

Community Food Project Profile in Nebraska

Four Community food project grants have been awarded to organizations in Nebraska between 1997 and 2006. These are profiles on the three most recent projects, which total \$640, 982:

Open Harvest Natural Foods Cooperative, Lincoln

Grant awarded: \$275,982 in 2006 for 3-year period

In partnership with the local government agencies, the “From Garden to Table” Project has worked to develop an ethnic farmers’ market to increase farmer income and provide fresh food opportunities for low-income and immigrant populations. The project has placed Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) machines in this new market and in existing farmers’ markets, and has linked them with local community gardens. They have also reached out to low-income communities through educational activities, including youth gardening projects, classes on food self-reliance and children’s nutrition, and culturally appropriate cooking classes, which have also been broadcast on a local public TV station to overcome limited access to transportation. As part of a project advisory council, the project has worked with partner organizations to translate information labels on bulk foods, removing barriers to information on nutrition, and has promoted local food-based micro-businesses.

United Methodists for Mission and Justice, Omaha

Grant awarded: \$185,000 in 2005 for 3-year period

The Omaha Project, has engaged churches, businesses, public agencies, and marketing specialists to established a string of new community gardens in east Omaha for entrepreneurial enterprises, agricultural skills training, health promotion, inter-generational mentoring, and food-based economic development. Five such gardens were established in the first year, and UMMJ expects to complete 12 by the end of the third year of the project. The project has provided nutrition education and opportunities for gardeners to sell excess produce, and has helped build a network of gardens and congregations.

Lincoln Action Program, Lincoln

Grant awarded: \$180,000 in 2002 for 3-year period

The CFP-funded project Partnership for Food Security focused on improving the food security of low-income persons, refugees, and immigrants, and the expansion of markets for regional farmers. The project expanded the Perishable Foods Program, distributing 400,000-500,000 pounds of food to 400-500 families per week. To increase the community’s self-reliance in providing for its own food needs, the project established 165 garden plots available to low-income people. Additionally, a kitchen was provided to micro-enterprise clients for the development of food-related businesses, which eventually began selling products at the Centreville Farmers’ Market and the year-round Farmers’ Market store. The Centreville Farmers’ Market has worked with the Lincoln Action Program to develop its own income stream and become self-sufficient.