

Feed the Hungry Pilot Project Outline

Partners: NYFB, NYFB Foundation, AITC, FFA, NYS Ag Society

**This program may be “customized” by any and all who use it.
Feel free to make it work for YOU!**

Mission:

Expanding students’ knowledge of the agricultural food and fiber system and the understanding that good nutrition comes from the soil, growing healthy food, while providing an understanding of community and social service.



This mission will be obtained through the auspices of the following program goals:

- ★ Involving students with a local farmer and agricultural student group (FFA or Master Gardener Program or 4-H Program – referred to as ambassador)
- ★ Increase students’ appreciation and understanding of agriculture, nutrition and the food system through education
- ★ Increase the students knowledge of community and the community needs through service

Process:

1. Select Farmer/Farm Market location
2. Align FFA class/gardening ambassador/group with program (ambassador)
3. Select one or more third grade class at an Elementary School to participate
4. Approach farmer, FFA advisor, 4-H leader, Cornell Cooperative Extension and class teacher and principal for approval and acceptance

Responsibility template:

Farmer/Ambassador/FFA:

The Farmer will meet with the class to “sow the seeds” (winter squash is recommended) which will be brought back to the farm greenhouse for on-farm care. A project ambassador will accompany the farmer and photograph the children planting. Local media will be approached and the FFA/ambassador may write some articles about the project, participation, learning and community “win”. This project can also be completed without an on-the-farm planting experience. Digital photography and email can keep the students up to date on the development of their plant. Each seed must be identified with the name of the student to provide for real “ownership” from seed to squash (or whatever vegetable might be planted).

Classroom Teacher:

The teacher will be asked to administer a “pre” test to the class to measure the students’ ag literacy level prior to the project. The classroom teacher will be asked to administer a similar test after the lessons and initial planting.

The teacher will be given three to four lesson plans that “fit” the project...for pre and post planting use at their discretion. These are matrixed to the standards and the teacher will have the opportunity to utilize any of the other lesson plans available through the Ag in the Classroom Program, with specific focus on the tie of food to agriculture. Part of the learning process will include recipes, uses, and nutritional information.

Class/Teacher/Farmer/Ambassador/FFA:

If possible, the students will visit the farm to plant their seedlings, and have an opportunity to learn about soil and nutrients, plus they will help the farmer to “hang the official project banner”. The ambassador will accompany the group and help with the planting and cover the event for media exposure as well as documentation of the project.

Students/Ambassador/FFA/Farmer/Food Bank:

The fall of the following school year, the students and their parents will be invited back to the farm market for the harvest. The Food Bank will be contacted so that they will be able to accommodate the distribution. This harvest will present the opportunity for another “media” event highlighting all the positives of the project, again utilizing ambassador facilitators.

Students/School Food Service/FFA:

Some squash may be sent to the school with the students, where they can work with their school food service director to learn about how it might be used in the school lunch menu. Again, an ambassador group may facilitate and utilize this as a final page in the story! Some post-testing can be done by the end of the school year. Additional volunteer testing will be done on an individual basis. The CD History of NY Ag can be utilized, selecting those portions directly touching on this project and the farms represented that produce similar products (ie Mason Farms, Wayne County).

Seeds, peat pots, and a banner for each of the pilots will need funding, but minimal fundraising will provide the “tools” needed. Many programs will be planting winter squash, due to the adaptability to the time frame available.

OUTCOMES

1. Students aware of the interface between community, school and agriculture
2. Community awareness of interface mentioned above
3. Nutrition
4. Inter-disciplinary learning through agriculture
5. Volunteerism
6. Giving and working for those less fortunate
7. Community pride
8. Careers
9. Connect a “garden” to the food supply for the general public

As an agricultural and community program, the media activity and positives of and for all should be highlighted via all media outlets. Input from those involved will help us to shape a program that truly “works” for the community, education and agriculture.