

# FINAL REPORT

## Serving the Underserved with Specialty Crops Submitted by Central Detroit Christian CDC

*For our final report, we took our interim report and expounded upon it providing an update as to what we accomplished since our interim report and also our conclusions. A star \* indicates the new narrative for the final report.*

### I. Summary and Status of the goals and objectives of the Project

Our overall goal is to introduce Michigan Specialty crops to the central Detroit community.

With respect to that, we have developed four objectives;

1. Research the need for fresh produce in at least 3 surrounding communities from where we presently serve.
  - do a geographic scan of where access to produce is most severe
  - interview at least 250 members in each community regarding what produce they would like to eat.

*We spent the fall surveying Highland Park, the area west of Linwood and north of Chicago Blvd., and the area east of Woodward. We also reached into an area of Southwest Detroit, but have determined that the area is too far away at present. The question there is also whether access is really "severe". Southwest Detroit seems to have access in a variety of areas. We interviewed 202 heads of households and another random 180 people regarding their choices in eating. The survey listed every fruit and vegetable that we knew as a Michigan Specialty crop, and asked people to check the box of produce they would eat if given the opportunity. After discovering very early on that we omitted sweet potatoes from the list, there were very few surprises. Men preferred to eat fruit instead of vegetables. Women would eat and serve both and children preferred fruit also. We found great consistency in popularity with the following Michigan Specialty crops: peaches, strawberries, cherries, watermelon and grapes. This, of course, lines up with our sales on the mobile truck and the produce store, Peaches & Greens. Other top seller is bananas—non Michigan crop.*

*\*This past summer we expanded to the near Northeast community of Detroit (7 Mile & Conant area), a largely Chaldean community and a smaller area west of Wayne State University. We received requests to visit these 2 communities in June and have been servicing them ever since. Apples, peaches and pears are their mainstays thus far in terms of Michigan produce, however, they too like bananas. In total in these two communities we interviewed 56 and 31 people respectively.*

*To date, we are servicing Highland Park, an area west of Linwood, the 7 Mile & Conant community, and a small pocket near Wayne State University. Therefore, we have met the objective of researching at least 3 additional communities and*

*interviewing at least 250 community members. The research has resulted in service of produce delivery to these communities.*

2. Market and promote the impending expansion of the produce truck route to include a greater radius of the central and west Detroit communities based upon the research so that at least each new community is being provided access at least twice a week.

*After surveying the community (and finding no surprises) we then began to market the delivery of produce into these underserved communities. This was very simply done with a flyer announcing the dates and times that our produce truck would be in the area. Each community area was served on either Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday and then revisited again on Friday. Flyer distribution continued for several weeks even after the routes were established so that people would understand that we were there for them instead of doing a delivery for a store in the area or just passing through. Everytime the produce truck stopped to make a sale, the assistant to the driver would jump out and flyer the homes where the truck stopped. This continued for about four weeks. We have seen our services warmly received everywhere but in particular the area west of Linwood and around Dexter Avenue in particular. This seems to be the most isolated area of the three communities we canvassed.*

*\*As a result of our research, we not only service the 7 Mile & Conant area with produce through delivery from the Peaches & Greens truck, but we have also put produce in 3 strategic Corner stores in that area. Sales are good, modest, but steady.*

*Access is being provided at least 2 times a week for each community area.*

3. Expand the produce truck route to these three communities.

*It seems that objectives 2 and 3 blend and much of what needs to be reported under this point is already expounded upon in point number 2. The key thing to say here is that consistency is key and doing what you said you were going to do in the flyer will lead to success. In other words, if the flyer says the truck will be in the neighborhood on Wednesdays from 12-2 p.m, don't show up on Thursdays instead. During the non winter months we even expanded our produce truck routes to include an early afternoon shift and a late afternoon/early evening shift. This allowed us to tap into the working class family coming home from work—a little more expendable income, but still in a food desert.*

*\*The truck route visits the 7 Mile & Conant area on Tuesdays and Fridays, and the Wayne State area on Tuesdays and Saturdays. The Linwood to Dexter area is also serviced on Tuesday and Friday while the Highland Park community is serviced on Wednesdays and Saturdays. The main area of the central Detroit community is serviced Wednesday and Thursdays with return visits on Fridays and Saturdays.*

4. Introduce new and exciting options for fresh produce by providing samples of Michigan grown specialty crops; at least one new item of produce a week.

*Our approach here was again quite simple—offer different specialty crops as samples. All of the samples we offered were fruit as the mobile truck was not equipped to clean or cook vegetables. When Michigan crops came in during September and October last year and this year, this became very fun because the purchase prices were so low. Apples were particularly wonderful tasting this past growing season. We were able to pick some apples from a local farmer and pass them out in the neighborhoods. I have personally never tasted an apple fresh off the tree and I was amazed how incredible it tasted. It demonstrated the advantage of locally grown produce in terms of freshness and quality. If everything tasted that fresh we would have no problem getting people to eat fresh Michigan grown produce.*

*\*This Michigan harvest season (2010) we focused on vegetables and made salsa and have had it available for samples with chips. Tomatoes, peppers, and onions—simple stuff in abundance during this time. We are going to try to make bread and butter pickles also, hopefully even this week, as we have an abundance of great tasting cucumbers that were so inexpensive to purchase! Again, samples are of this nature are pretty much bound to the store as they do not travel well.*

*In the produce store we took the introduction of new crops even a step further by doing cooking demonstrations. Each week we introduce a new fruit or vegetable and show how it can be used in a recipe. This was as simple as demonstrating how to make a fruit smoothie and providing samples to baking a blueberry pie, to squash soup. We primarily targeted pre-teens and teens as our chefs and samplers to which they showed us they were up to the task (except for tasting the squash soup).*

## II. Financial Reporting

Financial reconciliation of actual expenses incurred during the reporting period for reimbursement. This includes copies of paid invoices being submitted for reimbursement.

See attached report, receipts, cancelled checks for 4 line items:

	<u>Amount Awarded</u>	<u>Amount Spent</u>	<u>Amount Requesting</u>
Personnel	\$10,000	\$4500	\$5500
Transportation	\$ 5,000	\$1500	\$3500
Marketing	\$ 7,500	\$1000	\$6500
<u>Supplies</u>	<u>\$ 2,500</u>	<u>\$ 500</u>	<u>\$2000</u>
TOTAL	\$25,000	\$7500	\$17500 ✓