Community Garden Evaluation

Objectives

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- State at least 2 benefits to coalitions for evaluation of community gardens
- Identify the evaluation tools available to assist you in evaluating community gardens
- Use the tools to recall: data collection expectations and content of the tool, how they are to be implemented, and when they should be completed
Community Garden
Evaluation Description and Procedures Manual

March 2009
Community Garden Evaluation

Q: Who?

A: Every grantee implementing a community garden
Q: Why?

- BHC: PEC → **Healthy Eating**, Physical Activity, Tobacco
- Eating Fruits and Vegetables = Healthy Eating
- Community Gardens → Eat Fruit and Vegetables
Community Garden Evaluation

Why? (cont’d)

- Evaluation Goals:
  - Is the intervention having the intended effect?
  - Future plans
Why a Standardized Process for Garden Evaluation?

**Benefits to Grantees**
- Less burden on LHD
- Demonstrate the garden’s success to partners, funders, etc (including MNN-SNAP-Ed)
- Make data-driven decisions

**Benefits to BHC**
- Minimize TA needed by multiple staff to review individual tools
- Consistent measurement allows for aggregation of data across sites to determine overall impact of garden initiatives
- Ensures appropriate data is being collected for funding agencies
Community Garden Evaluation

A note about standardization:

In order for the results to be aggregated, it is important that all the questions are asked in the same way.

Contact your consultant if you would like to explore modifications.
Summary of Tools

- Customer Survey Tools
  - Adult Gardener Survey
  - Youth Gardener Survey

- Community Garden Overview Tracking Forms
  - Tracking Form for Attendance/Participation
  - Tracking Form for Produce
  - Tracking Form for Garden Characteristics

Tools adapted from the Community Food Project Evaluation Toolkit written by National Research Center, Inc.
Community Gardener Surveys

- Complete at end of garden season
- Collect information on behaviors, opinions and demographic characteristics
- Self-administered
- Will help you determine garden impact on individuals
- Youth is for ages 12-17, Adult survey is for 18 +
Tracking Form for Attendance + Participation

- Complete on daily/weekly basis
- Tracks participation by neighborhood residents, youth, interns, etc
- Tracks time spent and activities in garden
- Will be helpful for calculating reach, SNAP-Ed match
Tracking Form for Produce

- Complete on daily/weekly basis
- Tracks food produced and distributed
- Tracks food lost to spoilage, theft
- Estimates reach from distribution
- Optional: Estimate monetary value of food produced/distributed
Tracking Form for Garden Characteristics

- Complete monthly or seasonally
- Tracks general characteristics
  - Hrs of operation
  - Land use/size of garden
- Totals numbers from other forms
  - Total production
  - Total participants
Community Garden Evaluation

Q: How do I enter the data?

- MDCH will provide an Excel spreadsheet

- Enter daily or weekly, submit in October
Community Garden Evaluation

Feedback

Q: How will I get my data back after I submit?

MDCH will analyze your data and send you a report.
Questions?
Quiz Time!!

- State at least 2 benefits to coalitions for evaluation of community gardens

- Identify the evaluation tools available to assist you in evaluating community gardens

- Use the tools to recall: data collection expectations and content of the tool, how they are to be implemented, and when they should be completed