

**West Virginia University (joint program with WVSU & UMD College Park)**  
**2013 NESARE State Program Annual Progress Report (Second year of three-year plan)**  
**Doolarie Singh-Knights, Nola Wilson, WVU; Barb Liedl, WVSU**

**Project Title:** Sustaining family farms and their communities by building new capacity to enter and compete in locally accessible higher-value markets

**Performance Target:**

- 30 of the 110 Agricultural Service Providers (AG SP) educated through this program will teach 300 farmers about marketing, meeting demand specifications, and business planning strategies for identifying and selling in new or expanded markets
- 100 of these 300 farmers will implement at least one of the recommended actions directed towards entering and competing in a new or expanded local, accessible, higher-value markets

**Outcomes Reported**

**Ag Service Provider Actions**

- 27 incorporated new ideas from project into existing programming that has reached 1500 farmers. Examples of programs include: Food Processing workshops, Farm Opportunity Days Conference, Producer Dinner Meetings series, WV Women in Agriculture Risk Management Project, and ongoing crop and livestock programming:
- 16 developed new programming that has reached 450 farmers. Examples of programs include: Ready for Market short-course, Small-scale Poultry Production and Processing short-course, Farm-to-Table workshop series, Farm-to-School workshop series, Food Business Workshops, Pricing your Product workshops
- 60 ag service providers indicated they provided one-on-one consultations with producers on areas related to this project; and shared project-related information and materials through their county websites and social media channels; local newspapers, television and radio stations; and organizational newsletters and websites.

**Milestone Activities Conducted in 2013**

- 10 workshops at WV Small Farms Conference conducted in collaboration with ag service provider project participants and other partners. Topics included: Matching Crops with Markets; Most Wanted Fruits & Veggies; Why Cooperatives; I Cannot Change What I Do Not Measure-Understanding my Farm Numbers; Effective Teams with Outcomes: More than Just Teamwork; Pricing your Products for Market; How to Form a Cooperative; Determining what Markets are Right for You; Applying Communication Styles as an Effective Marketing Tool; High Tunnels – Production, Management and Economics; Good Agriculture Practices Training
- 3 educators supported to attend Cornell GAPs online Produce Safety course.
- 6 business planning and financial analysis workshops to learn record-keeping, budgeting, financial analysis, and how to business planning skills.
- 1 day-long agritourism workshop with topics including: Emergency Planning; Culinary Tourism; Marketing, Promotions and Sponsorships; Hospitality: Practice Makes Perfect; and “The Business Side of Agritourism – Is this Business Economically Feasible?”
- 7 short-courses and 7 workshops conducted in collaboration with ag service provider project participants on topics including: small-scale, backyard or pastured poultry production (4); ready for market training (3); food safety and insurance planning, and innovative marketing and social media opportunities (7).
- A comprehensive needs assessment survey for ASP (a similar survey for producers was conducted in 2014 to determine the state of knowledge, ability, interest, and adoption of ASP versus producers with regard to sustainable agriculture programs in WV; among other objectives. To date, 51 ASP (WVUES, WVSUES, UMD, NRC, WVDA, WV Farm and Food Coalition, WV Farmers Market Association) have responded to this survey.

### **Program Participants**

121 Ag service providers (including Extension, WVDA, USDA, non-profit and industry representatives) and 474 farmers participated in the project events. 16 ASP attended 2- 6 events.

### **Assessments of Learning**

Pre and post evaluations have indicated that participants increased knowledge in the following topics that will help them support producers to building new capacity to enter and compete in locally accessible higher-value markets:

- Market Analysis, Capacity Assessment and Visioning
- Sustainable Production Practices
- Value-Adding and Direct Marketing
- Food Safety
- Farm Financial Management, and
- Providing Opportunities for Networking and Forging Partnership in Production and Marketing

Overall, participants were very satisfied with the content, delivery and timeliness of the information provided, as well as follow-up support provided.

### **Outreach about SARE and Grant Programs**

- 6 exhibits/presentations about SARE grants at meetings and conference and 2 grant workshops 342 farmers and 72 ag service providers.
- NESARE in WVU website and Facebook page reached more than 400 farmers and 50 ag service providers.