Incubator Farm

A land-based, multi-grower project that provides training and technical assistance to aspiring and beginning farmers. New Entry Sustainable Farming Project works to coordinate the National Incubator Farm Training Initiative (NIFTI). We conduct a yearly survey of incubator farm projects (IFPs), for 2018 data, 29 IFPs completed the survey. The average plot size ranges from 0.3 to 3 acres of land with 9 businesses being run on the land; with an average of 2.5 full time and 2.5 part time staff members.

More info: www.nesfp.org/nifti

2018 Incubator Farm Projects (IFPs)

Years in Operation

- Pre-launch: 48%
- 0-1 yr: 21%
- 2-3 yrs: 10%
- 3-4 yrs: 7%
- 5-9 yrs: 7%
- 10+ yrs: 7%

Top Production Items

- 96% Vegetables
- 37% Fruit
- 75% Flowers

Approximately 31,300 pounds of produce was donated in the year by 14 IFPs.

84% of farming participants use food to feed their families.

Top Challenges for IFPs

70% Funding

- 45% of funding comes from federal grants

44% Access to land

- more than 50% of programs have no time limit on incubator participation

22% Infrastructure & Equipment

- 60% lease land so investing in infrastructure on land not owned may be imprudent

22% Recruitment

- about 50% of participants are refugees or immigrants

Top Services Provided to Participants

- 91% Irrigation infrastructure
- 78% Access to post harvest handling facilities
- 65% Access to green house or hoop house
- 65% Plowing before the growing season
- 56% Compost
- 52% Discounted Rent for plots

Training Topics

Each bar represents the percentage of IFPs who offer training in these topics.

- 92% CROP PRODUCTION
- 88% MARKETING
- 84% BUSINESS PLANNING
- 80% SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION
- 76% FERTILIZER AND PESTICIDE USE
- 76% ACCESS TO LAND
- 72% EQUIPMENT OPERATION
- 72% FARM MANAGEMENT
- 68% ORGANIC PRODUCTION
- 48% EQUIPMENT SELECTION AND MAINTENANCE
- 40% ACCESS TO CAPITAL
- 32% SOCIAL & RACIAL JUSTICE
- 24% CLIMATE CHANGE

Former Participants

- 61% of former participants are still farming
- 38% of former participants are primary farm operators
- 24% of former participants are now farm employees

Approximately 4,520 people participated in IFPs continuing education, CSA, land-based training, and/or other programs.

23 IFPs supported 258 farm businesses and 472 participants

61% of former participants are still farming

38% of former participants are primary farm operators

24% of former participants are now farm employees

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