

Community Food Project Grantees in Florida

Florida Certified Organic Growers and Consumers (FOG)

Grant awarded: \$175,000 in 2000 for 3 years; \$108,000 in 2003 for 3 years.

FOG received a 2000 Community Food Project grant for the Alachua County Local Food Project, which worked through its Neighborhood Nutrition Network (NNN) to increase access to and knowledge of fresh, local, nutritious food in the community. NNN worked intensively with youth and local schools, establishing gardens at three schools in low-income areas of Gainesville. Students grew fruits and vegetables both to serve in the lunchroom and to share with their families. In the first year of the project, every student involved in the program brought home a total of 150 pounds of produce. Teachers incorporated the garden into lessons, working with FOG staff to develop a school garden curriculum tailored to state standards. Building on its success with school gardens, particularly with "at-risk" students and those with disabilities, NNN decided to expand its work with youth.

FOG's second CFP grant, awarded in 2003, enabled the Youth Entrepreneurial Farm and Food Preservation Project (FFPP) - begun as part of the school gardening project - to expand and grow. FOG staff employ low-income high school students to work on one of the last remaining farms in the Gainesville city limits. Youth grow food both for donation and sale, connecting to their communities while learning to develop their own business.

North Florida Educational Development Corporation, Gretna

Grant awarded: \$100,000 in 2001 for one year.

The WellSprings Initiative began in 2001 to address chronic food shortages in this economically depressed area. Its goals were to increase production of and access to locally produced food and to bring food grown in South Florida up to the North Florida region for processing, in order to create jobs and to feed the area. The Initiative runs a farmers' market, and coordinates 12 farms in a local cooperative. A 2001 CFP grant allowed them to renovate a former feed mill into a community food processing plant. In the future, the group hopes to procure funding to buy crops from the Southern Farmers' Cooperative, and to process this produce into value-added commodities.