

# The Activities and Impacts of Community Food Projects 2005-2009

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## Preface

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The Community Food Projects (CFP) Competitive Grants Program (CFPCGP)<sup>1</sup> was created to accomplish the legislative goals of improving food access in low-income communities while addressing farm and nutrition issues. The program develops proactive approaches for low-income communities to create their own comprehensive, sustainable food systems. These approaches help them fight hunger and become more self sufficient in their food supply, while addressing economic and social equity as well as environmental stewardship issues.

This report of the activities and impacts of the CFP shows the breadth and depth of the solutions communities have chosen. No one solution matches the needs of all communities. A strength of the program is that rather than imposing one solution, it nurtures creativity within the communities to find their own solutions. The very breadth and depth of these efforts presents a challenge: how to adequately represent this dynamic work across the whole CFP.

The community food security (CFS) movement, of which the grant program is a part, laid the groundwork for the remarkable local and sustainable food interest that has caught fire across the country in the last few years. The CFS movement has focused on the most vulnerable communities. The CFP supports the CFS movement's outreach formally, through training and technical assistance grants in addition to funding community-based projects. The CFS movement has a strong culture of sharing, educating and co-learning from the experience of the participants. Much more goes on among partners, collaborators, and experts in the movement than can be measured or reported here. From a national perspective, program staff at the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) has been very impressed with the extent of the movement's participants in sharing, cooperating and teaching about the lessons they have learned. They have made the movement as strong as it is. The funds in CFP have helped.

In CFP projects, food is a powerful community development tool to improve access to food and strengthen food policies and systems. The most common activities revolve around community food production and marketing. Many of the projects see young people as the key actors to address future food system challenges, and they involve them in a variety of ways. The CFP Program has increased the capacity of low-income communities to control their own food systems.

This report represents the CFP's broad-brush effort, in partnership with grantees, to capture the activities and impacts of the CFP Program grants.

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<sup>1</sup> The Community Food Projects Competitive Grant Program was supported by the Community Food Security movement and established by Congress in 1996 by The Community Food Security Act of 1996 (legislative authority is located in Section 25 of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 2034), as amended by the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 and Section 4402 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act (FCEA) of 2008 (Pub. L. 110-246). USDA administers the program through the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (formerly the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service).

# Contents

Key Findings .....	1
Introduction .....	5
Community Food Security and the Community Food Project’s Competitive Grant Program .....	5
Study Methods .....	6
Study Limitations.....	7
The Reach of Community Food Projects.....	8
The Landscape of Community Food Projects.....	8
The Activities of Community Food Projects.....	8
The People of Community Food Projects.....	10
Food Producers and Handlers .....	10
Food Customers and Recipients .....	11
Partnerships and Collaboration.....	12
Education, Training and Technical Support.....	12
Outreach and Education Materials.....	13
The Impacts of Community Food Projects.....	14
Economic Impacts .....	14
Farmland and Garden Impacts.....	15
Food Impacts.....	16
Food Generated.....	16
Food Sold, Donated and Composted.....	16
Community Food System Infrastructure Impacts .....	17
Community Food Assessments.....	17
Food Policy Councils and Networks.....	18
Summary and Conclusions .....	20
Appendix A: Definitions .....	22





## Key Findings

### Introduction and Methods

The USDA-funded Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service (CSREES) Community Food Projects (CFP) Competitive Grants Program (CFPCGP) was designed to meet the food needs of low-income people; to increase the self-reliance of communities in meeting their own food needs; and to promote comprehensive responses to local food, farm, and nutrition issues. Since its inception in 1996, scores of programs have been funded through CFPCGP.

To assess the impacts of this program, a web-based Common Output Tracking Form (COTF) was developed to track common activities and results among the diverse and dynamic community food projects. The COTF is one of three reporting vehicles for CFP grantees and it is requested of grantees and submitted online to the Community Food Security Coalition (CFSC). Together, these data demonstrate the impact of community food projects towards increasing community food security across the country. Fiscal year 2009 marked the fifth year that grantees were asked to complete the COTF. Over the five year reporting period, 307 grantees were funded through the CFPCGP. Of these, 191 community food projects completed the form – providing annual response rates ranging from 37% to 79% and a response rate overall of 62%. These data were statistically weighted to represent the results of 100% of the active grantees operating between 2005 and 2009. This report provides a summary of those estimates for the five years.

### The Activities of Community Food Projects

Grantees were involved in myriad activities to support community food security including the management of Community Gardens, Youth/School Gardening or Agriculture projects, Promoting Local Food Purchases, Training and Technical Assistance, and Food Access and Outreach. In addition, grantees often collaborated with other organizations to assist with other food system activities. Job skills training, farmers markets, community food assessments, and food policy councils/networks were additional types of program activities commonly pursued by USDA sponsored food projects.

### The Reach of Community Food Projects

The 307 CFPs funded between 2005 and 2009 stretched through the U.S. heartland to the coasts representing 39 states and hundreds of communities varying not only in geography, but in size and culture.

The number of people and organizations involved in and affected by these community food projects during this five year period was significant. More than 750,000 people received education or training, and more than 5,400 organizations received technical assistance. Approximately 51,000 staff members and volunteers and 32,000 organizations collaborated on food security projects during the funding period. Partners typically included community-based organizations, farmers and farmer groups, businesses, and schools. State and local governments also were frequent collaborators.

Nearly 2.5 million Americans were provided food as a result of the programs and about 1.8 million were K-12 students or youth attending summer programs. Approximately 290,000 Americans receiving food from the CFPs were involved in USDA Food Assistance programs.

Community food projects provided training and technical assistance to a vast number of residents and organizations. Over the five year period almost 187,000 hours of



assistance was provided to residents – about one-third of the hours were spent with youth. Additionally, more than 2.5 million educational materials were distributed by grantees and CFP web sites received more than 3.3 million hits.

## The Impacts of Community Food Projects

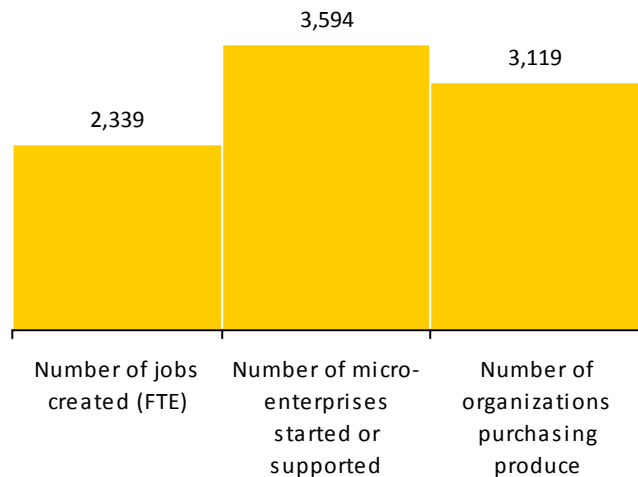
Although the outcomes of CFP work cover vast territory and are often intertwined, significant progress was made in four key areas of impact: economic and social equity, environmental stewardship, healthy food access, and increased community food system infrastructure.

### Economic and Social Equity

Increasing economic benefits to disadvantaged communities and residents through increased jobs, micro-businesses, and extended customer bases for local foods are important components of community food security.

- **Increased Skills:** Approximately 35,000 farmers and gardeners received training and assistance in farming, sustainable agriculture, business and management. One-half of the CFPs worked with underserved or socially disadvantaged farmers
- **Jobs and Businesses:** As a result of CFPs, an estimated 2,300 jobs were created and 3,600 micro-businesses were started or strengthened. More than 1,000 value-added food products were produced by farmers and agricultural workers.
- **Demand for Local Produce:** the customer base for local agriculture was expanded significantly by the CFPs with more than 3,100 organizations purchasing produce. More than 2,600 of these were school districts and schools.

Figure 1: Economic Impact of CFP Activities



### Environmental Stewardship

The preservation and use of agricultural land for farming and gardening is essential for community food reliance but also can serve a broader purpose - protection of the environment. More than 53,000 acres of land were farmed as part of the community food project work – 62% (33,000 acres) were donated or used free of charge. Almost 3,000 acres of land were preserved through Community Food Projects.

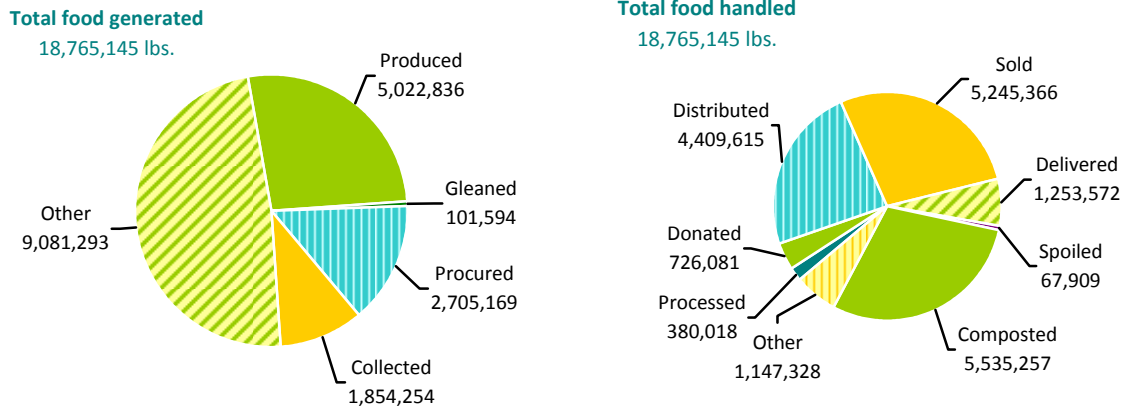
In terms of community and urban gardens, CFPs are estimated to have operated more than 2,500 gardens, 9,100 gardens plots, and 656 greenhouses. More than 5.5 million pounds of food waste were composted by the USDA recipients. This compost reduced inputs into community landfills and was used to enrich soil on sustainable growing operations.



## Healthy Food Access

In a nation simultaneously challenged with hunger and obesity, the importance of healthy food for all is evident. The 307 CFPs active between 2005 and 2009 are estimated to have generated and handled almost 19 million pounds of food – including, fruits and vegetables, meats, dairy items, eggs and honey. The monetary value of the food was estimated at approximately \$19.7 million.

Figure 2: Methods Used to Generate and Handle Food (in Pounds)



Customers and food recipients varied in age, race and ethnicity, and most resided in low-income areas. Approximately 290,000 Americans receiving food from the CFPs were involved in USDA Food Assistance programs:

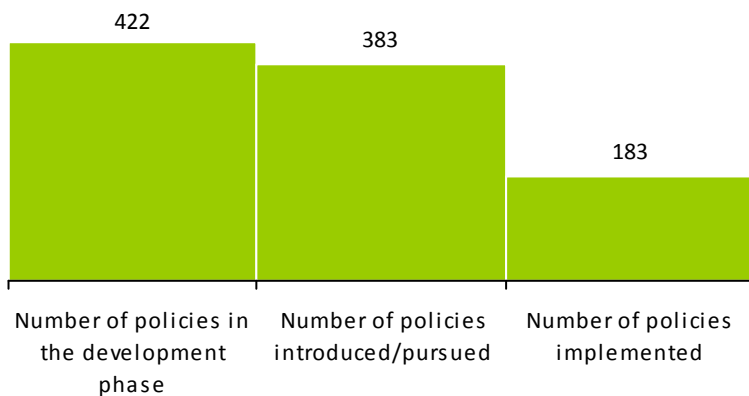
- 105,000 were Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) participants
- 90,000 were Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly food stamps) recipients
- 49,000 were elderly meal recipients
- 47,000 were Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program recipients.

## Increased Community Food System Infrastructure

Creating self-reliant communities involves facilitating positive change for the existing local food system. During the five year time period, The USDA funded CFPs conducted more than 350 Community Food Assessments, formed almost 40 food policy councils and networks and implemented more than 180

policies aimed at increasing community food security across the nation. More than 50 million Americans lived in the communities where these system-level changes were made.

Figure 3: Food Policy Councils



## Conclusion

Although this report only captures a subset of the work completed by USDA funded food projects, the progress made across all grantees is substantial. People are learning about the food system, acres of new land are being farmed and protected, healthy food is being delivered to residents in underserved areas, and jobs are being created. Systems change also is occurring through advocacy and new policy initiatives (see Table 1). These system-wide findings demonstrate the important and integral role of Community Food Projects toward creating food security in communities across America.

Table 1: Community Food Security – 5 Years at a Glance

Element	Performance Measures
<b>Community Impacts</b>	<b>Economic and Social Equity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 2,300 jobs created</li> <li>▪ 1,000 new businesses/microenterprises</li> <li>▪ 2,600 existing businesses/microenterprises supported</li> <li>▪ 3,100 organizations bought local produce</li> <li>▪ 19 million pounds of food produced/generated valued at \$19.7 million</li> </ul>
	<b>Environmental Stewardship</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 53,000 acres of land used for agriculture</li> <li>▪ 3,000 acres of land preserved</li> <li>▪ 2,500 gardens operated</li> <li>▪ 9,100 plots gardened</li> <li>▪ 650 greenhouses</li> <li>▪ 5.5 million pounds of food composted</li> </ul>
	<b>Healthy Food Access</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 18.7 million pounds of food produced and processed</li> <li>▪ Monetary value of food \$19.7 million</li> <li>▪ 726,000 pounds of food donated</li> </ul>
	<b>Increased Community Food System Infrastructure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 183 policies implemented</li> <li>▪ 350 Community Food Assessments conducted</li> <li>▪ 40 food policy councils formed</li> </ul>
<b>Capacity Building</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 187,000 hours of training and technical assistance provided</li> <li>▪ 2.5 million education materials distributed</li> <li>▪ 152,000 media contacts made</li> </ul>
<b>Participation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 307 CFPs participated</li> <li>▪ 50,600 staff and volunteers participated</li> <li>▪ 32,100 affiliated groups participated</li> <li>▪ 10,600 farmers participated</li> <li>▪ 23,800 gardeners participated</li> <li>▪ 720,000 people trained/educated</li> <li>▪ 2.5 million customers and residents received food (1.8 million youth)</li> </ul>





# Introduction

## Community Food Security and the Community Food Project's Competitive Grant Program

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The Community Food Projects Competitive Grant Program (CFPCGP) has existed since 1996 as a program to fight food insecurity through developing community food projects that help promote the self-sufficiency of low-income communities. Community Food Projects (CFPs) are designed to increase food security in communities by bringing the whole food system together to assess strengths, establish linkages, and create systems that improve the self-reliance of community members in meeting their food needs. Community Food Projects aim to:

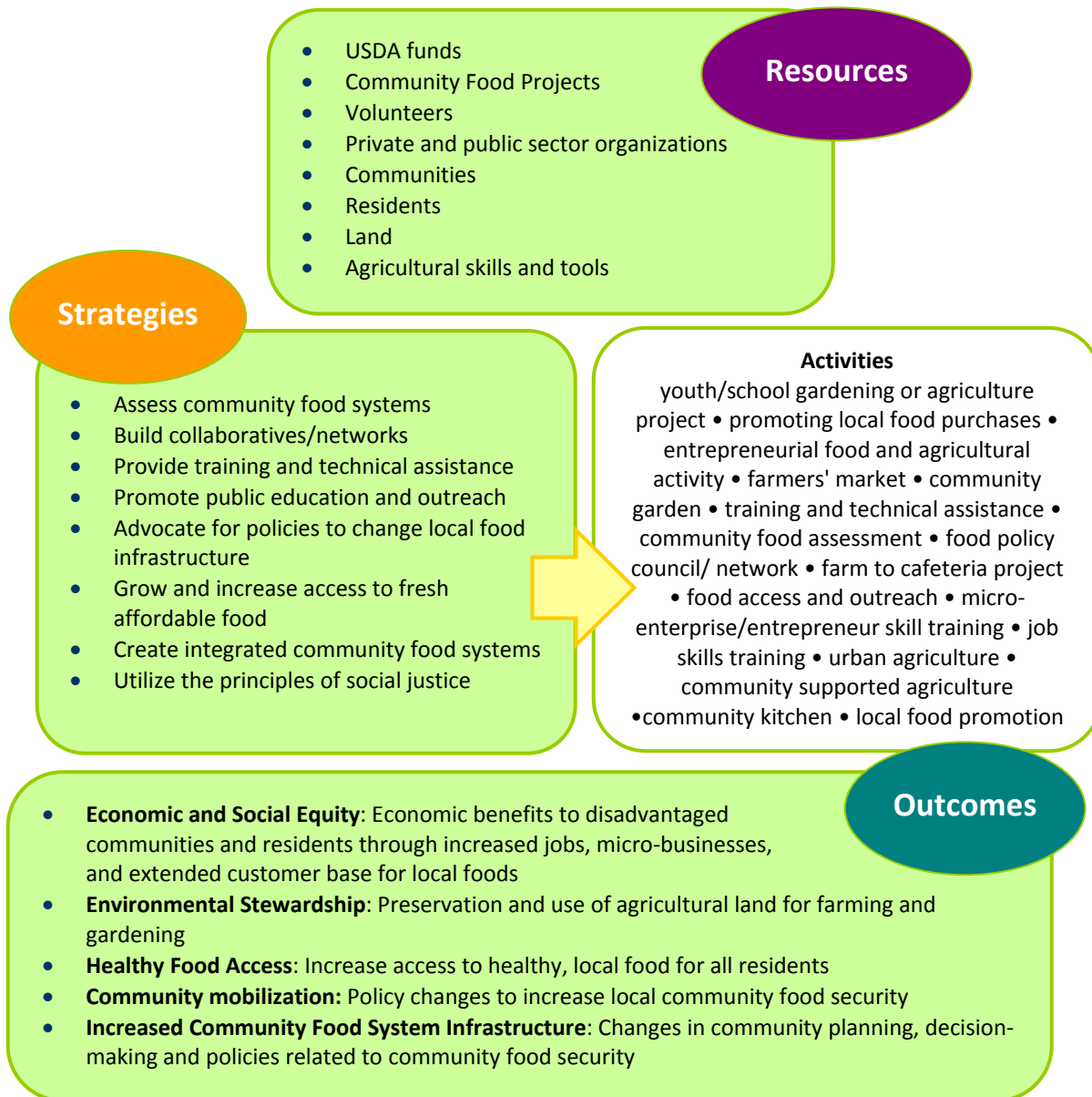
- Meet the needs of low-income people.
- Increase the self-reliance of communities in providing their own food.
- Promote comprehensive responses to local food, farm, and nutrition issues.
- Meet specific state, local, or neighborhood food and agricultural needs for infrastructure improvement and development.
- Plan for long-term solutions.
- Create innovative marketing activities that mutually benefit agricultural producers and low-income consumers.

Preferred projects also develop linkages between two or more sectors of the food system, support the development of entrepreneurial projects, develop innovative linkages between the for-profit and non-profit food sectors, encourage long-term planning activities and build long-term capacity of communities to address the food and agricultural problems of communities, such as food policy councils and food planning associations.



## The Activities and Impacts of Community Food Projects 2005-2009

Figure 4: Community Food Projects: Resources, Strategies and Outcomes



The CFP grants are intended to help eligible private non-profit entities that need a one-time infusion of federal assistance to establish and carry out multipurpose community food projects. Projects are funded from \$10,000-\$300,000 and from one to three years. They are one-time grants that require a dollar-for-dollar match in resources. Approximately 18% of the submitted proposals have received awards during the history of this program. Funds have been authorized through the year 2012 at \$5 million per year.

### Study Methods

In 2005, the Common Output Tracking Form (COTF) was created through the collaborative partnership of the Community Food Project Competitive Grants Program (CFPCGP), Community Food Security Coalition (CFSC), National Research Center, Inc. (NRC), and nearly 70 Community Food Project (CFP) grantee organizations.

Out of these collaborations, the web-based COTF was developed to track the most common outputs across community food projects. While not meant to capture the full



picture of all that community food project grantees accomplish, it provides a shared reporting system for those activities that are most easily quantified and demonstrates the overall productivity of the CFPCGP. The collective results can serve as an important resource for future advocacy and promotion of community food security.

Since fiscal year 2005, the Community Food Projects staff at the United States Department of Agriculture/ Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (USDA/CSREES) have requested that all grantees complete the COTF in addition to submitting their required annual narrative report. The CFSC has been funded through a Training and Technical Assistance grant to assist CFP grantees in completion of the form and to manage data collection and reporting. Fiscal year 2009 marks the fifth year the form was completed. Over the five year reporting period of the COTF, 307 grantees were funded through the CFPCGP. Of these, 191 community food projects completed the form – providing annual response rates ranging from 37% to 79% and a response rate overall of 62%.

All data submitted by grantees were cleaned, synthesized and statistically weighted by National Research Center, Inc, the independent research firm conducting the evaluation. Definitions for each activity are included in *Appendix A: Definitions*.

### Study Limitations

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As with every study, there are a number of limitations the reader should keep in mind. The challenges to these data result from 1) non-response bias, 2) the nature of self-report, and 3) the difficulty that organizations working in multi-sectors face in tracking participation.

- 1) Reporting for the COTF was not mandated. Thus, about 37% of grantees over the five-year period opted out of completing the forms. To compensate for this non-response, the responses of the participating CFPs were statistically weighted to reflect the full percent of active, funded organizations during the fiscal time periods. The unweighted data provided by the 191 grantees participating in the COTF are presented in *Appendix B: Unweighted COTF Results* under separate cover. These data might be viewed as the minimum amount of activity and impact made by the USDA funded CFPs.
- 2) Because of the nature of self-reported data and the fact that this type of reporting can be interpreted differently by each grantee, recording and data entry errors are possible.
- 3) Some of the questions do not require that the grantee report unique numbers; therefore, a portion of the reported numbers could be redundant, suggesting a broader reach than what grantees actually accomplished. It is unknown if these repeated values represent an averaging of actual amounts across the grantees activities (since tracking the data per activity may not be feasible for the grantee) or if these are data entry errors.

Despite limitations delineated here, the Common Output Tracking Form provides an efficient method to collect outputs from organizations and programs across the country. This report describes the reach, activities and outcomes of the grant recipients of the CFPCGP for the fiscal years of 2005 through 2009. This five year data summary demonstrates the significant impact of community food projects towards increasing community food security across the country.

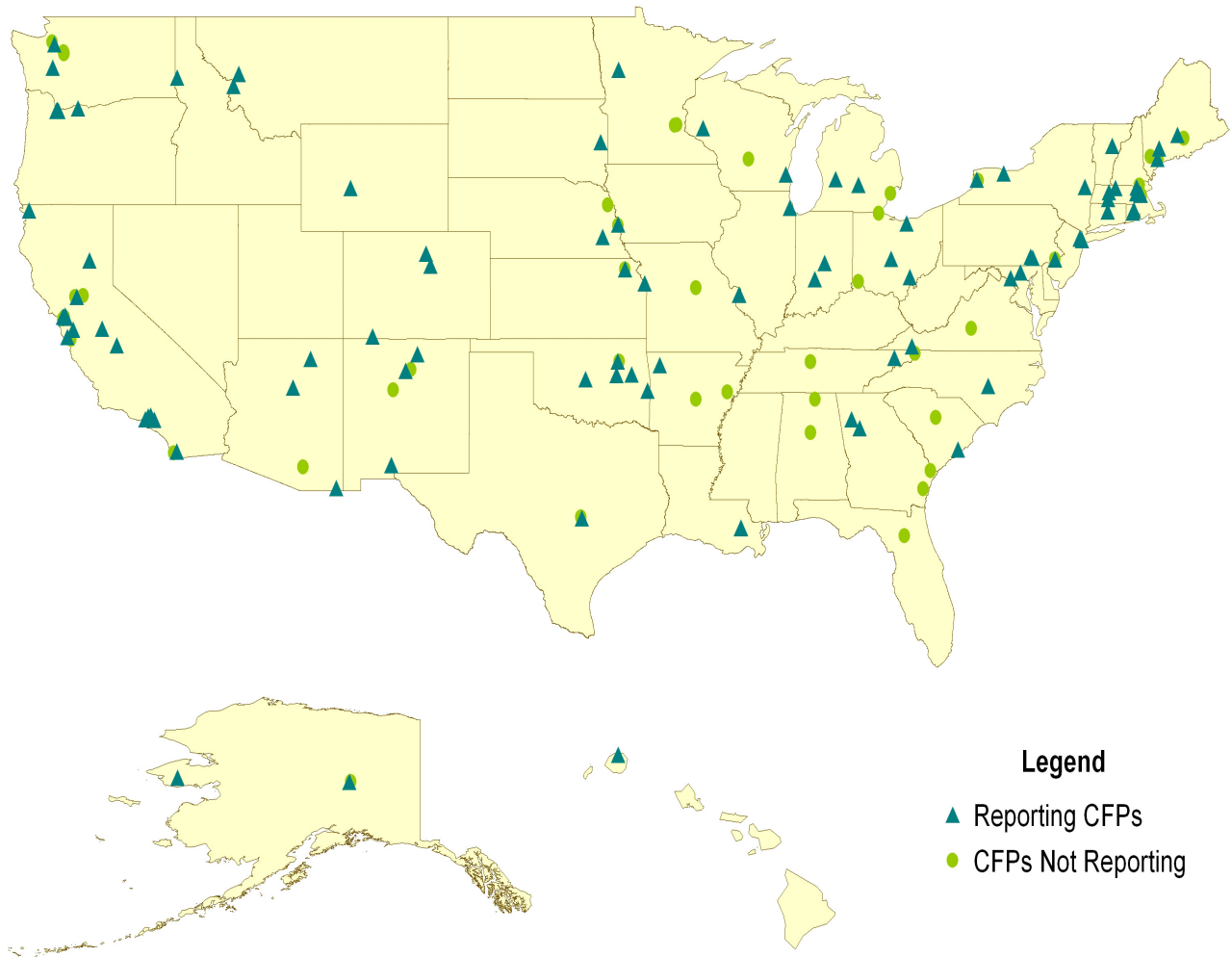


# The Reach of Community Food Projects

## The Landscape of Community Food Projects

Community food security stretches through the heartland to the coasts. The Community Food Projects funded through the USDA represent communities varying not only in geography but in size and culture. The projects funded from 2005-2009 represent 39 states. In addition, about 20% of the grantees reported working with Indian nations and reservations.

Figure 5: Community Food Projects (CFPs) 2005-2009



## The Activities of Community Food Projects

Community food projects participate in myriad activities, some common and others quite unique. The activities shared by the largest number of grantees include managing or supporting youth/school gardening or agriculture projects, the promotion of local food purchasing, activities related to entrepreneurial food and agricultural activities, farmers' markets, and community gardens. These activities were reported as activities pursued by almost one of every three grantees.



## The Activities and Impacts of Community Food Projects 2005-2009

Other common activities include providing training and technical assistance, conducting community food assessments, formation of food policies/networks, and increasing food access and outreach. One in four community food projects reported participation in these types of food security activities. Many CFPs take a systems approach to community food security by integrating a variety of activities to build community capacity, support local food production, and increase access to healthy food.

Figure 6: Top CFP Activities

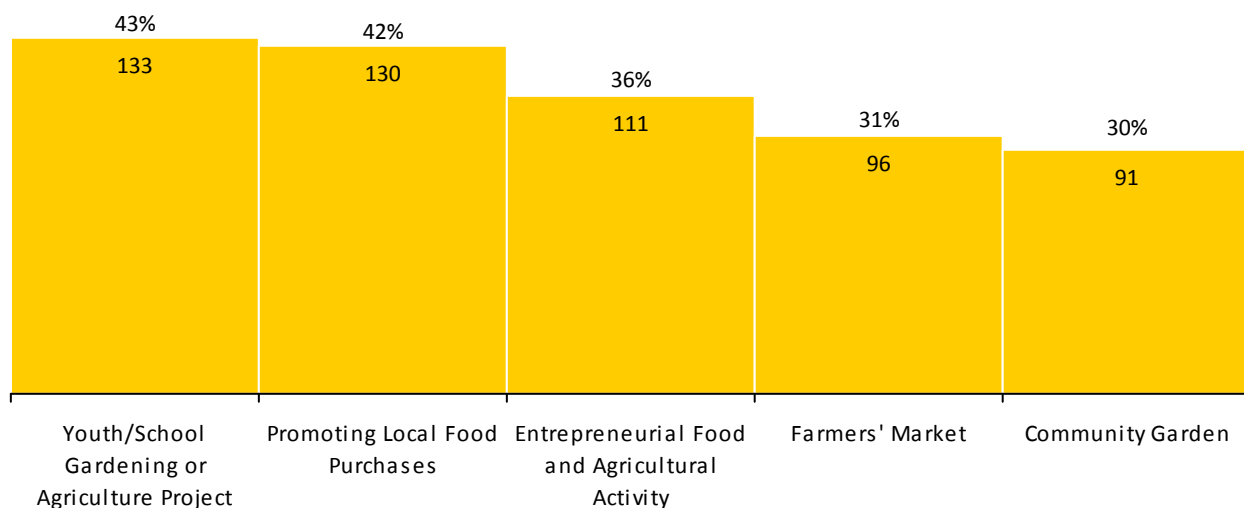


Table 2: CFP Activities Overall

	Overall
Youth/School Gardening or Agriculture Project	43%
Promoting Local Food Purchases	42%
Entrepreneurial Food and Agricultural Activity	36%
Farmers' Market	31%
Community Garden	30%
Training and Technical Assistance	27%
Community Food Assessment	27%
Food Policy Council/Network	25%
Farm to Cafeteria Project	23%
Food Access and Outreach	22%
Micro-enterprise/Entrepreneur Skill Training	22%
Job Skills Training	22%
Farm/Grower Cooperative	19%
Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Program	19%
Community or Incubator Kitchen/Value-Added Production/Processing	17%
Emergency Food Collection and Distribution	14%
Restoration of Traditional Foods/Agriculture	13%
Immigrant/Migrant Farm Project	9%
Planning Grants	9%
Food-buying Cooperative	6%
Urban Agriculture	3%



## The People of Community Food Projects

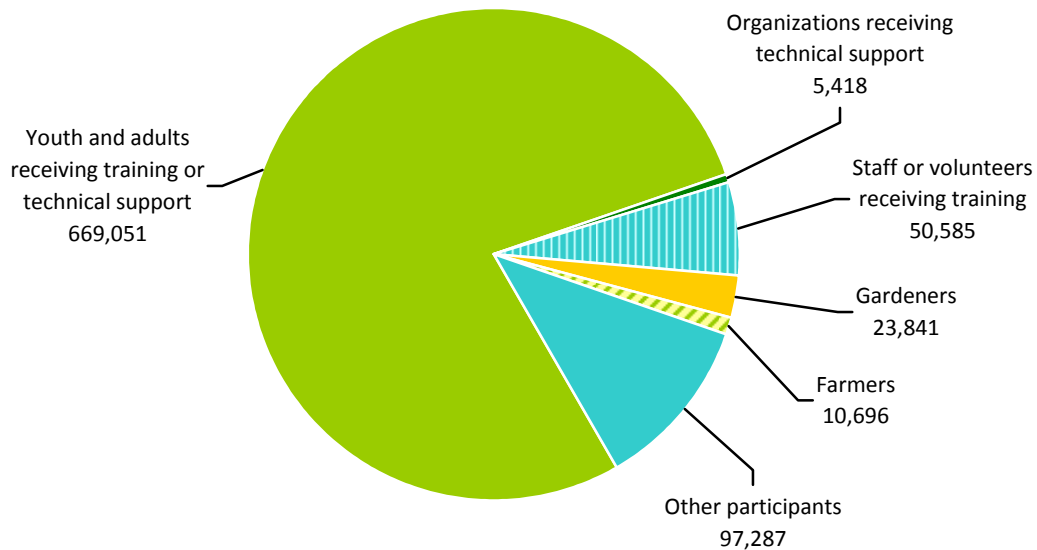
The number of people and organizations involved in and affected by the community food project work is significant. There are producers, recipients, and partners who learn from food projects and benefit from fresh local food. The benefits extend beyond any one social class or age. Low-income residents and youth, particularly, gain from these widespread food projects.

### Food Producers and Handlers

It is estimated that the CFPs active during the 2005-2009 funding period worked with nearly 24,000 gardeners and 11,000 farmers to produce locally grown food. Almost 670,000 youth and adults residents received training or education, and 51,000 staff and volunteers received training or professional development opportunities to increase community food security across the nation. Additionally, approximately 5,400 organizations received technical assistance for food system issues.



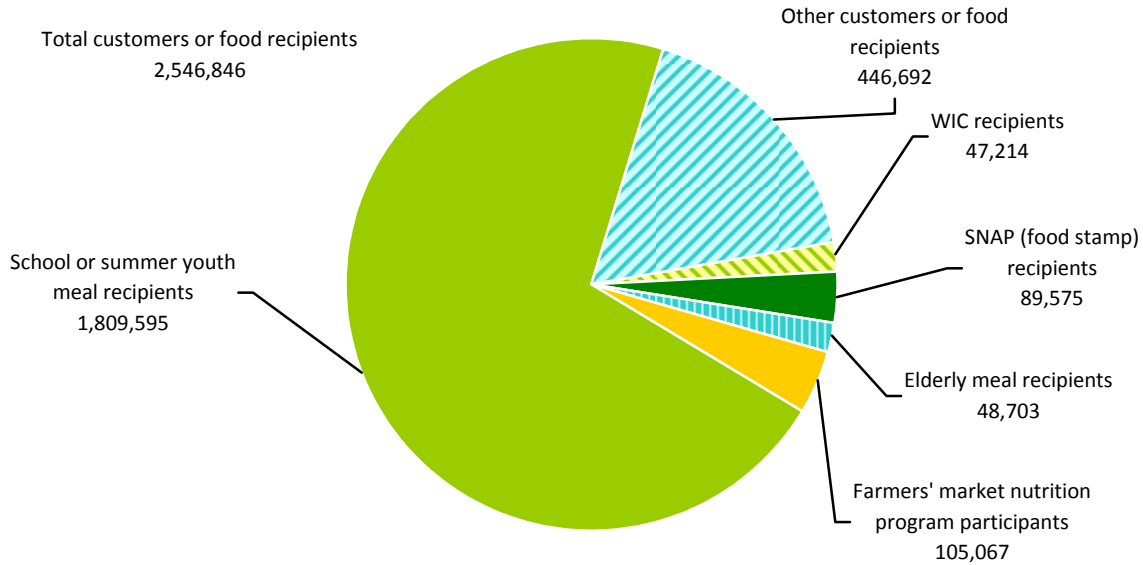
Figure 7: Food Producers and Handlers



## Food Customers and Recipients

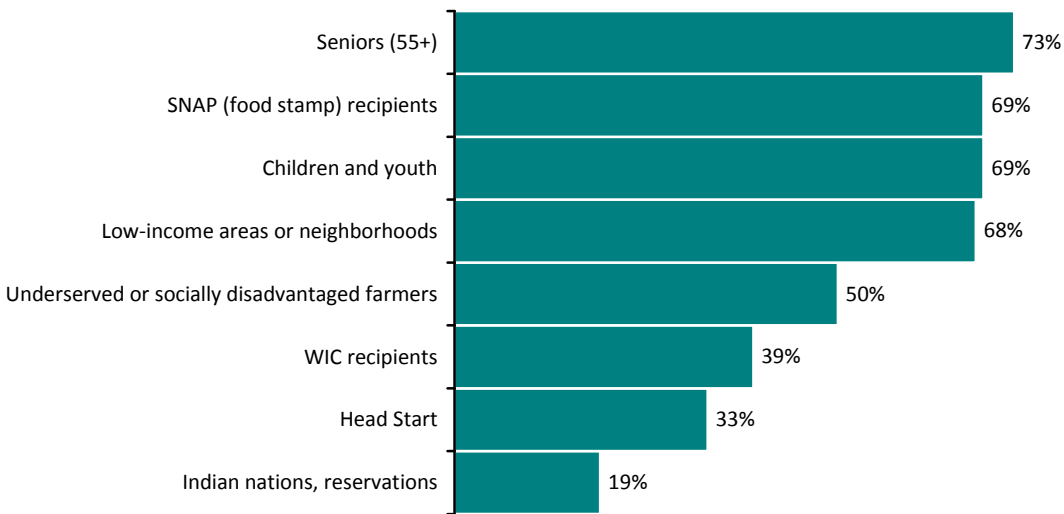
An estimated 2.5 million people received healthy food as a result of the CFPCGP between the years of 2005 and 2009. Of the more than 2.5 million customers or food recipients, 70% (1.8 million) were students or youth participating in summer programs. More than 290,000 were USDA Food Assistance recipients.

Figure 8: Food Customers and Recipients



Customers and food recipients varied in age, race and ethnicity, and most resided in low-income areas. Almost 70% of the projects served SNAP recipients; 40% served WIC recipients; about one-half worked with underserved or socially disadvantaged farmers; one-third served Head Start participants; and close to 20% worked with Tribal nations or residents of reservations.

Figure 9: Special Populations Served



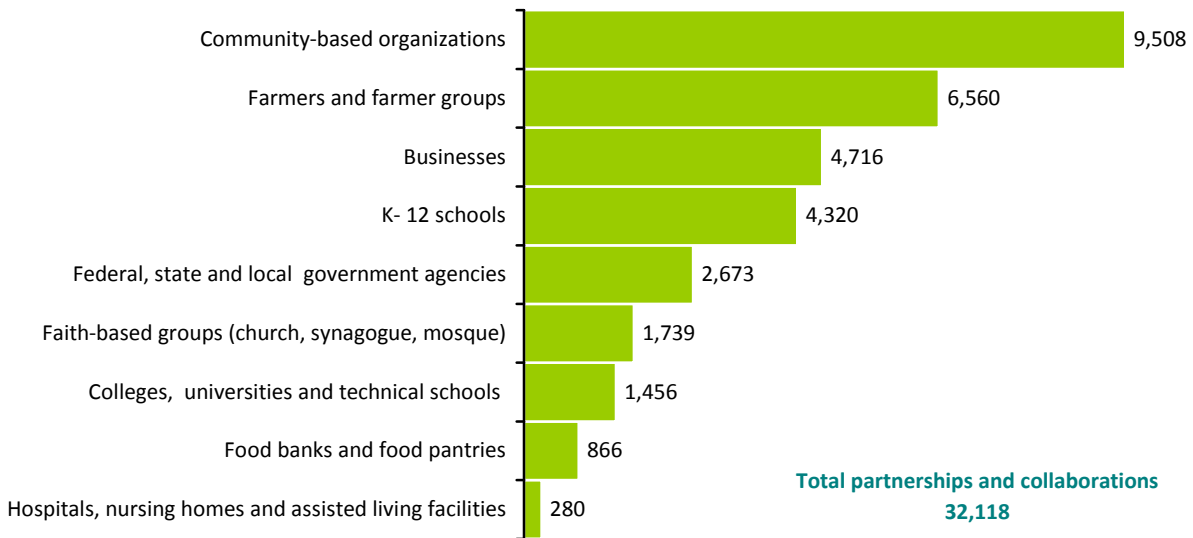
Percent of CFPs serving population



## Partnerships and Collaboration

Working with partners was common among the CFPs. During the five-year timeframe, a total of more than 32,000 organizations collaborated on food security projects. The largest number of affiliations involved community-based organizations (9,500 organizations), farmers and farmer groups (6,500), businesses (4,700), schools (4,300), and government organizations (2,700) also were common collaborators.

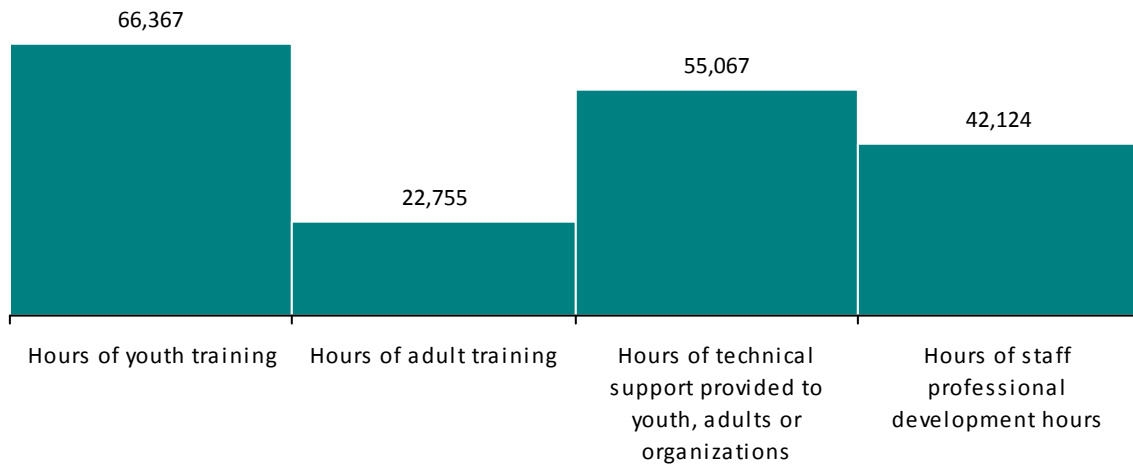
Figure 10: Partnerships and Collaboration Overall



## Education, Training and Technical Support

To increase the resilience of food insecure communities, a vast number of residents and organizations were educated, trained, or provided with technical support by CFPs. It is estimated that almost 187,000 hours of training and education were provided to residents and organizations through USDA funds in five year time period. Approximately 67,000 of those hours were devoted to educating youth and 55,000 hours were spent providing technical assistance to organizations.

Figure 11: Education, Training and Technical Support Sessions





## Outreach and Education Materials

Educating residents and raising awareness around the issue of community food security are important activities for many community food projects. More than 2.5 million educational materials were distributed and 152,000 media contacts were made by grantees over the five year period. Further, more than 30,000 media contacts were made and community food project websites received more than 3.3 million hits.

Table 3: Outreach and Educational Materials

	Total materials and/or contacts
Media events and press conferences	574
Media published (press releases, letters to the editor and articles)	30,151
Media interviews conducted	1,494
Media advertisements/sponsorships and PSAs	4,180
Other media contacts	115,455
CFP newsletters, flyers and information brochures distributed	2,236,837
Audio tapes, video tapes or CDs distributed	6,598
Internet Web site hits	3,324,650
Curriculum developed	2,050
Other materials distributed	224,748



# The Impacts of Community Food Projects

## Economic Impacts

One of the defining elements of community food security work is its emphasis on facilitating community economic self-reliance. Community food security programs help to keep family farms in business and they educate farmers on sustainable agriculture and the business of farming. Grantees create small businesses that rely on local suppliers and neighborhood consumers whose payrolls and purchases keep money in the community. The value of “buy local” is becoming understood by everyday people across America, and community food projects are helping to spread this message.



In terms of employment and industry increases over the five year period, an estimated 2,300 jobs were created and 3,600 micro-businesses were started or strengthened. More than 1,000 value-added food products were produced.

Related, the customer base for local agriculture was expanded significantly by the CFPs with more than 3,100 organizations purchasing produce. More than 2,600 of these were school districts and schools.

Figure 12: Economic Impact of CFP Activities

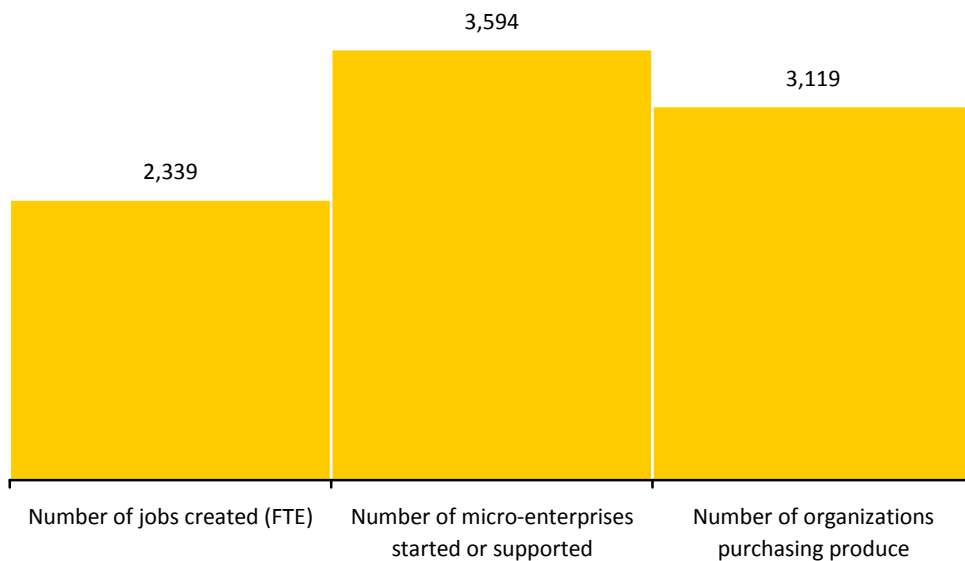


Table 4: Economic Impact of CFP Activities

	Overall
Number of jobs created (FTE)	2,339
Number of micro-enterprise opportunities/micro-businesses started	1,010
Number of micro-enterprise opportunities/micro-businesses supported (other than those started)	2,584
Number of business plans completed	980
Number of restaurants buying produce	469
Number of schools districts buying produce	214
Number of schools buying produce	2,433
Number of institutions (other than schools) buying produce	4
Number of community kitchens built	24
Number of kinds of value-added food products produced	1,091
Amount of money redeemed from WIC purchases	\$198,730
Amount of money redeemed from SNAP	\$150,256

## Farmland and Garden Impacts

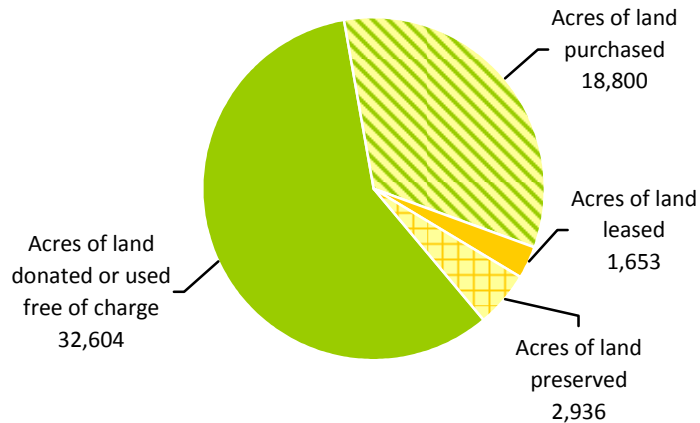
Farmland is decreasing rapidly in its availability. The protection of these lands and their supporting agriculture can provide food security, clean drinking water, flood mitigation, food and cover for wildlife, open space, jobs, and economic stability.<sup>2</sup>



Community gardens also provide the benefit of community food security while increasing social connections, neighborhood beautification and safety, and opportunities for healthy living for residents.

An estimated 53,000 acres of land was farmed as part of the community food project work between the years of 2005-2009. Approximately 33,000 of the acres were donated or used free of charge. Further, almost 3,000 acres of land were preserved by Community Food Projects. Grantees are estimated to have operated more than 2,500 gardens and 9,100 gardens plots, while using 656 greenhouses and 1,560 irrigation systems.

Figure 13: Land Utilization Overall



<sup>2</sup> From the American Farmland Trust web site. Accessed on April 4, 2010. <http://www.farmland.org/default.asp>



## The Activities and Impacts of Community Food Projects 2005-2009

Table 5: Farmlands and Gardens Utilized by CFPs

	Overall
Amount of land farmed or gardened by project (acres)	56,225
Land donated (acres)	2,337
Land purchased (acres)	18,800
Land leased (acres)	1,653
Land utilized free of charge (acres)	30,268
Acres of land preserved	2,936
Gardens operated on land	2,476
Number of garden plots available within these gardens	9,181
Number of greenhouses	656
Number of irrigation systems built or acquired	1,560

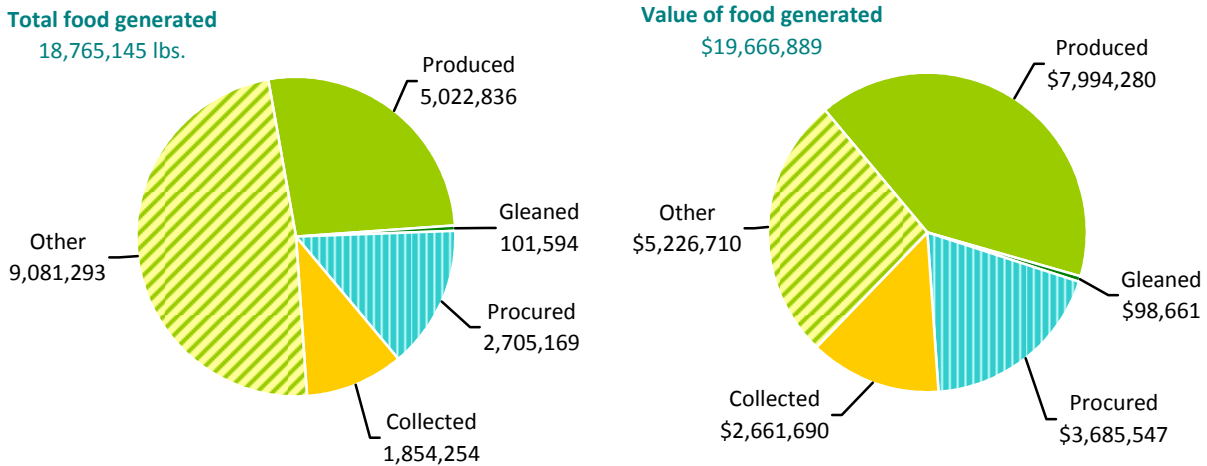
### Food Impacts

At the foundation of changes to the people, economy, land, and environment brought by these community food projects, is the food itself. The grantees have grown, handled, and contributed vast quantities of fresh, locally grown produce. Although most think of the U.S. as a country of great abundance, almost 50 million people had a hard time finding enough to eat.<sup>3</sup> Further, it is estimated one in four children do not have dependable access to adequate food.<sup>4</sup> Community food programs have made significant contributions to increase access to healthy food.

### Food Generated

The 307 CFPs active between 2005 and 2009 are estimated to have generated and handled almost 19 million pounds of food. The monetary value of the food was estimated at approximately \$19.7 million.

Figure 14: Methods Used to Generate Food (Pounds and Value)



### Food Sold, Donated and Composted

Of the 19 million pounds of food (with a monetary value of \$19.7 million) processed or handled by grantees, more than 5.2 million pounds of the food was sold, 4.4 million was distributed, and 5.5 million pounds of food waste were composted.

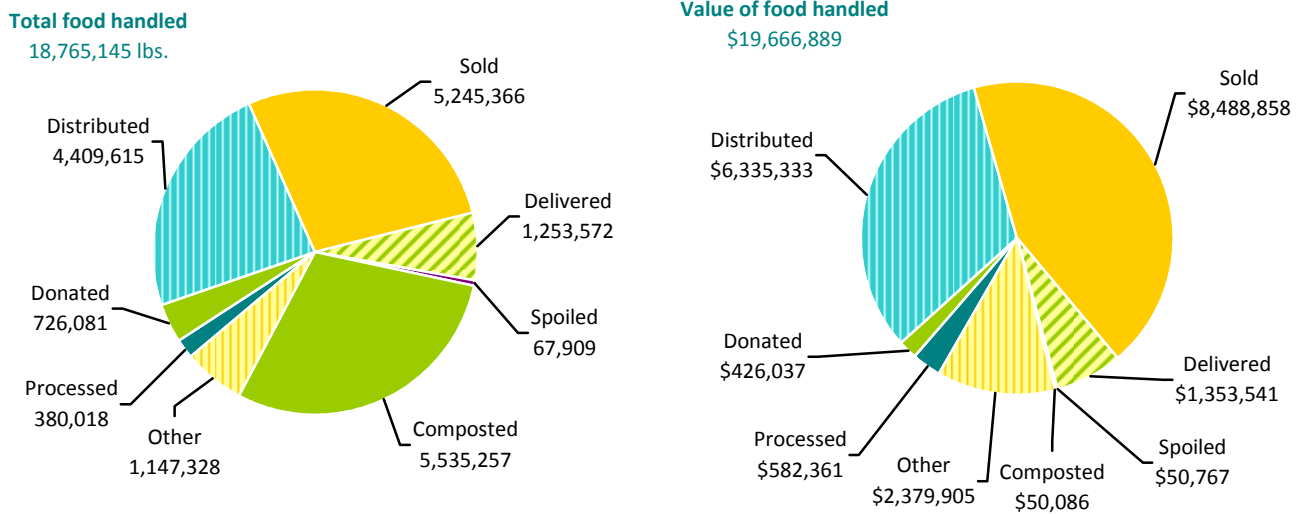
<sup>3</sup> Nord, Mark, Margaret Andrews, and Steven Carlson. *Household Food Security in the United States, 2008*. ERR-83, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Econ. Res. Serv. November 2009.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*



# The Activities and Impacts of Community Food Projects 2005-2009

Figure 15: Methods Used to Handle Food (Pounds and Value)



## Community Food System Infrastructure Impacts

An integral component of community food security is to empower and strengthen communities to increase their quality of life. Community food projects were involved in many activities which worked towards creating healthy local food systems. Conducting needs assessments, forming community collaboratives to address shared community needs, and policy advocacy are key activities chosen by CFPs to create systems changes to local food systems.

### Community Food Assessments

A Community Food Assessment (CFA) is often a community-wide study identifying what is happening with food in a community, including both strengths and weaknesses. Often, a CFA will use a variety of data collection methods to compile general community characteristics, community food resources, food resource accessibility, food availability and affordability, and community food production resources. Through such assessments, a diverse set of stakeholders work together to research their local food system and mobilize efforts to improve the system.

A total of 358 Community Food Assessments (CFAs) are estimated to have been completed by grantees, involving almost 1,700 staff members and 42,000 hours of staff time. An estimated 15.5 million residents live in the areas where the CFAs were conducted in the years 2005-2009.

Table 6: Community Food Assessments

	Overall
Total number of community food assessments completed	358
Total number of staff who worked on CFAs	1,668
Total hours spent working on assessment(s) (paid and unpaid)	42,047
Number of residents living in regions covered by assessment	15,470,565
Amount of land covered by assessment(s) (sq. mi.)	214,022



## Food Policy Councils and Networks

Often, CFPs work to create empowered and competent communities through strategic partnership of government, community organizations and individuals. Whether large or small, well-endowed or underfunded, these food councils or networks work together to solve community food issues through collaborative problem solving, multi-sectoral cooperation, public education, and policy advocacy.

An estimated 39 food policy councils and networks were formed by Community Food Projects from 2005-2009. More than 560 organizations were represented on these councils, with more than 700 individuals participating.

Figure 16: Food Policy Council Activities

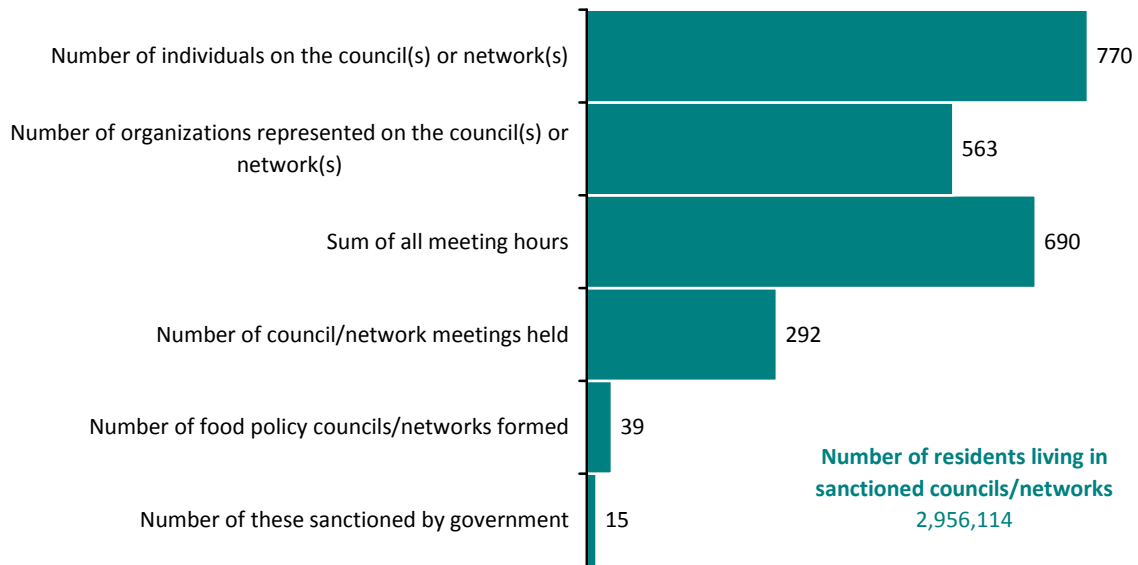


Table 7: People Affected by Food Policy Council

	Overall
Number of residents living in region of network (all networks)	70,618,108
Number of residents living in region of network (sanctioned networks only)	2,956,114

## Food Policy

Policy advocacy is an activity commonly undertaken by CFPs to create systematic change to community food systems. The principal aims of food policy advocacy are to develop, introduce, reform, and implement policies, and ensure that policies that are implemented allow communities to provide healthy food accessible to all residents.

In the five year period of 2005-2009, it is estimated that more than 183 food policies were implemented by the USDA-funded CFPs affecting more than 33 million people. These policies most often involved infrastructure development for the local food system, creating access for customers, and economic development. Policies most commonly were introduced at the institutional (62%), city (47%), or state (43%) level. Almost one-third of the policies implemented were institutionalized at the county level.



# The Activities and Impacts of Community Food Projects 2005-2009

Figure 17: Food Policy Councils

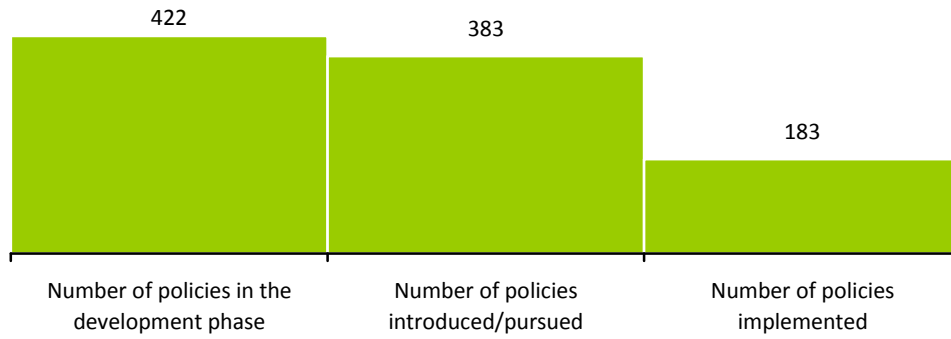


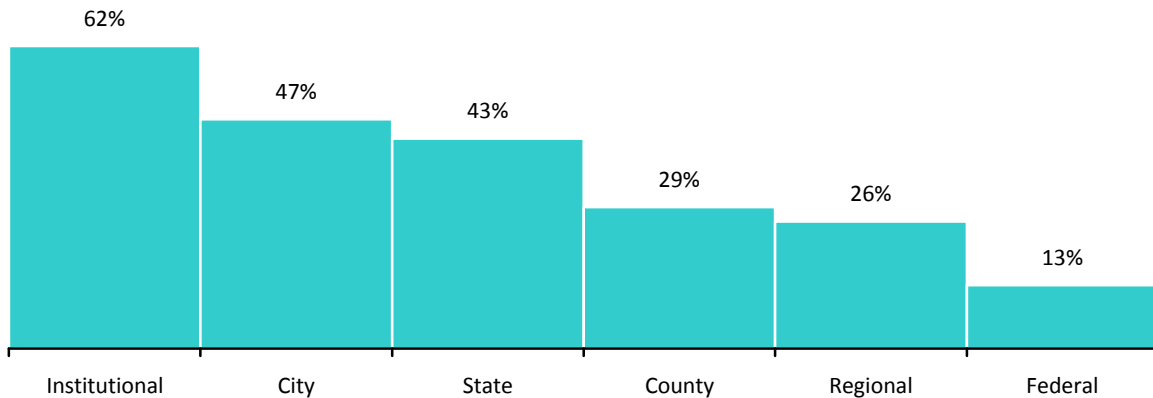
Table 8: People and Area Affected by Implemented Policies

	Overall
Number of residents affected by implemented policies	33,333,465
Amount of land affected by implemented policies (sq. mi.)	63,055

Table 9: Types of Policies Implemented

	Overall
Market and economic development	61%
Creating access for consumers	58%
Systems change including two or more elements above	55%
Infrastructure development for local food system	53%
Policy requiring better coordination among health, nutrition, education, agriculture and other sectors	45%
Procurement policy	40%
Nutritional guidelines	36%
City planning, zoning	30%
Access to land for food protection	22%
Emergency food	16%
Other	12%

Figure 18: Level of Policy Jurisdiction



## Summary and Conclusions

The grantees of the Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program showed their strength by providing education, skills, food and resources to a diverse group of residents and food insecure communities across the nation.

Ten thousand farmers, many disadvantaged, were trained on sustainable agriculture and business management. Thousands of jobs and micro-businesses supporting the local food system were created, and customer bases for local agriculture were increased (3,000+ new buyers). Farm-to-cafeteria programs were created throughout the country providing markets for local farmers.

Nearly 19 million pounds of local, healthy food was distributed to over 2.5 million people, mostly in low-income neighborhoods across 39 states. With fast food available easily and cheaply for many Americans, the impact of providing healthy, fresh fruits and vegetables cannot be underestimated. Over 1.8 million children and youth in schools or summer programs ate fresh fruits and vegetables because of farm-to-cafeteria programs. SNAP and WIC recipients purchased local produce at farmers markets, and elder food recipients received seasonal fruit and vegetable shipments from local CSAs. These healthy foods provide recipients with not only the nutrition to stay well, but also instill healthy eating habits that can last a lifetime. This becomes especially important for young children who may be at risk for obesity through the bad habits learned from a sedentary lifestyle.



Farmland depletion was delayed and local food production enhanced by the CFPs where almost 60,000 acres of land was farmed or preserved. Youth and urban gardeners learned to grow and prepare their own food through 2,500 community gardens and more than 9,000 garden plots.

Community food system capacity and infrastructure was enhanced through community food assessments, the formation of food policy councils and networks and the implementation of new policies. More than 50 million residents lived in the communities where these community-wide changes were made.

Results from the first five years of this food security program could be just a taste of the opportunities to come for improving the health, environment and economy of this country, when residents of almost every age are taught about healthy food supply and when they have access to delicious, abundant locally produced fruits, vegetables and meat. (The following table provides a summary view the work of the CFPs during the years of 2005 through 2009.)





## The Activities and Impacts of Community Food Projects 2005-2009

Table 10: Community Food Security – 5 Years at a Glance

Element	Performance Measures
<b>Community Impacts</b>	<b>Economic and Social Equity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 2,300 jobs created</li> <li>▪ 1,000 new businesses/microenterprises</li> <li>▪ 2,600 existing businesses/microenterprises supported</li> <li>▪ 3,100 organizations bought local produce</li> <li>▪ 19 million pounds of food produced/generated valued at \$19.7 million</li> </ul>
	<b>Environmental Stewardship</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 53,000 acres of land used for agriculture</li> <li>▪ 3,000 acres of land preserved</li> <li>▪ 2,500 gardens operated</li> <li>▪ 9,100 plots gardened</li> <li>▪ 650 greenhouses</li> <li>▪ 5.5 million pounds of food composted</li> </ul>
	<b>Healthy Food Access</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 18.7 million pounds of food produced and processed</li> <li>▪ Monetary value of food \$19.7 million</li> <li>▪ 726,000 pounds of food donated</li> </ul>
	<b>Increased Community Food System Infrastructure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 183 policies implemented</li> <li>▪ 350 Community Food Assessments conducted</li> <li>▪ 40 food policy councils formed</li> </ul>
<b>Capacity Building</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 187,000 hours of training and technical assistance provided</li> <li>▪ 2.5 million education materials distributed</li> <li>▪ 152,000 media contacts made</li> </ul>
<b>Participation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 307 CFPs participated</li> <li>▪ 50,600 staff and volunteers participated</li> <li>▪ 32,100 affiliated groups participated</li> <li>▪ 10,600 farmers participated</li> <li>▪ 23,800 gardeners participated</li> <li>▪ 720,000 people trained/educated</li> <li>▪ 2.5 million customers and residents received food(1.8 million youth)</li> </ul>



## Appendix A: Definitions

**Community Food Assessment.** A Community Food Assessment is a collaborative and participatory process to systematically examine a broad range of community food assets and resources, so as to inform on local issues that need attention and change actions to make the community more food secure.

**Community Garden.** A community garden is a garden where people share basic resources—land, water, and sunlight. Community gardens are the sites of a unique combination of activities such as food production, recreation, social and cultural exchange, and the development of open space, community spirit, skills, and competence.

**Community or Incubator Kitchen/ Value-Added Production / Processing.** A community kitchen is a shared use facility that enables growers and small business people to process their own agricultural or food products to add value prior to sale.

**Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Program.** CSA is a mutual commitment between a nearby farmer and the people who eat the food that the farmer produces. The farm feeds the CSA members; the members support the farm and share the inherent risks and potential bounty.

**Emergency Food Collection and Distribution.** Collection and procurement of edible foods that are then distributed through food banks, food pantries, and congregate feeding programs. Including but not limited to, gleaning, farmer/grower donations, food drives, and institutional donations of prepared and perishable foods.

**Entrepreneurial Food and Agricultural Activity.** Any activity related to the marketing of food products. Examples of these could include a single farm stand (as opposed to a farmers' market) and a value-added food product cottage industry.

**Farm/ Grower Cooperative.** A group of farmers who are working together to market their products. This group may or may not have articles of incorporation or other agreed upon guidelines or rules.

**Farm to Cafeteria Project.** Included in this category are Farm to School, Farm to College and Farm to Institution projects. Farm to Cafeteria projects link local farmers with nearby schools or institutions to increase consumption of fresh, nutritious fruits and vegetables. Students and/or other community members learn about the origin of their food, while small and medium-sized farmers are able to avail themselves of a local market to supplement their income. One project may include single or multiple schools, school districts, or institutions depending on the structure of project activities.

**Farmers' Market.** Organization that provides resources and a gathering place for farmers and consumers to exchange products.

**Food Access and Outreach.** Informational and educational activities and campaigns to inform low-income people of their potential eligibility for and benefits available from government nutrition assistance programs, including but not limited to, SNAP (food stamps), school lunch and breakfast, WIC, summer food, elderly meals, and farmers' market nutrition programs.

**Food-buying Cooperative.** A group of people or organizations that purchases food together in bulk to receive discounted prices or increased access.

**Food Policy Council/ Network.** A Food Policy Council (FPC) is comprised of stakeholders from various segments of a state or local food system. Councils can be



officially sanctioned through a government action (such as legislation or an Executive Order) or can be a grassroots effort. While this category is not limited to policy initiatives, many FPCs' primary goal is to examine the operation of the local food system and provide ideas or recommendations for how it can be improved.

**Immigrant/ Migrant Farm Project.** A project that works with immigrant or migrant farm workers to support their ability to make a living in agriculture through providing additional social services or employment development support.

**Job Skills Training.** Training to support someone in developing the necessary skills to obtain and keep a job.

**Micro-enterprise/ Entrepreneur Skill Training.** Training to support someone in starting and maintaining a small-scale, food-related business venture. These projects are typically capitalized at under \$35,000 with three or fewer employees initially.

**Planning Grants.** Many community food project activities include some degree of project planning. This activity is for proposals specified as planning grants. These activities often include some form of community assessment, business planning, and/or building collaborations and partnerships.

**Promoting Local Food Purchases.** An education, outreach, or public relations campaign that highlights the benefits of purchasing raw and value-added local foods and food products. This may encompass support for activities such as buy-local campaigns, community supported agriculture, farm-to-cafeteria efforts, and farmers' markets.

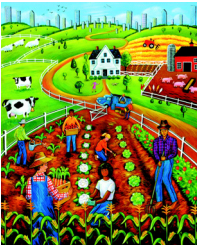
**Restoration of Traditional Foods/ Agriculture.** Activities (other than immigrant farmer projects) that focus on supporting the use of traditional food and agriculture and rely on agricultural knowledge bases held by indigenous people.

**Training and Technical Assistance.** Includes services to support a wide variety of projects and initiatives, through trainings and workshops, practical publications, mentoring, and other individualized assistance.

**Urban Agriculture.** Promoting or growing of agricultural products within an urban environment. While many of the other project activities (community gardening, youth agricultural project, immigrant/migrant farm project) may also include growing food in urban areas, this activity is aimed specifically at utilizing urban lands for the production of agricultural crops.

**Youth/ School Gardening or Agriculture Project.** Includes all youth activities related to community food systems, other than farm to school projects. These activities could include composting and vermiculture.





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