

TRADITIONAL AND MODERN AGRICULTURE PROJECT

by ASPRI

Region 2 • Guaynabo, Puerto Rico
aspripr.org



Senior Citizens Job Training • Economic Development • Food

INITIATIVE OVERVIEW

This project focuses on increasing the number of participants **educated and trained on how to use traditional and agriculture methods and hydroponic farming**. The project establishes and sustains a home or community food system that can meet participants' nutrition and/or economic needs. The project facilitates an 8-week, 4 hour per week training program where participants learn how to cultivate produce utilizing hydroponics. Additionally, project staff follow-up with training participants after the training to assist in whatever way possible to help them practice and apply what they learned.

LOCAL NEED ADDRESSED BY INITIATIVE

The poverty rate in Puerto Rico is 43.1% which is drastically higher than the U.S. national poverty rate at 13.1%. Puerto Rico additionally faces over a decade-long economic recession with over a 10% loss of economic growth. It is estimated the Puerto Rico grows only 15% of the food that is consumed.

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With individuals and families needing methods to sustain self-sufficiency, it is imperative to provide education and training resulting in certification and skills necessary to increase access to local and nutritional produce. By completing the 8-week



hydroponics training, participants expand their knowledge and increase their economic opportunities to cultivate and sell produce thereby increasing their household incomes.

ROLE OF CSBG FUNDS

CSBG Funds are utilized for the implementation of the Traditional and Modern Agricultural Project. CSBG funds are used to support the staff salaries.

TRANSFORMATIVE IMPACT

This initiative seeks to impact individuals and families across Puerto Rico. The initiative educates individuals on how to not only cultivate produce for the household but also for economic gain. The Traditional and Modern Agricultural Project:

- Promotes the creation of projects targeting the development of small business, cooperatives, self-employment, in coordination with other public or private agencies.
- Offers individual and collective follow-up to the

participants who receive the training and who desire to develop their own projects.

- Develops projects in the day care centers for the elderly in order to encourage them to participate in an agricultural activity.

Since 2002, approximately 2,229 participants have been enrolled in the agriculture workshops.

EVIDENCE-BASED OUTCOMES

In this program, traditional agriculture courses are offered to young people and adults with low economic resources, giving them the opportunity to train and perform in productive activities that allow them to generate income, feel self-sufficient and in turn achieve a higher level of independence.

EQUITY LENS

The initiative does not discriminate potential participants by race or ethnicity. All are recruited and welcomed. All participants are welcome to participate in the program as long as income eligibility is met.

CUSTOMER VOICE

On January 29, 2014, the eight young participants and 1-faculty members of Nuestra Escuela, Inc. began taking a course in hydroponics at our facilities in Rio Grande, graduating on March 18, 2014.

Nuestra Escuela, Inc. is a non-profit, community-based, non-governmental organization, incorporated

on August 11, 2000 under the laws of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico for the purpose of offering educational services to youth and adults outside of the school without having completed the Fourth Year of high school.

The experience was unforgettable for all of us who worked at the Center for Traditional and Modern Agriculture of Rio Grande. The integration of the youth of Nuestra Escuela Inc. was very successful. The students showed great interest in hydroponic farming and made the most of the workshops.

Currently in their Loiza facilities, they have planted a diversity of agricultural products despite space limitations and hydroponic systems.

We hope in the near future to have more groups of students from Nuestra Escuela Inc.

Contact

ASPRI

Bo. Monacillo carr. 19 KM 0.3 00969
Guaynabo, Puerto Rico 00969

Website: www.asprir.org
Email: accionsocialdepr@asprir.org
Phone: (787) 273-1878



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