



UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND
EXTENSION

January 28, 2010

1890 Extension Program

2122 RICHARD A. HENSON CENTER
PRINCESS ANNE
MARYLAND 21853
(410) 651-6206
FAX (410) 651-6207
EMAIL: mce@umes.edu

4-H Youth & Adult Leadership
(410) 651-8330

Alternative & Small Scale
Agriculture
(410) 651-7974

Farm Management Outreach
Project
(410) 651-7733

Nutrition
(410) 651-6212

Rural Development Center
(410) 651-6183

Seafood Technology
(410) 651-6636

Small Farm
(410) 651-6693

Small Ruminant
(410) 651-7930

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS
U.S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE COOPERATING
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMS

The Help Ourselves Project (HOP)
Attn: Mrs. Gladys McMichael
528 S. 52nd Street
Philadelphia, PA 19143

Dear Mrs. Gladys McMichael:

As Project Director for the Small Farm Outreach Initiative at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, I would like to confirm our continued support of your "Mid-Atlantic Black Farmers Food Distribution Project". The progresses (website development, participation in Small Farms Conference, initiating a youth agriculture component, and arranging produce pick-ups with participating farmers) you've made so far have been good. However, as with any proposed project, there are always unforeseen circumstances beyond our control that can impede the progress of a project.

As you know, many of the producers who agreed to participate in your project experienced one of the worst drought years on record last year. As a result, they were unable to produce the volume of produce initially anticipated. This coupled with logistical matters such as: transportation, negotiating a fair price, and planning group meetings with farmers around their busy schedules also posed some challenges.

Taking the above matters into consideration, I believe that we are in a better position this year to plan for these potential pitfalls. Some of the limited-resource producers I've been working with are already talking about establishing low-cost irrigation systems (drip-tape) as an added insurance. Plus, as the economic situation continues to make it hard for limited-resource and minority farmers to make a living, I feel that farmers will be more receptive to the idea of pooling resources to take advantage of potential market outlets that you are proposing.

If your project is approved for an extension, I would be happy to work with you in helping you nurture the relationships started with some of the minority farmers here on the Eastern Shore, as well as, identify strategies that will help move this project forward to meeting its objectives.

Sincerely,

Berran Rogers, Jr.
Project Director,
Small Farm Outreach Initiative

cc: Dr. Henry M. Brooks
1890 Extension Administrator