

NCR-SARE Youth Educator Grant Project

Final Report

1. PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

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- Project Title: Edible Avalon Summer Youth Program

- Project Number: YENC10-036
- Project Duration: March 18, 2011 – March 31, 2012
- Date of Report: March 26th, 2012

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND RESULTS



How did you educate youth about sustainable agriculture? What sustainable agriculture knowledge did they gain? Be specific and include the goals, audience, project activities, and results of your project as indicated on this form. Describe how you planned and conducted your project to meet your project goals. Consider what questions other educators would ask about your grant project and try to answer them.

A. BACKGROUND. Before receiving this grant, were you involved in teaching youth about sustainable agriculture? If so, briefly describe what type of sustainable agriculture training you did and the students you worked with.

Four of us were involved in developing the curriculum, three of whom directly taught the two youth programs (SPY, Summer Program for Youth, for K-8 students, and YLP, the Youth Leadership Program for High School students). All of us have worked in various capacities with youth and been involved in sustainable agriculture. Kris Kaul, the edible Avalon program coordinator, has worked with youth in gardening since 2008 and is certified in organic gardening and permaculture. Emily Canosa, the Youth Education Coordinator and head teacher in the project, developed the first edible Avalon youth garden program in 2009 in which Avalon youth learned about organic gardening, cooking from the garden, visited a local farm, and built a sunflower fort (see edible Avalon video in which Emily discusses working with youth in the garden [here](#)).



Paul Burger, an AmeriCorps VISTA intern, had just completed the 8-course series in the organic certification program offered by Washtenaw Community College and Project Grow, and was eager to share his knowledge with the teens. Lizzy Brosius, a Smith College student who joined us a nutrition intern with experience working with youth, co-taught the teen program with Paul. Lizzy was new to sustainable agriculture but had extensive experience working with youth in the YMCA. In addition, we had the expertise and support of the Avalon Housing social work staff who worked directly with the youth and their families.

B. GOALS. List your project goal(s) as identified in your grant application.

The Edible Avalon-Summer Youth Program is a unique opportunity to immerse the next generation in sustainable, organic food growing. Our hope is that students will realize the importance of living soil and of using sustainable methods – working with nature, rather than against it. We also hope they get a glimpse into the burgeoning world of sustainable urban agriculture and the ways in which even disenfranchised communities have used community and urban gardening to empower themselves and build community.

In addition, we hope students will:



- Gain self-confidence and self-respect by producing an important commodity for themselves and others
- Learn about the link between healthy soils, healthy plants, and healthy bodies
- Understand the scope of the environmental problems caused by conventional agriculture
- Understand the value of buying locally made food, and the costs of long-distance transport
- Gain respect for nature's complexity and the harm we cause by ignoring how nature works
- Increase their appreciation of the outdoors and gardening
- And be introduced to unfamiliar crops and learn how to grow and prepare (and love) them.



C. PROCESS. Describe the steps involved in conducting the project and the logic behind the choices you made. Why did you use this approach? Please be specific so that other educators can consider what would apply to their efforts and gain from your experiences.

Our grant proposal was fairly detailed, so much of the curriculum outline had already been developed prior to receiving the grant. This drew on resources for youth educators provided by NSC-SARE, the wealth of local resources and organizations, and the perceived needs of our youth, and derived topical sequence based on the season and a progression from the small immediate environment to the garden ecosystem and our larger foodshed. This outline was then refined into a curriculum and lesson plans by Youth Education Coordinator Emily Canosa, with

extensive additional linkages to local organizations, media, and people.



This was the fourth year of the overall edible Avalon program, and so there was a history and infrastructure on which to build. Had we started from scratch, the entire process would have been much more difficult: we would not have had at least two people who had been involved in the program and worked with the youth, nor the underlying garden program already developed and understood; and we might not have had the community linkages that we did.

The eventual shape of the program was also influenced by the decision to seek High School credit for the Teens through [Ann Arbor Community High School's](#) "Community Resource" program, in which students may study under an outside expert for elective credit. In order to fulfill requirements, teens needed to complete a total of 90 hours of work. Thus we knew the summer Teen program would involve many hours of in-depth, hands-on learning, which we planned to divide between 1) mentoring opportunities with the younger students in the SPY program, 2) onsite community service work, 3) volunteer hours at local farms and other bodies involved in sustainable agriculture, and, 4) fieldtrips designed to show students the depth and breadth of the area's local food economy.



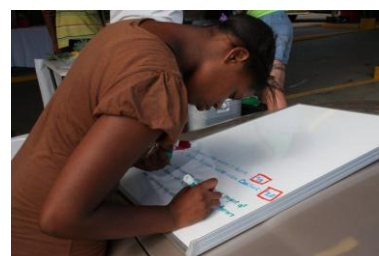
In practice, we also learned that, like the younger students, the teens responded much better to short, hands-on experiential learning activities than to the level of more traditional learning (films, discussions) initially planned, and we adjusted accordingly to try to maximize the proportion of time spent in modalities to which students were most receptive and in which the most active exploration occurred.

What follows is a timeline of both youth programs (SPY and YLP) showing their interrelationship. Lesson plans are marked in **bold**, while fieldtrips are *italicized*.

Note: SPY lesson plans are available on our edible Avalon Youth webpage: <http://avalonhousing.org/edible-avalon/edible-avalon-youth-program/> Teen program lesson plans are attached in pdf form.

Date & Topic	SPY Summer Youth Program for K-8 youth	YLP Youth Leadership Program for teens
April	Building raised bed gardens & filling with organic compost Starting & raising transplants in the Afterschool classroom Fencing the gardens	
May & early June	Watering Can Hot Potato: Have fun taking care of the garden and practice sharing the watering can Whipped Cream Rules!: make whipped cream and serve over strawberries Garden Promise Poster: collaborate rule-making and garden pledge; students each sign pledge Plant the transplants out into the gardens! <i>Tantre Farm Visit</i>	Plant Teen garden beds (produce for selling at Farmers Market and Avalon food pantries) <i>Tantre Farm Visit</i> <i>Hoophouse Build: Capella Farm</i>
Summer programs: SPY & YLP WEEK 1: Intro & basics Jun 27-Jul 3	Dustbowl! Icebreaker Go over Garden Promise poster. Sign Making (“Don’t tread on me”, etc.) Garden Detectives: investigate the garden Garden Log & Journals: draw gardens and tell a story about them; ongoing Hamburger plant: links in food chains and seed to plate concepts Healthy Snacks: make smoothies; learn about healthy snack choices	
WEEK 2: Plant needs Jul 4-10	Garden Weather Station: the link between weather and garden health Garden Log & Journals Food Survey Game Plant Parts: touch and feel plant parts; draw and label plant parts together, make copies for youth to color in Garden Harvest Salad	Intro to the Farmers Market: what to expect, ground rules Learning About the U.S. Food System: Food, Inc. & discussion <i>Farmers Market Visit & Survey</i>
WEEK 3: Particular plants; Art in the garden Jul 11-17	Garden Weather, Garden Log & Care Garden Rap: youth create & perform rap about the garden Plant Superheroes: create Marvel cards for vegetables, listing their “superpowers” Harvest Garden Chart: keep track of harvests Fruit & Veggie Bingo	SPY Mentorship Prep: Leadership: How to be positive mentors and role models Intro to Local Economies and Local Food: Local Economy Game <i>Avalon Housing Nutrition Fair</i> <i>Garden work</i> <i>First Farmers Market Day</i>
WEEK 4: bugs Jul 18-24	Circle & garden log Insect Prediction Survey: insects and the garden ecosystem Insect Friends & Foes: predators, pollinators, parasites, poopsters, and pests Chew On This: act out different insects’ eating strategies Draw insects, release beneficial insects in the	Intro to Business and Entrepreneurship - A Market Vendor’s Perspective: Farmers Market Business Handout <i>Farmers Market Day</i> <i>U-pick raspberries</i> <i>Tour de Fresh</i> <i>Garden work</i>

	garden	
WEEK 5: plant needs, food and relationships Jul 25-31	Garden weather chart & log Harvest food for kids to take home Oxygen factory: introduce photosynthesis Gas Gobblers: how photosynthesis is vital to human life Picture Yourself A Plant: plant needs through drawing and stories Garden Journals <i>Georgia Street Community Gardens</i>	Healthy Ecosystems and the Negative Effects of Industrial Agriculture <i>Visit Food Gatherers</i> <i>Garden Tour Grillers</i> <i>Georgia Street Community Gardens</i>
WEEK 6: Cooking, Nutrition, Harvesting Aug 1-7	My Plate: healthy eating, food pyramid What About Weeds? weed ID, make a weed salad Dave's Apple Crisp: cooking; Michigan apple producer Seeing Sugar: nutrition class Garden Journals	Urban Revitalization through Urban Agriculture & Intro to Food Equity: Urban Roots film & student debate SPY mentoring Freezing Produce: with Locavorious <i>Detroit Agricultural Network Tour</i>
WEEK 7: Farmers, Markets, Careers Aug 8-14	Shake, Rattle, and Roll: identify the 4 main parts of soil Worms Eat My Garbage: learn about vermicomposting Follow That Pizza: with Silvio Medoro; where do the ingredients come from? Guest farmer Dave Steinhauser Wrap-up Celebration <i>Visit Teens at Farmers Market</i>	Hands-on Soil Composition Test Is It Sustainable? Sustainability of Your Life Make a mess of greens: with dietetic intern Good Food Film Fest: teens as judges People's Food Co-op tour of Carrot Way: Teen presentations <i>Tilian Farm Development Center</i> <i>Farmers Market Day</i> <i>The Family Farm</i>
And beyond: Aug 15-21		<i>Carrot Way Tree Planting</i> <i>Eastern Market, Detroit</i> <i>Farmers Market Day</i> <i>Garden care & maintenance</i>



D. PEOPLE. List people who assisted with the project and explain how they were involved. Please include educators, farmers and ranchers, parents or others who may have helped you. Also, list any personnel from a public agency, such as the Extension Service, Natural Resources Conservation Services or Soil and Water Conservation Districts who may have assisted with this project.

Edible Avalon staff: Emily Canosa, Paul Burger, Lizzy Brosius, Kris Kaul (see Part A)



Avalon Family and Community Services staff: Scott Phillips, Daicia Smith, Celeste Hawkins, Manisha O’Leary
Members of the Family and Community Services (FCS) team organized pre- and post-program summits for the Teens that helped introduce the program, increased its perception as being real and meaningful in the eyes of the youth, and served as an ending celebration at which awards were given to teens and instructors alike. In addition, Avalon FCS staff worked with [Michigan Works](#) so that students were able to receive a stipend at the end of the summer for their community work.

[UM School of Public Health Dietetic Interns:](#) Mita Dutta, Yu-Han Huang, and Janine Cannel

Each summer, dietetic interns from the University of Michigan do fulltime rotations with edible Avalon. Last summer, part of their work involved teaching nutrition classes in the SPY program with the help of the teens as mentors.



Hoophouse build: Jeff McCabe & Lisa Gottlieb; Capella Farm owner Jennifer Kangas
[SELMA Café](#), a local Friday breakfast hosted by McCabe and Gottlieb, raises money for micro-loans to area farmers and organizes barn-raising-type hoop-house builds each Spring in which the entire structure is built in a day. Last year, teens in the YLP program participated in the hoop-house build at [Capella](#) farm, and also helped with mulching and pest management.



[Tantre Farm:](#) Richard Andre & Deb Lentz
Avalon youth and adults were given a complete tour of this diverse organic CSA farm, from tasting herbs and learning about their medicinal qualities, to learning about hoop-house growing, animal husbandry, and exploring an entire forest floor covered with mushroom logs.

Non-tenant and tenant volunteers on Build Day at Carrot Way Apartments: Kristen & Adam Muehlhauser, Christine Davis, Brandon Reeve, members of Zeta Phi Beta, and most of the youth at Carrot Way helped build, site, and fill the seventeen raised beds edible Avalon put in at Carrot Way. Eight of these beds were used for the youth programs, as well as beds at other Avalon properties.



[Ann Arbor Farmers Market](#) Manager: [Molly Notariani](#)

Farmers/vendors at the Farmers Market: David Kingenberger ([The Brinery](#)), Stefanie Stauffer ([Nightshade Army Salsa](#)), Shannon Brines ([Brines Farm](#)), Jason Frenzel ([Huron River Watershed Council](#)); formerly with [Natural Area Preservation](#)), Dave Steinhauser [Steinhauser Farms](#), Jonathan and Marlene Goetz ([Goetz Farm](#)), [Cohoctah Honeyworks](#)
Teens completed market surveys in planning their marketing strategy by interviewing market vendors after receiving a tour of the market and introductions to vendors by the market manager.

[Rap For Food](#): Lucas DiGia – see video [here](#):

(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kooVYOd1MmI>)

Lucas engaged the youth in creating and performing garden-based rap.

Avalon staff & tenants at Nutrition Fair: Kevin Bell, Lizzy Brosius

Teens made watermelon salsa and served it, along with information on lycopene, to fair-goers.



[Growing Hope's](#) 'Tour de Fresh': Amanda Edmonds, Arika Lyan, Mary Wessel Walker (Harvest Kitchen), other youth. Paul Burger led teens on a bicycle-tour of urban agriculture and local foodshed-related sites in Ypsilanti organized by Growing Hope.

EA Garden Tour: tenant/chef Ed Bostic, tenants from E Davis, Avalon staff and board members (Russ Monahan, Celeste Hawkins, Daicia Smith, Carole McCabe) Ed and edible Avalon staff worked with the teens in preparing a grill-out buffet using food from the gardens to greet Tour participants at the end of the tour.

[Georgia Street Community Garden](#): Meg Marotte, Mark Covington, Rich Wieske, other youth
SPY and YLP youth visited this urban farm and learned about its diverse products, including a lesson beekeeping.



[The Family Farm](#): Stephanie Phillips

As one of the few but growing group of female farm owners of color in our area, Stephanie gave the teens a new perspective on what it means to earn a living as a farmer while showing them the different work she engages in on the farm.



DAN Tour: [Detroit Agricultural Network](#), [Catherine Ferguson Academy](#)
Teens and adult tenants participated in the 14th annual Tour of urban agriculture sites in Detroit, which has grown to encompass three separate tour routes (plus one by bicycle) which showcase not only successful urban farming ventures in distressed, low-income areas, but reclamation and reimagining of entire neighborhoods through community organizing and food-growing.

Silvio Medoro, [Silvio's Organic Pizza](#)

Silvio not only taught the youth how to make pizza, he also brought pre-made pizzas and had students locate the farms from which their organic ingredients came on a map of Washtenaw County mounted on the wall!





[Tilian Farm Development Center](#): Jeff McCabe and Tilian volunteers
Teens were taught about the purpose of Tilian, an incubator farm where aspiring small farmers are given space to practice their trade for two years with the support of a board of successful area farmers to guide them. Teens spent the afternoon repairing implements and other farm

chores.



Rena Basch, [Locavorious](#)

Rena taught teens how to freeze blueberries, corn, and collards harvested from their gardens for winter use.



[People's Food Co-op](#) Tour: Organized by Caitlin Joseph
Teens led a tour of their gardens at Carrot Way Apartments and described their involvement in the local food community to members of Ann Arbor's People's Food Co-op, who in turn shared their support for the local foodshed and the reasons for creating the co-op.

[Dunning Toyota](#): Beth Bashert, Sales Associate

Dunning Toyota lent edible Avalon a Toyota van for its trip to Georgia Street Gardens, allowing us to transport all youth from both programs.

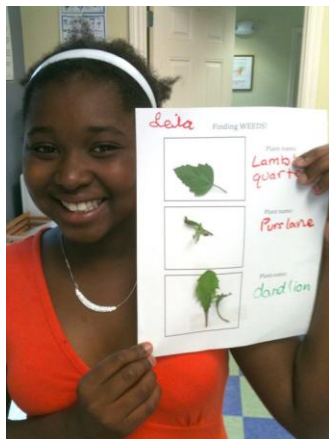
E. RESULTS. What results did you achieve and how were they measured? Sustainable agriculture is farming and ranching that is ecologically sound, profitable, and socially responsible. Which of these aspects of sustainable agriculture did the youth you were teaching learn about? Describe the youth audience you were trying to reach. Include outcomes you achieved and how you measured them through surveys, attendance, or other methods (if appropriate).

Avalon Housing provides supportive, affordable housing in twenty-two rental properties to county residents with extremely low incomes. Many families have experienced homelessness and/or frequent relocation. Many of the children are behind academically, and have not had positive messages about themselves from school or society. These children are at risk of dropping out, both physically and mentally, from school and from lifelong learning, and of completely giving up on hope for a fulfilling future for themselves. For both young and older youth, our program aims to take them out of this limiting mental environment and expose them to new ways of thinking about themselves and the world around them; to people who are self-directed and self-reliant, and who feel a deep sense of responsibility for the Earth; and to the joy and satisfaction that can be found in the natural world and in simple, natural tasks like growing one's own food and caring for one's local environment.



Our **program for K-8 students** achieved the following results:

- Got students outdoors and in the fresh air, active, and accomplishing visible, tangible results they could be proud of
- Introduced them to growing their own food and the importance of organic gardening methods (and the greater knowledge of the natural world it entails)
- Made them aware of their local foodshed and the people who inhabit and work in it
- Took them to see farms where food is grown sustainably and listen to the farmers talk about the importance of their production choices
- Allowed them to see animals being raised humanely
- Broadened their knowledge of and appreciation for diverse vegetables and fruits
- Made them aware of the diversity of animals and insects inhabiting even the urban environment around them, and the complexity of garden ecosystems
- Fostered a wonder at the marvel of the natural world through kinesthetically acting out ecological relationships and forms and expressing this appreciation and newfound understanding through drawings, stories, games, and food
- Fostered a broader respect for the natural world which included respect for each other



These outcomes were measured by the students' own work – their drawings, stories, enthusiastic game playing, affection for the class and for the gardens; the growing respect with which they treated the gardens (including asking other youth not involved in the program to please not step in them or throw fruit). There are dozens of pictures showcasing their activities on the [Facebook](#) page as well as two [videos](#) about the youth program.

The health of the gardens was also a testament to their care and appreciation for the gardening program; also their enthusiasm in trying new vegetables – even “weeds” – and learning about garden insects. Attendance was taken at each class; students were happy coming to the

program and are enthusiastic about returning this coming summer (witness the pictures from this week's [seed sowing](#)). Middle School students are looking ahead to when they are able to be in the Teen program and sell at the Farmers Market.

The **Youth Leadership Program** for teens was more intense than the SPY (K-8) program, involving many more contact hours (due to the High School credits requirement) and having more advanced goals. This was a smaller, yet quite diverse group; in some ways more challenging than the younger students. The outcomes achieved in this program include:

- Real bonding and respect among the teens toward each other and their teachers
- Increased poise and ability to interact with diverse people of all ages through their experiences at the Farmers Market and as Tour leaders



- Respect for farming as a career and for farmers – particularly the small-scale, organic farmers they visited – for the hard work they do and their love of the land and nature
- Fun! Teens had opportunities for fun, especially at the farms, that they would not otherwise have had



- Increased self-respect for their abilities, both physical and mental, and increased willingness to take personal risks, for instance during in-class debating
- Pride in their ability to grow and sell vegetables that were of as good quality as other vendors at the farmers market
- Greater openness toward adults, and greater patience with younger children (in their roles as mentors in the SPY program)

Specific learning outcomes related to sustainable agriculture include:

- A growing awareness that not all food is produced the same way, and that not everyone has the same values in mind when making decisions about how to produce food
- Awareness of the local food movement taking place throughout SE Michigan (and the country) and the issues it is championing:
 - a return to growing one's own food
 - growing food organically, without chemicals that harm the environment and our health and make farming dependent on large, distant corporations
 - the harm that conventional agricultural practices do to the environment through pollution, killing soil life and destroying soil tilth, dependence on fossil fuels for transportation and fertilizer
 - the greater skill and knowledge involved in understanding and working with as opposed to against nature, and the benefits this brings in terms of building soil fertility, confusing or deterring pests without using harsh chemicals
 - increased self-reliance for oneself, one's family, and one's community that comes from growing food oneself and/or buying locally-grown food – in terms of food security, economics, and better health
 - appreciation of a less consumption-oriented lifestyle
 - raising awareness that there are life and work choices available beyond what mainstream culture presents
- Awareness of the connections between their individual choices and their health and the health of the planet
- Knowledge of the vibrant urban agriculture movement taking place all around them in Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, and Detroit





Because of the need to track hours for High School credit and for Michigan Works stipends, and the extensive time spent together by students and instructors, it was very clear in this smaller program whether goals were being achieved and whether participants were enthusiastic and hardworking. Three of the participants attended volunteer work events even after they had fulfilled their ninety hours, and all have signed on to rejoin this summer as participants and program leaders for new teen members. The Youth Leadership Programs's outcomes are excellently showcased in this [video](#) made by Youth Education Coordinator Emily Canosa.



F. DISCUSSION. What did you learn from this project? How has this affected you and the young people you are working with? Were the results what you expected? If not, why? Are there changes you would make if trying this project again or recommending it to others?

Edible Avalon's original program proposal involved one program for all youth (with mentorship roles built in for older youth) and covering 5-7 hours per week. Due to an additional grant that Avalon Housing wrote for a Teen Leadership Program, our program expanded to include separate programming and additional goals for the Teens, especially once we received approval for it to qualify as a High School elective, and the educational team expanded from the Youth Education Coordinator with additional help, to an additional full-time AmeriCorps VISTA intern and a half-time youth/nutrition intern.

From a planning standpoint, an important but unavoidable lesson we learned is how important it is to have full information about what an overall program consists of well in advance for

planning purposes. Until June, we did not know how many weeks the overall summer program (of which the edible Avalon program was a part) would be offered, nor how many days per week. This made lesson planning difficult, and meant that we were still completing lesson planning – especially for the Teen portion - even after the start of the program.

Looking back, it was extremely important that we had experienced teachers to lead and serve as mentors to those with less experience. Envisioning what a lesson seeks to have the learner experience, and the different ways this can be achieved, and all the steps involved from assessing what is known to revisiting each concept as you go forward – all in an age-appropriate way – is complex, and the fact that this was a voluntary program (as opposed to being in school) meant even more skilled is needed to make it meaningful (and thus motivate it) and fun. For the teens, it is also crucial to involve them to the maximum possible extent in decision making and planning the structure and goals of the program, something we plan to implement this year.

Some things turned out differently than we had anticipated. Here is verbatim feedback from one of the Teen program educators, with specific suggestions for how we may want to run things differently in the teen program this year:

Clear expectations: I think it might be a really good idea to let the teens know exactly what we will be doing for the whole summer and how much time it will take up. Present this as a doable challenge- it will be hard but rewarding (you will learn a lot, and also get class credit, and paid for the time you put in.).

Get the teens involved with gardening as soon as possible: If it is possible in the future years, I think it would be helpful to have the teens start gardening as early as possible in the year. Having the teens plant all their own plants would be a good start, but it would also be good if they grew plants from seed inside, built beds, thought about what seeds to grow, etc. I think this would make the teens feel more connected to their garden and be more invested in the process.

Come up with clear lessons plans from the beginning: If possible, it would be good to create the lesson plans or a good portion of the lesson plans before the program even starts. This could help ensure that key concepts (such as sustainability) are brought up throughout the summer.

Promote teen initiated volunteer activities: This might be more difficult, but, depending on the group of teens, I think it could be a good idea to have the teens decide what field trips they go on and where they volunteer.

Possible application?/Learning contract: This is an idea that could be used if it seemed helpful. I think it might be valuable to have the teens “apply” to YLP. By this, I mean having the teens answer a few questions about why they want to do the program, what they expect to gain from it, and what they think they can bring to the table. Even if all applicants are selected, it might make the teens feel more motivated and responsible for their behavior.

In addition, it might be worthwhile to have the teens write their own “learning contracts” for the summer. This could be done on the first day, or shortly thereafter, and would ask the teens to write down what they will be doing this summer and what they hope to gain from the summer. I think if the teens wrote these out themselves, it may also make them feel more motivated and

invested in the program.

It's difficult to know what the long-term effects of the program will be for the youth. Long-term relationships have certainly been forged, especially with the teens. In fact, some of the teens recently represented the program at a major grocery store when it held a fundraiser for edible Avalon. It is clear that this has been a positive and meaningful experience for them, and this has carried over into the school year (one of us continued as tutor with some of the teens). The Avalon staff who work with the teens and know their situations intimately feel that the program was extremely positive. Yet, these teens continue to face immense challenges, especially academically.

None of the teens has suddenly decided s/he wants to be a farmer, or evidenced a change in direction in the goals they had for themselves. This wasn't expected, but there was hope there'd be increased enthusiasm among participants in growing food for themselves, or in the local food movement (however, there is one teen whose feedback for this year was "More farm visits!"). On the other hand, the real purpose was to present these experiences as alternative possibilities, so a mind-broadening effect may still have succeeded. It's also a reminder to us that teens are already who they are and that the ways in which they internalize these experiences may not be something we can foresee and may not occur immediately. The fact that the experience was very positive and continuation is desired is plenty.

Overall, the feeling after running the teen program is both one of satisfaction and hope, but also of realism and renewed determination.

For the younger children, the changes seem to be easier but perhaps less deep. Youth in the SPY program were surprisingly open and eager to learn about plants, gardening, insects, soil, and nature. They embraced the gardens and put real effort into signs requesting that people not step on the beds and "Keep the gardens healthy". They were also the most likely to forget these pleas as they returned to their usual outdoor play.

They were extremely open to all sorts of outdoor activities, but less likely than the older youth to overcome built-in prejudices about bugs and "dirt" – at least initially – through learning new perspectives. There was also a real need for instructors to learn firm management, especially in public places, beyond what might be expected in a typical school fieldtrip. This was due almost entirely to this being a summer, and therefore voluntary, program, and in small part to different expectations and perceptions of behavior between the youth and the instructors/volunteers. It was a good learning experience for all.



The advantage of the K-8 program over the teen program is that, while engagement may not be as deep, there are many years for it to take root and flourish in.

3. OUTREACH

How did you share information from your project with others? Who were you trying to reach? What methods did you use for telling others about: a. Your project, b. Project activities or events,

c. Project results? Be sure to include the names and dates of outreach activities and events and the number of people who attended. Was there media coverage of your project? What plans do you have for future outreach?

Please enclose any press releases, news clippings, flyers, brochures, or publications developed during this project. Also send any photos that might be helpful in telling your story to others. Please be sure to get permission to use the photos if they include other people. For photos with children, you will need a parent's permission. Please fill out and turn in a NCR-SARE Image Consent form along with your photos.



Our Outreach goals were to reach potential volunteers, interns, community members with relevant expertise to share, students just getting into organic farming or local food, potential sponsors, Avalon Housing and edible Avalon supporters, and other similar programs or organizations working in related areas (urban farming, hunger, sustainability, at-risk youth, homelessness, community-building and revitalization, etc.). We also wanted to extensively document our programs through photos, Facebook entries, and video.

Information about our program went out on the [edible Avalon](#) and [youth program](#) webpages and Facebook page, over the edible Avalon email list, the Avalon Housing email list and newsletters, Chris Bedford's Local Food list, the Homegrown/Local Food Summit list, SELMA Café's list, Growing Hope's list, and the Michigan Young Farmer Coalition's list. We flyered extensively at University of Michigan departments, especially the Schools of Natural Resources, Education, Public Health, and Social Work, and listed on VolunteerMatch. The Dietetic Intern program was advised of our new offering so that interested candidates could request a rotation with us. Avalon tenants were told about the program and invited to participate as mentors or to teach a class (which several did).

Our weekly activities were shared on an ongoing basis through our Facebook page, with numerous captioned pictures and entries. We also made three videos last summer showcasing the youth programs ([here](#), [here](#), and [here](#)).

The program also forged bonds with community members and organizations involved in sustainable food production and made them aware of the funding for our programming. Dates we interacted with community organizations are listed under section C.

There were two public events: the annual edible Avalon Garden Tour, in which teens prepared and presented a grill-out buffet for Tour guests and were on hand to talk about the youth programs, and the People Food Co-op's Urban Agriculture Tour, of which edible Avalon's Youth program was a stop, and at which Teens conducted a guided tour of their garden beds and explained what they had accomplished over the summer, after which they presented their final projects. Dates and information for these tours:

Edible Avalon Garden Tour: Wednesday, July 27th, 2011; participants: 22
People's Food Co-op Tour: Sunday, August 27th, 2011; participants: 15

Note: all photos uploaded to edible Avalon's or Avalon Housing's webpages have been cleared using Avalon's Photo Permission form, which must be signed by individuals (if adults) or parents (if under 18).

Attached are two Avalon Housing newsletters and an annual report in which the Youth programs are covered. Also attached is an article from AnnArbor.com by Slow Food Huron Valley director Kim Bayer, "20 Reasons To Feel Hopeful About Michigan and Our Food System in 2012", in which edible Avalon's Youth program is listed as one of the reasons.

4. PROGRAM EVALUATION

This was the third year the North Central Region SARE Program sponsored a Youth Educator Grant program. As a participant, do you have any recommendations for the regional Administrative Council about this program? Is there anything you would like to see changed?

The curricular resources provided to support Youth Educator grant proposals were very helpful and not often seen in other agencies. As our experience drove home, knowing how to plan and adjust activities/lesson plans is as important as actual content knowledge and examples. If there were resources listed that offered advice in these areas it would be especially helpful.