

FARM TO SCHOOL EVALUATION

INFORMATION SHEET

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Materials to support the Session on Program Evaluation: Planning and Implementing the Evaluation Capacity for a successful Farm to School Program

Southern SARE PDP Project for Building Capacity: Farm to School Extension Training for the Southern Region

Building Capacity: Farm to School is a two year SARE PDP project designed to build the capabilities of Extension, agricultural professionals, and communities in the development of Farm to School initiatives. These initiatives can range from educational components such as school gardens, farm field trips and experiential nutrition education, to connecting farmers with schools as a market opportunity. In this project, Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (ASAP), brings its leadership in Farm to School in the southeast and in the National Farm to School Network (NFTSN) to collaboration with Cooperative Extension in Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina. Its leadership in the Southeast and to the national scene is a key resource for all Cooperative Extension across the South.

Cooperative Extension's work with agricultural producers, youth and community education puts them in the unique position to offer an integrated approach to Farm to School across program areas and become leaders in the movement. The goal of the SARE PDP endeavor is to build a partnership of ASAP with Extension professionals to assist farms and communities with Farm to School initiatives in all the diverse and creative ways that a Farm to School initiative might develop in any location.

Our Evaluation Session has as its objective:

Because of this session; participants will know how to plan and implement an evaluation model so as to be able to report impacts and success stories in their Extension Reporting System or any other system to report inputs, outputs and outcomes including success stories and to collect data about program impacts and to report successes to stakeholders.

Steps to a successful evaluation

Needs assessment

A needs assessment is an essential starting point for any educational program. In order to design trainings that are participatory and that reflect the needs of Extension and their respective communities, project team members, ASAP, the Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group (SSAWG), and the National Farm to School Network (NFTSN) worked together to devise a simple needs assessment tool. This web based needs assessment will inform the conference by presenting a summary of *Farm to School* activities already existing in these states and what training and technical assistance is needed. By these means, the Extension professionals will not only be able to plan and implement effective programs but also to document and report successes through their agency evaluation system [**See Boone in reference list**]

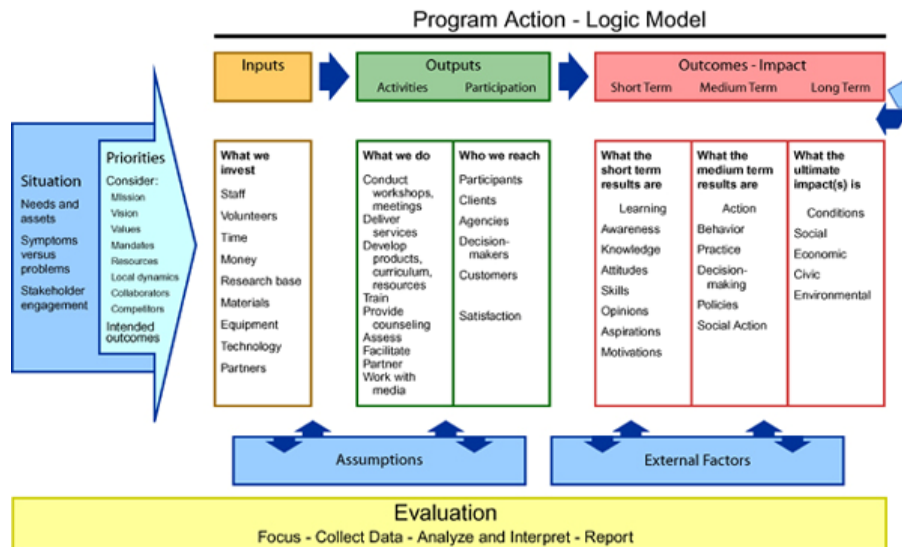
Program selection focus for planning, implementation and evaluation

Below in the table are listed the topics covered in our Farm to School workshop. Though, there are other program activities and planned events which could implement Farm to School programs too. These are called “*programs*” because they are planned educational events which take inputs of time and other resources to develop planned outputs such as activities, curricula, handouts, with expected learning outcomes. All these are part of the Evaluation language tied into educational programs. [See the website reference for Dr Jay Jayratne]

Farm to School Field Trips	
Connecting With Curriculum	
Cross-Program Collaboration	

Farm-to-School Cooking
How School Food Works
Models for Procurement
School Gardens

Understanding and planning the sequence of your program: A Program Logic Model as a program map.



A *program logic model* lays out the map from start to finish for a program. The map follows the steps of a program starting with *inputs*. Those are the resources you bring to achieve the results you want. It next indicates what you are going to do with those resources. These are the *outputs* and materials you develop or bring to the effort. Finally it spells out what are the results you want to have happen because of your work. These are the *outcomes or impacts*. Each is an important part of the process. From an evaluation point of view the prime interest is what it is you want to see as a result or impact of the program. [See Taylor Powell in the reference list]

Planning a successful evaluation: A collaborative approach is a way to collect good data and come up with impacts that are valued by stakeholders

There is a fundamental question that evaluators have to always confront. How will they know that a program has achieved the results desired? The best way to get at this question is to bring together people for whom the results matter and work with them to decide on how to know when and if those results are achieved. Then they can help to collect the data to show that the results do in fact happen. Many times those results are not directly measurable and have to be approximated with indicators of success. **[See power point presentation materials of O'Sullivan and O'Sullivan]**

References;

Boone, Edgar (1985). *Developing Programs in Adult Education*. Waveland Press; Prospect Heights, IL.

Jayratne, K.S.U. North Carolina Cooperative Extension (at NCSU) Extension Evaluation tools http://www.cals.ncsu.edu/agexed/exeval/Home_Page.html.

O'Sullivan R. and O'Sullivan J.M. "Collaborative Evaluation" power point presentation.

Taylor Powell; Ellen. University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension Program Logic Models.

This is the source for the jpg image of the program logic model above:

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/evallogicmodel.html>