

Project Aawre 2002 Final Report

1. Title Report: Project Aawre
FNE Number: FNE02-416

2. Goals: The objective of the proposed project is to provide vegetables, fruits and other farm foods produced by Dawa Farm and other local farmers to individuals living with HIV or AIDS who are economically, physically and/or socially unable to currently obtain these products.

The proposal primarily addresses the following aspect as noted in the grant application:

- the improvement in the quality of life for farmers and society

The proposal secondarily addresses the following aspect as noted in the grant application:

- the reduction of costs and the increase in farm income

3. Update on Farm Information: Nothing new to report concerning the farm.

4. Cooperators: Dayspring AIDS Support Services, Merrymeeting AIDS Support Services, Maine AIDS Lodging: Assisted in participant recruitment and application.

Pleasant Pond Orchard, Avalon Farms, Hilltop Raspberry Farm, Merrymeeting Farm, Good and Plenty Farm, Spear's Farm, Prout's Blueberry Farm, Prout's Strawberry Farm, Keough Farm, Judy's Kitchen, Meadow Brook Farm: Provided other locally produced food items for deliveries including fruits, baked goods, jams, relishes, corn, etc.

5. Our project worked on overcoming the obstacles of poverty and inaccessibility to nutritional foods for some people living with HIV/AIDS by utilizing the Community Supported Agriculture model with outside funding to provide vegetables, fruits and other farm products. In order to do this we worked with the above mentioned AIDS Support Services to help with the recruiting. We accepted 18 households to receive deliveries. This was twice the number of households originally proposed. We compensated for this by decreasing the amount of weekly deliveries from 16-18 to 12. Over the course of the season we lost 4 households due to people moving or becoming severely ill. Thus, the final number of households was 14. By the end of June we began our deliveries. In the beginning we delivered our vegetables and other farm products to 13 households in the city of Portland, 4 households in the city of Augusta and 1 individual picked up the goods at one of our farmers' markets. Each week we processed and bagged in season vegetables from our farm for the deliveries. We also purchased other farm products from other farms (see 4) to include in our weekly deliveries. Examples of the other farm products included; in season fruits, breads, cookies, jams, honey, eggs, relishes, pickled beets, apple sauce, and

meats. In order to recruit the participation of other farms, we sent out a newsletter to the local farms and used word of mouth to inform them about our project.

6. Our findings and accomplishments are best illustrated in the summary of the pre and post project evaluations that were done by the participants (see attachment, **Project Aawre Demographics and Evaluation**). The feedback from the participating farms was very positive. Many of the farms were excited to get involved with the project because of the need it was filling for the clients as well as the monetary impact it had on their farm.
7. There were no site conditions that had any great effect on the outcome of this project.
8. The economic findings of this project can be seen in the following chart. Our farm received \$2,800 for providing and delivering fresh produce. The project also provided over \$1,100 to other local farm for the purchase of their products. In conclusion, with the fundraising of as little as \$4,700 one can provide fresh vegetables and other farm products to 14 – 18 households over 12 weeks.

Expense	Expected 2002	Actual 2002
Personnel	\$2,800	\$2,800.00
Seeds	\$100	\$ 100.00
Travel	\$612	\$ 541.00
Printing	\$40	\$ 45.78
Postage	\$20.40	\$ 21.62
Telephone	\$40	\$ 40.00
Other Products	\$1080	\$1154.34
TOTAL	\$4692.40	\$4702.74

9. The results from this project have shown us that there is a vast need for more outreach like this to target the addressed population. Our evaluations have indicated that this program was well received and appreciated and that the participants would like to see it continue and grow. Our next step is to acquire a fiscal sponsor with nonprofit status so we will be able to seek out additional grants and donors.
10. Yes, this project was a success for us and we hope for it to continue.
11. We accomplished our outreach program by sending out 2 newsletters about the project to many local farms and to various HIV/AIDS support service. The first newsletter explained about our farm, about the project we were starting and how one could get involved in the project. The last newsletter indicated the results of the project. We also sent out press releases to the news media.
12. Jennifer Gunderman-King, December 3, 2002

Project Aawre Demographics and Evaluation

Information Sheet and Survey Administered at Start of Project

Approved Applicants: 17 (Expected 9)		
Individual Shares 14	Couple Shares 1	Family Shares 2

Counties of participants: Cumberland, Kennebec, Sagadahoc

Health Status:

17 (100%) HIV+

5 (29%) Diagnosed with AIDS

Please check if you receive assistance from any of the following:

11 (65%) Medicaid

0 WIC

4 (24%) Medicare

11 (65%) Food Stamps

0 Senior Farm Share

8 (47%) Social Security

5 (29%) Disability

1 (6%) Other: rent subsidy

How much did your household make last year for 2001?

12 (70%) under \$10,000

5 (30%) \$10,000 - \$19,999

How often have you eaten vegetables in the past week (7 days)?

7 (41%) at least once a day

6 (35%) every other day

3 (18%) once a week

1 (6%) not at all

What can't you eat as many vegetables as you would like?

12 (71%) can't afford

3 (18%) don't have regular transportation

1 (6%) too ill to get to store other: stretch out meals, recently lost appetite

Is eating the above foods important to you and your household? 17 (100%)YES

If you are not able to purchase and eat vegetables regularly, do you think that your health is affected? 17 (100%)YES

If you answered yes, please explain how your health is affected when you are not able to eat vegetables. Some comments include:

- Low energy
- Gastrointestinal problems due to low fiber
- Weak immune system
- I don't feel like I eat enough vegetables and would like more.
- Fatigue; get colds easier
- I don't feel as good
- I have diabetes too and need vegetables to maintain blood sugar level.
- Don't get vitamins and energy I need.
- My health suffers.

How do you feel now?

1 (6%) Great

5 (29%) Good

11 (65%) Not bad, but could be better

Do you think a weekly delivery of fresh vegetables for you and your household would make a difference to you and your household? 17 (100%) YES

If you answered yes, how would it make a difference? Some comments include:

- Healthier eating
- Allow me to keep healthy
- Continuous supply of fresh vegetables
- I would be healthier and have more energy.
- This would help me financially, I can't afford fresh vegetables.
- Fresh is always better.
- More variety of vegetables
- All I get is canned and frozen vegetables, would like fresh ones.

Final Evaluation-

Due to people moving, we had 14 active shares that received deliveries all 12 weeks. 11 participants (out of 14) or 79% completed final evaluations.

My weekly deliveries from Dawa Farm has allowed me to eat:

9 (82%) more vegetables a week

1 (18%) about same amount of vegetables a week

How has your health been effected by the weekly deliveries:

8 (73%) I feel better with the help of the fresh vegetables and other foods from the weekly deliveries.

2 (27%) I feel about the same as before I got the deliveries.

The weekly deliveries helped you to get more fresh vegetables than you usually have because (check all that apply):

9 (82%) I usually do not have the money to buy enough fresh vegetables.

8 (73%) I do not have the transportation to get fresh vegetables every week.

2 (18%) I usually don't feel well enough to go buy fresh vegetables every week.

How has your weekly deliveries effected you and your family? Some Comments include:

- Having access to vegetables was good.
- Person who delivered was nice.
- Vegetables made me feel better and this is a good thing.
- Your vegetables were very important to me.
- I have eaten more fresh vegetables this summer than usual.
- I have enjoyed many meals with the aid of Project Aawre.
- It has been very helpful.
- Enabled me to feel better and have more energy
- I feel grateful for the service
- Freeing up money for other needs

- It has inspired me to make a larger variety of meals with the different fresh fruits and vegetables. Better rounded food groups.
- Helped my son enjoy more vegetables
- Created less stress by not having the added pressure of needing to go to the store for these items.
- Felt good to know that people cared enough to deliver to my home.

What were your favorite vegetables (circle as many as you like)?

Most people enjoyed all the vegetables delivered to them. A few did not like the beets and beet greens.

What were some of the other farm products you enjoyed (check as many as you like)?

Most people enjoyed all the other farm products delivered to them except some mentioned they did not enjoy the bread. The bread was not what they were used to.

What was the best part of the weekly deliveries?

- Getting the vegetables.
- Friendly attitude and goals of the program made me feel good.
- Convenience
- Knowing every week I can receive fruits and vegetables that I cannot afford to buy and sometimes I feel too sick to go and get.
- Having a variation of fresh vegetables as opposed to canned or frozen ones
- I really liked getting lettuce and veggies to make salads.
- It was nice discovering what would be in the bag each week.
- It was nice seeing a friendly compassionate person I looked forward to the deliveries and the short visit with her.
- The program was wonderful. People with my disease tend to shy away from people, she made it so comfortable. Hope to see her next summer.
- Knowing that the deliveries were reliable and dependable.
- Surprise goodies.

What was the worst part of the deliveries?

- Tuesday was not the best day for me to get deliveries.
- There was no worst part.
- It was hard to be there for the deliveries but they left them at my apartment anyways.
- Breads were not to my liking.

If this program continues next year, would you like to be contacted to get deliveries next year? 11 (100%) YES

Would you recommend weekly deliveries from Dawa Farm to a friend? 11 (100%) YES

Volume 1, Issue 1

May 2002

Project Aawre

Dawa Farm
71 Carlson Cross Road
Bowdoinham, Maine 04008
(207) 737-7557
Dawafarm@hotmail.com

What is Project Aawre?

The objective of Project Aawre is to provide vegetables, fruits and other farm foods produced by Dawa farm and other local farmers to individuals living with HIV or AIDS and their households who are economically, physically and/or socially unable to currently obtain these products. The project was awarded funds from Northeast SARE to implement this program during 2002. Project Aawre is based on the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) model and utilizes the funds from this grant to provide free shares to people living with HIV/AIDS and their households. Shares will include vegetables and eggs from Dawa Farm as well as food items purchased from other local farmers.

Who is Dawa Farm?

Dawa Farm is a family owned organic vegetable farm in Bowdoinham, Maine. Our mission is to produce fresh, locally grown organic vegetables with a special concentration on providing our products to populations/communities that are unable to access vegetables due to economic, physical or social constraints. You can find us selling our products at the Brunswick and Bowdoinham Farmers' Markets.

Why HIV/AIDS?

Approximately 1200 people in Maine are living with HIV or AIDS. Many of these people are unable to work or go about their daily functions due to their illness and/or community stigmatization. As a result, some people living with HIV or AIDS are poor and/or homebound. Studies indicate that poverty has been correlated to poor nutritional intake. Therefore, people with HIV/AIDS who are experiencing poverty and not meeting their nutritional needs become increasingly more ill. This dramatically effects all aspects of their life, especially if they are an ill parent. A study conducted by the Harvard School of Public Health summarized that: "diet may play a



"Aawre" comes from the African dialect, Fulfulde, meaning "to seed"

much larger role in HIV prognosis than previously thought" (Reuters 11/29/02). Although some people living with HIV/AIDS receive foods from food banks, food stamps and/or other social agencies, many people still go without for numerous reasons such as high demand and low supply for food pantries, lack of transportation, as well as falling just above minimum requirements for state food assistance programs. This project aims at overcoming these obstacles.

How can you get involved and benefit from this project?

Funding for Project Aawre includes money for purchasing food items from local farmers. In addition to the vegetables and eggs from Dawa Farm, we will be purchasing other locally produced food items. Therefore, we are currently recruiting other farmers who would be interested in selling their products. We would purchase your products sporadically over 16 weeks from June–October and include them in the weekly distribution of food to people living with HIV/AIDS and their households. Although we are interested in many types of locally produced foods we are especially interested purchasing fruit, bread and milk. If you are interested in selling us your products to be included in this project, please contact us at 737-7557 or dawafarm@hotmail.com.

Volume 1, Issue 2

December 2002

Project Aawre

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The objective of Project Aawre was to provide vegetables, fruits and other farm foods produced by Dawa farm and other local farmers to individuals living with HIV or AIDS and their households who are economically, physically and/or socially unable to currently obtain these products. The project was awarded funds from Northeast SARE to implement this program during 2002. Project Aawre is based on the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) model and utilizes the funds from this grant to provide free shares to people living with HIV/AIDS and their households. Shares included vegetables and eggs from Dawa Farm as well as food items purchased from other local farmers.

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What were the results?

We delivered over \$3,500 in fresh vegetables and farm products to the 18 participating households. This included \$2,300 in produce from Dawa Farm and \$1,200 in products purchased from other local farms. According to the evaluations, this project has allowed 82% of participants to eat more vegetables a week. 73% of the participants felt better with the help of the fresh vegetables and other products. The reason this project has helped the participants eat more vegetables is it overcame their 3 biggest obstacles of; not having the money to buy enough fresh vegetables, not having the transportation to get vegetables every week, and not feeling well enough to go buy fresh vegetables every week. Our evaluations have indicated that this program was well received and appreciated and that the participants would like to see it continue and grow; so would we.... Please contact us with any questions or comments.



"Aawre" comes from the African dialect, Fulfulde, meaning "to seed"

What was done?

We worked with several AIDS Support Services to help with recruiting. We accepted 18 households to receive deliveries over a 12 week period. Over the course of the season we lost 4 households due to people moving or becoming severely ill. Thus, the final number of households was 14. By the end of June we began our deliveries. In the beginning we delivered our vegetables and other farm products to 13 households in the Portland, 4 households in Augusta and 1 individual picked up the goods at one of our farmers' markets. Each week we processed and bagged in season vegetables from our farm for deliveries. We also purchased other farm products from many other local farms to include in the deliveries. Examples of the products included; in season fruits, breads, cookies, jams, honey, eggs, relishes, pickled beets, apple sauce and meats.

In Bowdoinham, an eclectic mix of vendors

BY KARLENE HALE
Times Record Staff

BOWDOINHAM

Every week, Jennifer Gunderman-King and her husband, Scott, pack 18 baskets of fresh vegetables and homemade breads for delivery to ill people between Augusta and Portland.

The recipients have HIV or full-blown AIDS — a group very much in need of fresh food, but often too ill to go to market or who are shunned when they do, Jennifer said.

She and her husband also sell their vegetables each week at the Bowdoinham Farmers' Market, from 3-7 p.m. every Friday through October. The stands are on the waterfront at the center of town.

The market, now in its second year, has eight licensed vendors and three others authorized to

sell for five days throughout the season.

"Bowdoinham is a farming town," said Kathy Durgin-Leighton, Bowdoinham's economic and community development coordinator. One of the purposes of the market is the promotion of business growth through local agricultural outlets, she said.

"We have a very nice waterfront, which is an ideal place for the vendors. And we've found that people come not only to buy, but to socialize with each other," Durgin-Leighton said.

Gunderman-King is employed by the Maine Bureau of Health, while her husband works full time as a farmer and gardener in the summer and a carpenter during the winter. Scott King has a college degree in political science and interna-

tional relations, but his only dream was to become a farmer, his wife said.

While the two grew up in adjacent states — he in New Hampshire and she in Massachusetts — they met while serving in the Peace Corps in Niger after college.

Their farm in Bowdoinham is called Dawa, an African word that means "early to rise."

And rise early they do — to tend their two acres of organic vegetables and work the soil on two additional acres. They do rotation gardening — alternating plots each year to keep the soil from depleting.

"We began farming three years ago with a little garden and vegetable stand," Gunderman-King said.

The Bowdoinham market is important to them, but so is the



GLEN BOLDUC / THE TIMES RECORD

PATRICIA MORRIS of Bowdoinham looks over produce offered by Scott King, left, and his wife, Jennifer Gunderman-King, at the Bowdoinham farmers' market.

HIV/AIDS project, called Project Aware, for which they received a one-time \$4,600 grant from the University of Vermont.

"We pack our own organic vegetables, but we buy from other vendors things like whole-grain breads, eggs and fruits.

"We make the deliveries ourselves because many of these people are too ill to shop or to gain access to fresh, healthy foods that they really need very much," Gunderman-King said. "Often they can't work or go

food shopping regularly. And there's a stigma attached to HIV and AIDS that keeps patients from going out," she said.

She and her husband found the names of patients through Dayspring in Augusta, Merrymeeting AIDS Support Services in Brunswick, and the AIDS Lodging House in Portland. Most deliveries are made in the Portland area.

Someone else you'll see at the Bowdoinham market is Judy

Please see **VENDORS**, Page 3

\$50000

\$50

VENDORS

From Page 2

Sherburne, a Durham housewife who makes and sells breads, rolls, sweets and specialty muffins for people with wheat or dairy allergies.

Sherburne is a woman with a mission.

"I want to send my two youngest children to private Christian school in the fall. I've been home-schooling them, but this fall I want to enroll them in school. I started doing the baking to earn the money for that," she said.

She gets up at 2 a.m. on Friday mornings and bakes 120 loaves of yeast bread by market time. She has a bread machine capable of mixing 10 loaves at a time, and a convection oven that bakes faster than conventional ones.

"I use a basic potato dough for the white breads and sweet rolls, then during the process, I add onions, seeds, raisins or flavorings," she said.

She also makes other breads — rye, oat, molasses and corn, plus pies and pastries.

Sherburne believes in a start-to-finish approach.

She even grinds her own flours, using a machine about the size of a four-slice toaster, she said, with a sound like a jet engine taking off. It makes nine cups of flour at a time.

She buys grains in 25-pound and 50-pound bags from a distributor in Auburn.

"I just started this year as a vendor," she said. "Right now I have 35 loaf pans and some foil pie plates for the sweet breads and rolls. I use the same ones over and over. I definitely have to invest in more pans."

Sherburne on Saturday repeats the same routine as Friday — rising early and baking again, for the farmers' market held every Saturday at Crystal Spring Farm in Brunswick.

Here are the other vendors on hand every Friday in



GLEN BOLDUC / THE TIMES RECORD

RICHARD DUNBAR SR. of Hilltop Raspberry Farm in Bowdoinham, picks out a choice head of cabbage for Sue Clifford of Freeport.

Bowdoinham:

— Hilltop Raspberries, selling berries and different kinds of jams.

— Avalon Farms, selling eggs, lamb, chicken, beef, wool blankets and fleece.

— Hayward Farm, selling flowers, vegetables, fruit, sea lavender, baskets and teas.

— Bond's Orchard, selling fruits, vegetables and honey.

— Little River Farm, selling herbs, cut flowers and vegetables.