

November 17th, 2017

# Urban Growers' Collaborative Project

## Phase 1 Report Convening



**LIVE WELL  
SAN DIEGO**  
**COMMUNITY  
MARKET  
PROGRAM**

**UC San Diego**  
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

**Center for  
Community Health**



**FARMER D**  
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# Intros



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Joe's Pocket Farm  
MUNDO GARDENS

1. Your Name &  
Farm Name

2. One Crop You Are  
Harvesting or  
Planting Now

# Agenda Overview

1. Review Project Background
2. Goal & Questions of Phase 1 Research
3. What Did We Learn?
4. What Comes Next?
5. Q & A
6. Upcoming Training Workshop Reminders



# Project Goals

**Understand barriers & opportunities for collaboration among small urban farmers to improve viability and entry into new local markets**

- 1.) Support viability of small urban farms**
- 2.) Increase fresh food access for limited-resource urban residents**







# Project Phases

## One

- Review research on urban ag viability
- Assess product supply of growers' group
- Identify opportunities for TA
- Understand interest/potential for collaboration

## Two

- Assess local demand
- Determine recommendations for collaborative action/project/product
- Provide TA to access local markets

## Three

- Study the feasibility of the determined collaborative action from Phase 2

# Phase One Objectives

- Product Supply
- Needs Assessment

# Research Questions

- Who are the urban growers?
- What are they growing?
- What do they need for farm viability?
- Are they interested in collaborating?





# Key Findings



# Farmer Demographics

**Who is growing in urban San Diego County?**  
***Of 9 growers participating in the project:***

- 5 women, 4 men
- Avg age of 36
- 8 of 9 are white, 1 Latina
- 2 veterans
- Farming experience = 10 yrs avg, 5 yrs median



# Farm Operations

- 4.5 yrs = avg age of farms in operation
- .86 acres = avg area of production
- 56% organic practices but not certified, 22% certified organic, 22% soil grown, 22% regenerative, etc.
- 4 for-profit farms, 5 non-profit orgs

## **Vegetables:**

amaranth, carrots, chard, cucumbers, eggplant, herbs, kale, potatoes, salad mix, salanova lettuce, summer squash, tomatillos, tomatoes

## **Fruits:**

apples, figs, lemons, mulberries



## **Grains/Legumes:**

hominy, corn for flour (masa)

## **Other:**

honey, ornamentals, seeds





# Sales Outlets

- 5 sell via **CSA shares**, avg 63% of total sales
- 5 sell via **FM or farm stand**, avg 41% of total sales
- 4 sell **direct to restaurants**, avg 46% of total sales
- 1 sells to wholesale distributor

\*See pgs. 11-12 of report for benefits & challenges of these outlets

# Product Supply Analysis

Table 6. Summary of Urban Farm Supply*	
Average area in production per farm	0.86 acres
Total area in production across all farms	7.00 acres
Total sales	\$152,700
Average sales per farm	\$16,967
Average sales per acre	\$21,814
Top products/crops	Salad mix, lettuce, amaranth, kale, chard, carrots, and tomatoes
Top market outlets	1. Farm stands or Farmers' Markets 2. CSA Program 3. Restaurants

\*Using 2016 sales and production data



# Expanding Production

- 8 of 9 said they have capacity to expand if profitable markets can be accessed
- 2 said they can't expand overall production but willing to shift crops & try different markets
- Top 3 barriers to expanding production: labor availability, production equipment, access to grants, credit/financing

# New Crops/Products to Consider

- **Veggies:** arugula, salanova lettuce, carrots, onions, lettuce mix, tomatoes, Asian cucumbers, okra, basil, kale, chard, specialty veg, microgreens
- **Fruits:** tropical, figs, pomegranate, guava, dragonfruit, passionfruit, kiwano melons
- **Grains/Legumes:** dry beans, heritage grains
- **Other:** Hispanic and African American culturally relevant foods, high value rare food crops



# Urban Farm Viability





# Top 3 Barriers

- Marketing
- Business planning
- Access to capital, credit, and/or grants

\*See pg. 14 of report for details on critical components of traditional & urban farm viability



# Benefits/Opps Unique to Urban Farming

- Proximity to markets
- Proximity to other employment
- Camaraderie with other growers
- Connection to community/community support
- Opportunities for community building, reconnecting people to where food comes from
- Access to communities in need
- Access to large population centers
- Opportunities for collaboration
- Ability to address issues related to health, support underserved & minority communities
- Access to diverse markets & diverse communities

# Potential for Collaboration





# Collaboration Overview

- 6 growers currently work with other farms
- 2 previously had a joint CSA
- Top criteria in deciding where collective sales should be: **participation in local community, minimize time spent on sales**
- All 9 saw potential to collaborate to impact food access for low-income pop.
- 6 of 8 growers said preserving farm identity was essential to their marketing goals; **100% would consider jointly marketing products to access markets**
- 6 growers said they have physical assets they'd consider contributing to a multi-farm project

\*See pgs. 16-18 of report for more details on collaboration

# Technical Assistance Needs



# Top Technical Assistance Needs

- **Business planning & coaching, 11/30**
- **Marketing training, 12/14 & 12/15**
- **Accessing capital or credit**
- **Non-profit fundraising**
- **Production assistance**

\*See pgs. 19-21 for more details on technical assistance



# What's Next?

- **Assess local demand (e.g. restaurants, target potential CSA consumers?)**
- **Continued training & TA for individual farm viability**
- **Specific collaborative project TA**



# QUESTIONS?

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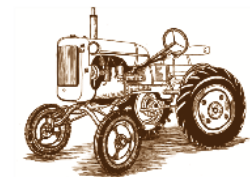
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