time and talents, and of course, work down my to-do list. I love it!

In addition to all these lists, I'm also working on reports. We had much success with our fall production; harvesting and selling produce weekly into late December. Low tunnels were experimented with again this year and the protection they provided was amazing! These low tunnels have kept spinach and root crops alive all winter. This week, the last of January, we will harvest spinach and roots from the field for market. We have also had some success in our high tunnel winter production experiment. Kale, salad mix and scallions from the high tunnels will also go to market this week. All these experiments further our knowledge, feed us and aid in our list making for next fall.

As February begins, the growing season has arrived. Come to the farm to see for yourself what we do.

Alicia can be reached at alicia@kccua.org.

Arkansas Farmer Leads the Way to Sustainable No-Till Practices

Example comes as more and more vegetable growers look for ways to kiss their tiller good-bye.

Patrice Gros was raised in Marseille, France. After pursuing a career in corporate finance, in 1993 Patrice bought a home in Ojai, CA, with an acre of land where he started his first garden, heart-shaped and barely 100 square-feet. With it came a life transformation of the most profound and unexpected kind. Today, many seasons and thousands of hours of raking, hoeing, mulching and harvesting later, Patrice's gardening passion is alive and well. Only the scale has changed. In 2006 Patrice founded Foundation Farm, a 5-acre certified organic farm in the Arkansas Ozarks. Foundation Farm follows a no-till, low-input system which provides high yields in a beautiful natural setting. In 2009 Foundation Farm harvested 20,000 lbs of produce that were sold within a 50-mile radius, through two area farmers markets, a few restaurants and stores. Foundation Farm welcomes season-long trainees in its farming school program as well as day-volunteers from nearby communities. Patrice is the co-founder and a board member of the Eureka Springs Farmers Market. He is married to Karen and the proud Papa of Manon and Marcello.



Foundation Farm: Small-scale no-till agriculture in Eureka Springs, AR.

By Patrice Gros

My current farm, Foundation Farm, was a no-till farm from the start, and that was four full growing years ago. Before that, my ½ - acre garden around my home in Eureka Springs, AR, was also 100% no-till, although with specifications adapted to a smaller acreage. The no-till approach, a journey indeed, was conceived early in my 15-year farming career; it started when I first read Masanobu Fukuoka's *One-Straw Revolution*, followed by long philosophical discussions with my former master and mentor who was himself a superior organic farmer, yet who tilled in compost regularly.

It took 15 years indeed to get it done: to compose an entire farming system away from any form of tilling or spading. As I stand today, my farm is able to produce (with some degree of reliability) more than \$50,000 worth of produce yearly on a cultivated area of 24,000 square feet (slightly more than ½ acre), spread over a total farm area of five acres. This exact square footage remains unchanged from year to year because I work with a permanent bed system which combines well with the no-till techniques.

No-till is not a faith-based system. Rather, it requires a complete set of technical steps to be practical and successful.

1. Soil Structure (tilth): in a successful no-till system soil structure has to be preserved by all means. If you start with poor soil, or poor structure, as in top-soil that you import from a nursery, or with clay-saturated/compacted soil, maybe my system will not help. I have always worked with cherty loam, which has great natural structure, and lots of stones too. But structure must be protected from compaction, which is something many beginning no-till farmers neglect. No-compaction techniques are critical and numerous. It starts with not tilling when you first start your beds. Instead, I start all my beds by mowing and killing surface sod with mulch or black plastic. It continues with a no-compaction policy which prevents any person or any machine from applying pressure on the cultivated area. Permanent, clearly marked beds (I use strings), can help a great deal in this regard. Preventing compaction also requires the intensive use of mulch, which covers most of my beds most of the time, and which has a great ability to protect against rain-based compaction. Row-covers and hoop-houses further protect the soil against weather-based compaction.

2. Soil Life: soil life also is a big part of the anti-compaction equation, but it does a lot more than protecting soil structure; it creates it. If not for an intensive soil biology, it is probable that gravity alone, aided by water logging, would end up compacting your soil. Soil microbial and insect activity are the key to your long term no-till farming success, maintaining the aeration level, optimizing water retention, and of course it feeding your plants. Think about it this way: soil life is the key to your no-till farming, but no-till farming is the key to your soil life. No-till indeed is the only farming system which allows soil biology to remain undisturbed, almost in a natural state. The only other element needed here is organic matter, the food to keep your hungry microbes happy. But organic matter and farm fertility is another topic.

3. Cultivation Methods: so let's say you need to seed carrots and you have a no-till farm. First, let me say that I do not do weeds. My weeds are small and marginal as beds are constantly mulched or raked and worked on. A bed of carrots will often happen in late summer (mid-August), following lettuce or whatever, say cucumbers. We will take two carts to the bed, remove the dead cucumbers and old mulch and transfer them out onto another bed, using hands and rakes. Once cleared of mulch, you will be left with the fluffiest, most desirable never-tilled soil, fit for carrots. The rest is just regular



Spring planting into a no-till bed at Foundation Farm.

farming. This simple operation takes two people about one hour to complete for a 100-foot long bed.

People ask me what was the drive behind the progression to a complete no-till. I think it came primarily from the knowledge I have accumulated about soil life, from studies and from my direct experience, as I compared my farm to other tilled farms. It also helped that the tractor culture was not hard-wired in me. But in the end, my respect and love of nature stand to remind to not cut corners and to abide to my no-till and no-chemical commitments

The side benefits of no-till have been numerous, and sometimes unexpected. The absence of machines provides a heavenly work environment: safe, silent and smokeless. No-till (no-tractor) saves on gas, maintenance, and lowers the farmers' stress level as he never starts the day with a stubborn, unyielding machine. And then there the subtle and powerful connection between farmer and land that occurs with close-contact, manual work. Indeed, I feel and understand my soil a lot better at the end of my rake than by sitting on top of a tractor.

I just gave you a very quick summary of the core aspects of my no-till method. Of course, it is complicated too, in the many details that make farming both interesting and frustrating.

For more information about Foundation Farm and Farming School, contact Patrice at mamakapa@yahoo.com or visit www.foundationfarm.com.

Tooling Kansas City Farmers For Business Success

Local entrepreneurship program helps growers "crunch the numbers."

By Laura Christensen

As I looked around me at the Kauffman Foundation Conference Center in early November I couldn't help but notice how the 11 other growers and aspiring farmers in the room shifted back and forth in their seats a little and occasionally glanced out the window. One grower surreptitiously leafed through a seed catalog. Several worried out loud that they ought to be planting garlic. There really should, I thought, be a t-shirt that says I'd rather be farming. The growers had gathered together for the first session of a modified version of the Kauffman Foundation's FastTrac New Venture entrepreneurship program, designed specifically for current or aspiring market farmers who wanted help developing a business plan for their farm.

I was there for two reasons. First, because I needed help organizing the business side of my market farm, a one-acre organic vegetable farm in Kansas City, KS. In the past year I had seen demand for my CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) rise, a change in buying patterns at farmers markets, and I had started to wonder if becoming a full-time farmer was a possibility. Local food was growing up and if I wanted my farm to grow with it I needed to learn more. I needed tools to help me make business decisions, organize and prioritize ideas, and get a better grasp on what was and wasn't profitable, feasible or right for me.

My second reason for attending was that I manage the Growing Growers Training Program. Growing Growers provides training and networking to local growers and aspiring farmers. Growing Growers had partnered with FastTrac to organize this course and I was excited to see how it would come together.

David Andre, our course facilitator, was also eager to see how this adaptation of FastTrac's New Venture program would work. An attorney, David had ushered many would-be entrepreneurs through FastTrac courses, but he had no background in small scale agriculture except happy memories of his grandfathers garden. To help keep the course relevant to growers, guest speakers with knowledge of local food production, marketing and trends were scheduled.

FastTrac courses typically include participants from many types of businesses. The diversity of their businesses brings new ideas and perspectives to the classes. For this grower-centered course we relied on a diversity of experience levels among the participants to bring different knowledge and skill sets to the course.

That morning everything seemed to be in place for a great learning experience but I had no idea how it would all turn out. By the end of the first class, my fears had faded. David welcomed us to the class, introduced the material and helped us see how business planning was relevant to us.

Our first speaker, Lynn Byczynski of Growing for Market, a national market-farming magazine, wowed us with her knowledge of the trends in local food production and sales. We talked about our ideas and hopes for our businesses and started the process that many of us find so intimidating: putting our dreams down on paper.

Like most small business owners, growers are passionate about what they do. We believe in the food we produce—that it tastes great, that it is healthy for our customers, the environment and our local economy, that the work involved is good work. What we sometimes fail to do is look at the numbers. There is a saying that a farmer should never calculate his or her hourly wage—it is too discouraging. However, part of the goal of this class was to put those potentially discouraging numbers out there. One of the first things our facilitator David stressed was that it was important that our final business

plans reflected our own personal goals and priorities but that we also needed to carefully consider the long-term feasibility of our businesses.

Bruce Branstetter, one of the most experienced farmers in the course, particularly appreciated this: I liked the step-by-step process of the course; beginning with introspection and then building upon question after question leading to a business plan. If done honestly the process will force one to come to some hard but required realizations about the viability of ones vision. Loretta Craig, a novice berry grower, echoed his sentiments: As a greenhorn, the course took me from lots of good ideas to the serious thinking of feasibility, marketing, and planning to make my goal of being a farmer a reality.

Among the most popular tools in the course were the business plan and financial plan templates that are included in FastTrac programs. For many of us it was the first time we had recorded our farm income, assets, expenses and labor hours in a meaningful way. And so, as the course neared completion in mid-December, clarity began to emerge. One grower particularly committed to education realized that she had been thinking about her farms product as food, when in fact it was knowledge. Someone else applied for a loan to expand the farm, another decided they needed to hire an employee. One decided that a market farm wasnt a good fit for them.

As for me, I set a goal for gradual CSA expansion, put better accounting practices in place and realized that I cant be a full-time farmer for another couple years. I also realized that there are great resources to be found in my fellow growers, who have continued to share information and ideas even after the course ended.

Thanks to my fellow classmates, our facilitator David Andre, the FastTrac program and the Kauffman Foundation for making the 2009 Growing Growers FastTrac course a success. Plans are in the works to offer the course again in late 2010.

If you or someone you know is interested in participating in or in supporting this program, please contact Laura at growers@ksu.edu or (816) 805-0362.

Manila Farmers Put Idle Urban Lands to Productive Use

Kansas City NGO helps small growers earn money from urban agriculture.

Kansas City-based Christian Foundation for Children and Aging (CFCA) is an international movement serving people of all faiths living in poverty in 24 developing countries through its Hope for a Family sponsorship program. The organization helps families put food on the table, send their children to school and have a decent place to live, so that together we can end the cycle of poverty. CFCA's Antipolo project is located on the outskirts of Manila, the Philippines, and serves more than 7,800 children, youth and elderly.



Evangeline and Reneboy are members of CFCA's Likas-kayang Pagkain, or Food Sustainability Project.

By Malou Navio, Antipolo Project Coordinator

Many CFCA-sponsored families in urban neighborhoods in Rizal Province, the Philippines, work as urban laborers as well as urban farmers. To the majority of them, working as a laborer is the main livelihood and farming is for food augmentation. For others, farming is the primary source of income and they look for a labor job after harvest to earn extra income.

In the community of Angono in Rizal Province, CFCA urban farmers have no lands of their own. They are frugal and hardworking. They cultivate and put to productive use public, private and easement lands that are idle or have been abandoned. They grow a variety of vegetables and root crops. They also nurture fruit trees and bananas and raise livestock to increase their income.

The CFCA-Antipolo project attempts to serve the needs of the sponsored rural and urban farmers. The project has a program called Likas-kayang Pagkain, or Food Sustainability Project, designed to respond to the needs of farmers. It includes training sessions and capacity building, food-for-work projects and seedling nurseries. It also provides assistance with acquiring tools, equipment, farm-helping animals, as well as leasing or acquiring land. This project promotes organic farming and growing food as a way of life.

The indigenous and organic way of farming is still alive in the farmers of Angono. They inherited these practices from relatives, were influenced by elders and have learned them from training sessions and seminars. Also, the farmers have started various farmer organizations that provide members a venue to talk about their welfare and intervene with land issues and concerns. These organizations play an important role in the care of the environment as well.

Families whose livelihood is growing Kangkong, or water cabbage, also raise fish in the lake. Then they use the bones from the harvested fish to make fertilizer. In this case, only the fathers do this with any older sons. The mothers are responsible to sell what they harvest.

Some families farm as a family unit, the father, mother and their children working together. To connect with each other, the parents of CFCA-sponsored children in Antipolo Project form community groups of about 15 members called Kapitbahayan, comprised of families within the same neighborhood. In the Filipino language of Tagalog, Kapitbahayan is translated as a connection of neighborhoods and the groups meet frequently to support and encourage one another. Some Kapitbahayan also assist each other with farming activities.



Members of the CFCA Likas-kayang Pagkain, or Food Sustainability Project, display part of their harvest in Rizal Province, the Philippines.

One of the most successful Kapitbahayan in urban farming is the Kapitbahayan #10 (K 10) with the leadership of Jesse, the mother of a sponsored child. K 10 is made up of 15 families of sponsored children and seniors. All families are members of the Mahabang Parang Crops and Livelihood Farmers Association (MAPACLIFA). The estimated land area that they farm is 15 hectares. Each family tills an average of one hectare (approx. 2.5 acres). The area is sandwiched between, and includes land belonging to, both a first-class golf course and the world-renowned Angono Petroglyphs.

The families daily farming begins at 5 a.m. and stops at 10 a.m., then continues from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. As a group, they help each other in soil preparation. They practice Bayanihan, meaning that those who have finished with their work early help the others who are not yet finished. Also, the early harvest is shared with those who have none yet. Seedlings are shared between group members.

The K 10 farmers grow the most delicious sweet potatoes, called "camote," as their major crop. Secondary crops vary and include corn, cassava, taro, yam, gourds, squash, luffa, legumes and ginger as well as other vegetables. There are bananas and fruit trees like papaya, mangoes, avocado and star apples also being nurtured. The land is only irrigated by rains.

Crops are planted during the rainy season from mid-May to November. The families keep their crops healthy by using organic fertilizers that they prepare by using animal manure and compost from decayed organic matter from the farm. They also plant legumes after each harvest of sweet potatoes, so they can restore the fertility of the soil. They manage pests by growing insect-repellant plants such as chamomile and oregano. They don't spray chemicals. They also value beneficial predator insects. The predator insects help drive the pests away. Many farmers and others, including the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, support the notion that organic farming fights hunger, tackles climate change and is good for farmers, consumers and the environment.

The K 10 farmers generally harvest their crops in the months of January, February, March, July, August, October, November and December. Lean months are April, May and September. During the harvest season, the families take orders from people in the nearby neighborhoods and subdivisions. They harvest the crops only in the quantity needed to consume for the day at home and to be sold, earning about 200 to 300 Filipino pesos, or \$4 to \$6.50 daily. The farmers establish regular customers called "suki" through growing organic crops known for their freshness and by using socialized selling.

As an organization, the K 10 farmers are vigilant and actively non-violent in their struggles, challenges and quests for secure land tenure. If this is not possible where they are, they look for lands that are left unused or abandoned while continuing their appeals for agrarian reform.

For more information contact CFCA at (913) 384-6500 or visit www.hopeforfamily.org.

Vegetable Specialist and High Tunnel Pioneer Leaves Kansas City
Former K-State Extension Agent reflects on a decade well-spent.

By Ted Carey



Sporting his new uniform, Ted Carey is checking in from Mozambique

In August 1999, I came to Kansas City to work for K-State Research and Extension. This was my first time in Kansas and I arrived with some preconceived notions: that Kansas was flat, and that it would be pretty rural. I was wrong on both counts, at least for the part of Johnson County where I settled (Lenexa). My job was to serve local and regional vegetable and fruit producers, and there was already a buzz around local food, along with growing concerns about our food system and lifestyle.

I came to Kansas City with a strong interest in organic and sustainable production techniques and an awareness that this area had been somewhat neglected by research and extension. I also came to Kansas City with an interest in urban and peri-urban agriculture, both here and around the world, and its possibilities for improving our quality of life and generating livelihoods. What I did not have when I arrived in Kansas City, was a clear idea of what the real needs and opportunities were for fruit and vegetable research and extension for our region.

One of the first things I did was to go out and visit farmers, stopping by farms and farmers markets to introduce myself and to get an idea of what producers needed. At one large farmers market I remember one vendor after another telling me that they had grown all their produce themselves but that the other vendors were just peddlers who had bought their vegetables at some wholesale outlet. I wasn't sure what the take-home message of that was, but it did seem to indicate something about the need for (and challenges of) more local production, for stricter market management and for more educated customers.

One producer I met at that farmers market was Katherine Kelly, then of Full Circle Farm, and now the Director of the Kansas City Center for Urban Agriculture. She immediately gave me my first assignment: to help her figure out how to extend the production season for leafy green vegetables into the heat of the summer. Another contact I made early on was Dan Nagengast, farmer and Director of the Kansas Rural Center, who was quick to provide great lists of needs and opportunities, some of which I wish he had kept to himself, such as, for example, the *Variety Trial of Processing Tomatoes* (my parents almost died of heat stroke when they joined in the tomato harvest for that project during their August visit). It was the visionary producers and consumers who were pretty much my bosses during my time in Kansas.

It has been a wonderful ten years working in and around Kansas and Kansas City. Interest in local food and food systems has grown and grown, impelled by so many forces, but actual local food and alternative food systems are still so tiny in the big picture of our fast food culture and global food system. I am grateful and happy to have been able to help lay the foundation for future efforts, by, for example, helping to establish the Growing Growers Training Program which has become a fixture of the local scene (see related story in this issue of *Urban Grown*), by researching and promoting high tunnels—such remarkable tools for providing crops with a favorable production environment, by serving on the Board of the Kansas City Center for Urban Agriculture, by participating in the establishment of the Kansas City Food Policy Coalition, and by assisting with organizing the Great Plains Vegetable Growers Conference held annually in January in St. Joseph, MO (this conference is a must for anyone thinking about growing vegetables for fun and profit).

While there will always be challenges—we recognize that in Kansas as you can tell from our states motto—I think there's a lot to feel optimistic about as we move forward with the tasks of transforming our food system to one that provides everyone with food that is safe, healthy, fair, affordable and sustainably produced. At the plenary session of this year's Great Plains Vegetable Growers Conference, we used classroom clickers to do instant polling of the growers present. Many interesting things came out of this survey, but the answer to one of the last questions was among the most heartening. Ninety eight percent of those present said that they were optimistic about the future of fresh vegetable, fruit and flower production in our region. I agree with you.

As I'm writing this, I have returned to work as a sweet potato breeder for the International Potato Center, and am on my way to Kumasi, Ghana. I am visiting my colleague, Maria Andrade in Maputo, Mozambique, learning about the incredible work she and her colleagues have been doing here to develop and disseminate orange fleshed sweet potato varieties to help fight hunger and malnutrition. I have taken off my purple t-shirt and am wearing an orange one now. Today torrential rains flooded the city and we couldn't go to the field to see the research plots. People here are worried about the changing climate and the devastating effects it may have on the poor and vulnerable, and on all of us.

Take care, and take care of Kansas City. I'll be sending snippets from Sub-Saharan Africa from time to time.

Reach Ted Carey at e.carey@cgiar.org

Growing Growers Announces 2010 Farm Apprenticeship Program

By Laura Christensen



Growing Growers apprentices learn on-the-go from experienced farmers.

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to grow food and sell it at market? Thinking about starting your own CSA? Looking for work experience on a sustainable farm? Want to learn more about small scale sustainable farming?

If so, you may want to consider being a Growing Growers (GG) Apprentice. GG Apprentices work or volunteer on local organic or sustainable farms, attend monthly workshops and farm tours covering the basics of sustainable market farming, receive books and resources recommended by area growers and receive training from their host farmers. Its a great way to gain real-world experience in local food production and learn about the skills and work involved in running a small scale farm.

Apprenticeships are available on several Kansas City and Lawrence area farms, including the Kansas City Community Farm. Both paid and volunteer apprenticeships are available. The apprenticeship is open to people of all backgrounds and experience levels. Apprentices must be able to commit to a schedule, be willing and able to work in the field and ready to learn on the go.

The deadline to apply for the 2010 GG Apprenticeship Program is March 1, 2010, but early application is strongly encouraged. Tuition for 2010 is \$300.00 (scholarships are available).

Growing Growers is a joint effort of K-State Research and Extension, the University of Missouri, KCCUA, the Kansas Rural Center and the Kansas City Food Circle.

For more information, go to www.growinggrowers.org or contact Laura Christensen, Program Manager, at (816) 805-0362.

Calendar of Events

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Restyle: Prior Attire Clothing Drive to Benefit KCCUA. March 1 to April 30, Prior Attire Resale Boutique, 9555 Nall Ave., Overland Park, KS. Donate bags of used clothing to Prior Attire. **KCCUA will receive a donation for every bag, and you will receive a tax receipt for your donation.** Please mention KCCUA when you donate. For more information, contact Kay Young at kay@prior-attire.com.

Growing Growers Workshop: Understanding Soil. Saturday, March 27th, 10am to 3pm. Location TBA (KC area). This workshop will include presentations on soil basics and composting designed to help gardeners and market farmers understand and manage their soil, including organic matter, basic soil biology, structure, testing and fertility. Our focus will be on organic and sustainable methods of management and will include demonstrations. Presenters are extension specialists with backgrounds in soil science and composting. Lunch will be provided. Cost for this workshop is \$30.00 (scholarships available, call or email for details). For more information contact Laura Christensen at growers@ksu.edu or (816) 805-0362.

12th Annual Exhibition of Farmers: EAT LOCAL! 2010. At TWO locations: Saturday, March 27, 2009, 9am - 2pm, Shawnee Civic Center, 13817 Johnson Drive, Shawnee, KS 66216 AND Saturday, April 3, 2010, 9:30am - 2pm, Roger T. Sermon Community Center, Truman & Noland Rd, Independence, MO 64050. High-quality, organic vegetables for sale on-site and through CSA memberships; free-range meats; eggs and dairy products; veggie seedlings and plants for spring gardens; information on organic agriculture and gardening. For all the details and lots more on local food and agriculture visit the Kansas City Food Circle at www.kcfoodcircle.org

To subscribe or unsubscribe please send an email to info@kccua.org.
For editorial comments please contact *Urban Grown* editor Daniel Dermitzel at daniel@kccua.org.
The Kansas City Center for Urban Agriculture is a 501c3 not-for-profit organization.

www.kccua.org
(913) 831-2444



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