New Farmer Training Workshop Series

Hawaii Island
Program Organizational Process

• A collaborative project with the following agencies and contact persons:
  • Hawaii Community College Office of Continuing Education & Training
    – Leomi L. Bergknut, Chairperson
  • Hawaii Organic Farmers Association
    – Bari Green and Kelly Langes
  • College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources
    – Komohana – Michael DuPonte and Glenn Sako
    – Kealakekua – Virginia Easton-Smith
Monthly Meetings

- Responsibilities with the grant specifications
- Pre-evaluation on the scope of workshops with needs of new farmers and farmers diversifying into new crops
- Scheduling of workshops and topics
- Evaluations and assessment of workshops
- Sustainability
Preparation

- Facilities and materials – logistics
- Meeting with instructors before their workshop to ensure that the topic materials were appropriate for the participants and the time allowance
- Evaluation
Meeting Sites

- Hilo (Main site)
  - Availability of instructors
  - Coordination and time restraints
  - Wider audience with participants
- Kona
- Waimea
Positive Indicators

• Ability to select what workshop they wished to attend was not “binding” or “constraining” as a series.
• Wide variety of topics and instructors who did hands-on demonstrations, field trips and presentations
• Accessibility and no parking problems at locations – easy to find at CTAHR – Komohana and the Hawaii Community College
• Easy registration process with evaluations
• Really like the Manual!
Attendance

• Participants: 191
  • Each participant received the Manual

• Participants who attended:
  o 1 – workshop: 151
  o 2 – workshops: 21
  o 3 – workshops: 4
  o 4 – workshops: 5
  o 5 – workshops: 5
  o 6 – workshops: 1
  o 7 – workshops: 0
  o 8 – workshops: 0
  o 9 – workshops: 4
Evaluation

• What did you like about the workshop?
  - Liked the data presented on what is consumed and grown in Hawaii
  - Ideas for entrepreneurship and niche marketing
  - Good hands-on experiences
  - The links and resources were very helpful!
  - Practical info about types of trees to plant – now I know what to do and where to get information
This was a good presentation that was light and informal
Need more of these practical workshops
I’m going to throw a compost worm party ASAP! Excellent presentation!
This class & the booklet were very relevant. I read the entire book last night
Fantastic!

Letter of appreciation and summary of evaluations were sent by Chairperson Leomi Bergknut to each presenter.
PROGRAM STRENGTHS

• CTAHR Agents were given an opportunity to do presentations with new farmers in a classroom setting versus in the “field” or one-on-one. It was a positive experience for many who had not done this type of presentation in recent years.

• The CTAHR and Hawaii Community College gave participants an opportunity to come into a positive learning environment – many of them had never been to the campus locations.

• Practical information with hands-on demonstrations
• The Team began to notice that participants were networking with each other and attending more of the workshops.
  • Kamehameha Schools Agriculture instructors attended the workshop series and are interested in a program for their students.
  • Networking with Charter Schools has begun

• Informational sheets on organizations in the Agriculture field were seen as a useful tool

• Introduction of computer technology was seen as a positive new experience for those who are out on the land
PROGRAM WEAKNESSES

• Need to assess and provide more workshops in Kona and Waimea plus:
  • More workshops with panels on those in the field who have been successful
  • Value-added products

• Include more general public attendance for awareness of agricultural issues and needs
• Advertisement is costly on the Big Island and more allocation of funding would be necessary. A 2 column by 5-inches advertisement is over $375 and free advertisement is not guaranteed.
  • We were fortunate that Virginia Easton-Smith of CTAHR-Kealakekua, Carol Yurth of Hawaii Community College and Shepherd Bliss of Hawaii Island Journal did include our workshops in their newspaper articles.

• More communication with this project overall with NREM due to the short timeline for implementation of workshops, manual overview, website, etc…
  • Clearer guidelines on the funding allocation with networking agencies
SUSTAINABILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Continue workshops in Hilo, Waimea and Kona on a regular basis and time such as every Wednesday on the first week of the month at 5:30 – 7:30 PM.
   - Have more workshops on Organic Farming

2. Conference with workshop sessions followed by Farm Tours

3. Farm Exhibition

4. Team continues to network to support agricultural training
NEW FARMER WEBSITE

1. The posting of the workshop schedules was a good idea

2. The Manual on the website was convenient

3. The website was an opportunity for those with little computer skills to become more familiar with computer technology and the resources that CTAHR has to offer in the community

Challenge: Forwarding information from workshop series to be posted on the website – need more time and specifications on how this is being channeled.
MANUAL

• OCES – approval for printing is a process that at times is challenging within the University System. We need to be informed about this process.
  • There were questions about the copyright by our media graphics and if we had permission to reproduce
  • Instructors questioned what resources had been used for the manual due to discrepancies with information
  • Our networking agencies also question how the responsibility of the manual was delegated for publication within the grant specifications

• We are not aware as a group when and if a FINAL Manual will be published. A question we were asked by MANY participants. A positive sign that the manual is being read and used by those who attended the workshops.
LENDING LIBRARY

- Participants will receive notification that books are available for them at CTAHR – Komohana and Kealakekua, and at HOFA in Hilo. A wide variety of books were purchased that are in relationship to the workshop series.

- Team members were notified to label these books as being part of the WSARE grant.