

Horticulture CRSP Trellis Fund

Engaging U.S. graduate students in international development

The goal of the Trellis Fund is to link U.S. graduate students to non-governmental organizations and national research institutes in developing countries, and enable these organizations to extend new horticultural ideas to rural populations.

Methodology:

Organizations in Feed the Future focus countries identify a problem facing local farmers and the type of expertise they seek in a U.S. graduate student. The organization submits a proposal and the Trellis Fund matches awarded organizations to an individual graduate student and supports the organization's farmer outreach program.



A volunteer from EcoFinder in Kenya discusses weeds with Michael Wolff, a Ph.D. student in soil science.



Mark Lundy, a Horticulture and Agronomy Ph.D. student, learns about growing tomatoes at a farmer field demonstration plot of the Bvumbwe research institute in Malawi.

Achievements:

- 124 training and extension meetings
- 1,492 female farmers trained
- 1,935 farmer participants
- 10 demonstration plots

For a total of \$35,000, Horticulture CRSP funded 10 organizations and 10 students in 2011.

Funding structure for 2012 projects:

- \$2,000 grants to the developing world organization for conducting extension and educational programs to local farmers and stakeholders. Low overhead costs and close ties to farmers allow for grants of this size to make significant impacts in Feed the Future focus countries.
- In 2012, fellowship packages for graduate students include \$300 plus travel to the target country, where the students build relationships with their counterparts and gain a better understanding of the local situation. Upon return, graduate students continue to engage their partner organization by creating educational materials and supporting their outreach programs via email.



For its Trellis project, the Sustainable Agriculture Development Program tested disease-resistant tomato varieties, led training programs in organic agriculture and connected farmers to markets.



Horticulture CRSP Trellis Fund Projects 2012-2013

14 projects in 7 countries, with 14 students from 4 universities

Uganda

- Promoting organic pest management and control in vegetables
Uganda Environmental Education Foundation (UEEF)
Carrie Teiken, UC Davis
- Promoting orange fleshed sweet potato for improved livelihoods in Hoima district
Eco-Agric Uganda
A.J. Campbell, UC Davis
- Adoption of cowpea as a horticultural crop
National Semi Arid Resources Research Institute / National Agriculture Research Organisation (NaSARRI/NARO)
Graham Savio, UC Davis
- Promoting organic mango and orange fruit farming
Teso Women Development Enterprise
Brian Flanagan, Cornell University
- Value addition and reduction of postharvest losses
Uganda Network for Community Empowerment
Ephrem Rukundo, UC Davis
- Developing tools for intra-household resource allocation in vegetable growing households
Rural Agency for Sustainable Development (RASD)
Sarah Sahlaney, UC Davis

Rwanda

- Mushroom farming initiative for better livelihood of widow farmers
Sustaining Rwanda Youth Organization
Bryan Sobel, Cornell University
- Improving banana maintenance, soil management and intercropping education among female smallholder farmers
Gardens for Health International
Gabriel Sachter-Smith, University of Hawai'i at Manoa

Kenya

- Strengthening Irish Potato production through collaborative exchange research
Eldoret Region Company-Christian Community Services
Bob Johnson, UC Davis

Tanzania

- Improvement of indigenous African leafy vegetables (ALV) for food security in urban farmers
Sapporo Mobi-Vet
Whitney Brim-DeForest, UC Davis

Nepal

- Soil fertility improvement and increasing yield of organically grown tomatoes
Sustainable Agriculture Development Program
Arun Jani, North Carolina State University
- Improvement on vegetable cultivation practices through integrated pest management and farmers field school
Ecological Services Centre (ECOSCENTRE)
Rachel Suits, North Carolina State University

Honduras

- Promesa Patuca
PROMESA
Amanda McWhirt, North Carolina State University

Nicaragua

- Capacity building with women farmers in organic horticulture and family nutrition
Caritas Parroquial Esquipulas
Angel Cruz, North Carolina State University