Urban Agriculture in St Louis

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• Founded 1866 by African American Civil War veterans for newly freed African Americans
• 1890 Land Grant
• 3,100 students (Underclassmen and Graduate)
• Open enrollment
Lincoln University Cooperative Extension

Research and Cooperative Extension:

• Organic research farm, aquaculture, IPM, composting
• Urban Impact Centers: KC and STL; ag since 2009
• Innovative Small Farmers Outreach Program

Serves ~20 counties out of 114
LUCE Agriculture services

• One-on-one technical and educational assistance
• Farm visits
• Demonstrations/Field Trips
• Workshops
• Conference: MMLRF
• St Louis Urban Farmer Meet-up Group
• Commercialization Piece
Different Types of Projects

- Small scale market farm
- Non-profits
- Hybrids
- Community gardens
- Non-profit supported community gardens
- Schools
- Churches
- Subsistence growers
Features of Urban Farms

• All races and ethnicities are interested
• Most are using organic growing practices in market gardens; sell direct to end consumer.
  – (wholesale sales gross 30% less)
  – Usually must charge premium price to middle class and above customers.
• Everyone has a second source of income
• FY 2013 no farm made more than $14,000 (gross income)
• Most farmers lack the skills or professional training in agriculture; don’t understand the process of starting this type of business/activity
Features of Urban Farms, cont.

• Most are less than 1 acre; most are ¼ acre
• Specialty crops
• Most are in trucked in soil
• Drip irrigation is must
• Food Safety Plans/Good Agriculture Practices
Show Urban Farm Map
The most successful projects are those whose leadership are motivated by passion and altruism.

There is little money to made it this model of urban farming.
Issues Facing Urban Farmers

- Soil
- Water
- Theft/Fencing
- Sewer Rates
- Commercial Utility Rates
- Taxes
- Urban Agriculture Zoning
Thank You!

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