

### Starting New Farm Businesses in Urban Communities: Juniper Gardens Training Farm

Katherine Kelly, Executive Director, Farmer  
Kansas City Center for Urban Agriculture



### Kansas City Center for Urban Agriculture

- 501 (c) 3 organization
- 4 years old
- Founded by urban farmers and supporters
- Staffed by farmers



### Kansas City Center for Urban Agriculture

- Mission: KCCUA promotes the production and consumption of fresh, local produce by growing urban farmers who are an active part of healthy neighborhoods in Greater Kansas City.



### Kansas City Center for Urban Agriculture: Programs

- **Urban Farmer Development**- helping to develop urban farm businesses through technical assistance, collaborative projects, networking, policy work & community education and outreach



### Kansas City Center for Urban Agriculture: Programs

- **Kansas City Community Farm**- a two-acre, certified organic vegetable farm



### Kansas City Center for Urban Agriculture: Programs

- **Juniper Gardens Training Farm**- a project to address the fact there are people who want to farm, who may have some farming experience, but who don't have the start-up funds and who may have other barriers that keep them from growing and selling food.



### Incubator Farm Model

Training Farm provides:

- Land, infrastructure both on site and on nearby "Affiliate Farms" (in development)
- Development support
- Start up costs, on an annually reducing basis.



GOAL: to develop independent farm businesses within 3-5 years, then move them to a permanent site they own or rent.

### Juniper Gardens Training Farm

- KCK Housing Authority land at the Juniper Gardens Housing Project
- Northeast KCK neighborhood



### Partner Organizations



**Catholic Charities**  
OF NORTHEAST KANSAS



Walnut Boulevard Neighborhood Association



Kansas City, KS  
Housing Authority



**KANSAS CITY**  
Center for Urban Agriculture

Department of Health  
& Human Services-  
Refugee Agricultural  
Partnership Program

**Oak Grove  
Neighborhood  
Association**

### Farm Lay-Out



### Farm Infrastructure



Wash Area



Central buildings



Refrigeration



Storage & equipment



Greenhouse (off site)

### Farm Management



Tillage



Soil Nutrients



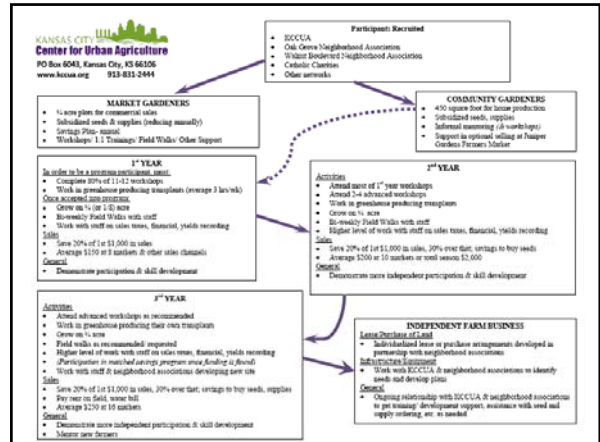
Production Supplies



Water

## (Future) Affiliate Farms

- In the neighborhoods around Juniper
- ¼ acre plots on empty lots and unused land
- Land may be owned by city, neighborhood association, or privately
- Soil improved & water & security needs addressed
- Permanent sites for “graduates” from Training Farm and for farmers just entering program



## Recruitment of Participants

- From Community Gardeners (Catholic Charities & neighborhood gardeners)
- Through community networks



## Recruitment of Participants

- For **market gardeners**, looking for:
- 1) Some gardening experience
  - 2) Some understanding of small businesses
  - 3) Some stability, ambition, curiosity



For **community gardeners**:

- 1) Desire to garden!



## Community Gardeners

- 500 square foot
- Subsidized seeds, supplies
- Informal mentoring (*and workshops*)
- Support in selling at Juniper Gardens Farmers Market



*Some selected for market gardeners track*

## Market Gardeners



### General Expectations

- Plant and maintain ¼ acre plot (or 1/8 acre if staff decides is appropriate)
- Use organic practices
- Sell their produce through farmers' markets or other channels
- Demonstrate participation and skill development

### Market Gardeners, Year One

Activities

- Complete 80% of 11-12 workshops
- Work in greenhouse producing transplants
- Grow on ¼ (or 1/8) acre
- Bi-weekly Field Walks
- Work with staff on recording sales taxes, yields

Sales

- Average \$150 at 8 markets
- Save 20% of 1st \$1,000 in sales



### Market Gardeners, Year Two

**General Expectations**

- Farmers begin to differentiate in crops and in sales outlets & approaches
- Water is metered and cost figured, but not charged (if funding for meters is found!)
- Higher level of self-determination and more initiative in learning



### Market Gardeners, Year Two

Activities

- Attend most of 1st year workshops
- Attend 2-4 advanced workshops
- Work in greenhouse producing transplants
- Grow on ¼ (or 1/8) acre (1/8 acre scale only available for 2 years)
- Bi-weekly Field Walks
- Higher level of work with staff on sales taxes, financial, yields recording

Sales

- Save 20% of 1st \$1,000 in sales, 30% over that; savings to buy seeds
- Average \$200 at 10 markets or total season \$2,000



### Market Gardeners, Years Three-Five

Activities

- Attend Advanced Workshops
- Field walks and 1:1s as needed, requested
- Greater autonomy in greenhouse producing their own transplants
- Higher level of work with staff on sales taxes, financial, yields recording
- Participation in IDA program
- Pay rent on land and pay for water
- Greater involvement in seed & supply ordering
- Work with staff & neighborhood associations developing new site

Sales

- Save 20% of 1st \$1,000 in sales, 30% over that; savings to buy seeds, water
- Average \$250 at 16 markets

General

- Demonstrate more independent participation & skill development
- Mentor new farmers

### Market Gardeners, Independent Farm Businesses

Land

- Individualized lease or purchase arrangements

Infrastructure/Equipment

- Work with KCCUA/ Catholic Charities to identify needs and develop plans

General

- Ongoing relationship with KCCUA/ Catholic Charities to get training/ development support, assistance with seed and supply ordering, etc. as needed

