

Massachusetts Center for Agriculture

University of Massachusetts Amherst

Sustaining Local Food Systems in a Globalizing Environment: Forces, Responses, Impacts

Issue

The Latino population is now the second largest in the state. Presently, the majority of crops for these ethnic groups are imported from outside the state. We are collaborating with local food system stakeholders to identify high priority needs.

Impact

Results of this work consisted of farmers in Massachusetts selling more than \$2,000,000 worth of ethnic vegetables not previously grown in the state previously. Members of ethnic communities had access to locally-grown vegetables and herbs that had not been available fresh. Over 1,000 farmers in the state, region and country were made aware of the results of this work due to presentations at conferences, fact sheets, and web-based

information. Over 100,000 consumers in the United States were reached through advertisements and a cable show about this work. A web site launched as part of this work, worldcrops.org, averaged over 2,000 hits/month since being launched in 2003. The majority of crops listed on worldcrops.org were evaluated at the UMass Research Farm Information on these crops was disseminated to commercial growers through several twilight meetings held at the UMass Research Farm and through web-based technologies. Among the many crops evaluated were aji dulce (*Capsicum chinense*), poblano peppers (*Capsicum annum*), serrano peppers (*Capsicum annum*), and taioba (*Xanthosoma sagittifolium*). Over 15 nutritionally-balanced, culturally-appropriate recipes were produced with an emphasis on locally-

grown agricultural products. These recipes were made available in several languages including Portuguese and Spanish. Over 3,000 recipes were disseminated to mostly food stamp and WIC recipients during this project.

Primary impact area(s)

- Research
- Education
- Extension

Funding sources

- Hatch

Topics

- Local Food Systems
- Ethnic Groups

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