

# ““Vacant to Vibrant” Urban Agriculture Project Inspires Youth Entrepreneurs IPM Adoption

Brad Bergefurd, Suzanne Mills-Wasniak, and Tony Nye

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DAYTON  
BEAUTIFUL®

Vacant to Vibrant



Grow  
Green  
Dayton

Urban Agriculture Pilot Project

# Where is Dayton, Ohio



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# Dayton, Ohio Facts 2009

**Dayton is located in Montgomery County**

**Montgomery County is 1/3 rural; 2/3 urban**

**Dayton's population is declining; ~ 140,000**

**Over 15,000 excess housing units**

**Over 6000 vacant lots**

# **“Vacant to Vibrant” Urban Agriculture Pilot Project**

- Result of an internal city discussion on what to do with the vacant lots
- Urban Agriculture was one of the options
- OSU Extension Montgomery County Agriculture / Natural Resources contacted
- OSU Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program asked to become involved

# Getting Started 2009

- July 16th and 17th over 1000 transplants and row crops were planted.
- Crops: tomatoes, peppers, zucchini, eggplant, special zucchini, green beans, cabbage, basil, cucumbers, melons, pumpkins, okra, Swiss chard, beets, romaine lettuce, followed later by leaf lettuce
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# First Site 2009



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# Planting 2009



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# City Planner has been involved



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# 30 Days Post Planting 2009



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# Learning 2009



# Produce 2009



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# The Group 2009



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# Collaborating Partners 2009



**City Officials, Neighborhood Representatives,  
OSU Extension and Sudan/Somali Refugees**

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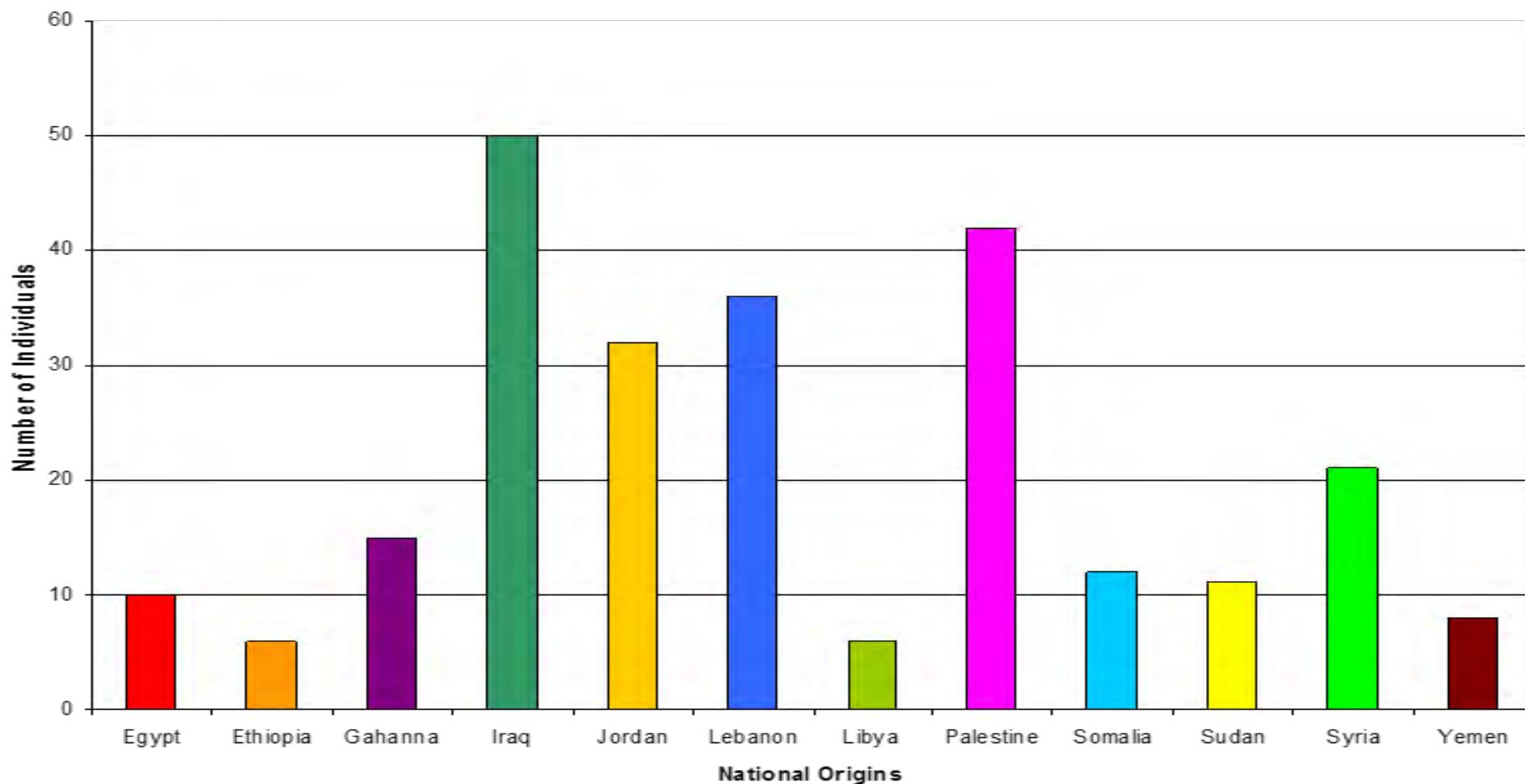
# City Officials 2009



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**National Origins of Non-U.S. Native Participants in "Vacant to Vibrant" Pilot Project**  
(n = 249)



## “Vacant to Vibrant” Dayton, Ohio Urban Agriculture Pilot Project

### PARTNERS

Expanded Food and  
Nutrition Education  
Program  
(EFNEP)

Catholic Social  
Services Miami  
Valley & Islamic  
Federation

**CITY OF  
DAYTON  
AND  
OSUE Ag/NR**

Sudanese & Somali  
Refugees

Wright-Dunbar  
Neighborhood  
Residents

### OBJECTIVES

To utilize vacant urban lots for agricultural production as a means to decrease incidence of “food deserts” in Dayton ethnic neighborhoods

To improve the health and well-being of Dayton urban Middle-Eastern families through access to, preparation and consumption of locally grown produce

### OUTPUTS

#### PROJECT EXPANSION/ OUTREACH

City of Dayton Guidelines for  
Urban Agriculture  
Four Season Garden Club Grant  
Outreach into Middle Eastern  
and Latino Neighborhoods

#### MARKETING

Dayton Public Television  
Dayton Daily News  
Farm World Magazine

#### PRESENTATIONS

State EFNEP Conferences; OSU  
Extension Hunger Class;  
Ag/NR Professional Conferences:  
Cleveland, Tulsa, Toledo; Farm  
Science Review

### OUTCOMES

1. Implementation of first steps to achieve an environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable agricultural response to urban challenges
2. Eighty (80) ethnic families consumed approximately 1000 pounds of locally grown fruits and vegetables to improve their nutritional well-being
3. Transition of one city-owned vacant property to a vibrant, productive and green neighborhood resource.



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# Lessons Learned 2009

- Establishing a market and neighborhood acceptance is critical
- Water is a limiting resource
- Infrastructure must be in place to provide adequate water flow
- Labor force and lot size must match
- Nutrition education is vital

# City Initiatives 2010

- **Lot Links using the Real Estate Acquisition Program with Montgomery County**
- **Urban Agriculture Ordinances**

# Water System 2010

## Old vs New



# Water System 2010



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# 2010 Field Day



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# 2010 Field Day



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# 2010 Field Day



# Mini Tunnel 2010



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# November 15, 2010



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# 2011 High Tunnel



# 2012 Soxx Technology



# 2012 Soxx Technology



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# 2012 Wesley Community Youth Center



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# 2012 Wesley Community Youth Center

## Working and Learning IPM Practices



# 2012 Wesley Center



Priority Board  
Chairwoman,  
Wesley  
Center Project  
funders meet  
with Missouri  
Educators

# 2013 Wesley Center



**City of Dayton  
Director of  
Planning and  
Community  
Development  
visits Wesley  
Center**

# 2013 Wesley Center



Produce sold  
to Second  
Harvest  
Foodbank

## **“Vacant to Vibrant” Urban Agriculture Pilot Project**

“In 2009, “Vacant to Vibrant Urban Agriculture Project” was started as a partnership between the City of Dayton and OSU Extension Montgomery County **to pilot economically sustainable urban agriculture practices.** As the project has evolved other partners have been added. **The goals of the project were to: 1) bring fresh produce to inner-city Dayton families; 2) promote economic self-sufficiency; 3) reuse vacant, abandoned land.**” Aaron Sorrell, City of Dayton Director Planning and Community Development

**In 2013 “Vacant to Vibrant”  
Dayton, Ohio Urban  
Agriculture Pilot Project  
removed the word Pilot  
from it’s name**

# 2014 partnered with Jim Jasinski Ohio IPM Program Coordinator



# New sites for 2015 development identified



# New sites for development



**Thank You  
Questions?**



Brad Bergefurd, OSU South Center  
Suzanne Mills-Wasniak, Montgomery  
County  
Tony Nye, Clinton County



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