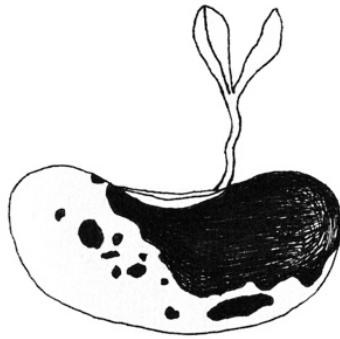


Brickyard Educational Farm Operating Plan



Revision 8, February 20, 2013

Sophia Maravell, Founder of Brickyard Educational Farm

Executive Summary

Brickyard Educational Farm operates on 20-acres of publically owned Montgomery County school board land. It is a project of the 501(c)3 nonprofit organization called the Chesapeake Institute for Local and Sustainable Food and Agriculture (CILSFA). Brickyard Educational Farm's philosophy is that hands-on, environmental and agricultural education experiences are essential components of a well-rounded education for every child and adult to lead healthier lives while improving the environment at the same time.

Through four core programs, Brickyard Educational Farm strives to bolster national food security through its Seed Saving Program, provide agricultural education through its existing Farm to School Program, grow the next generation of sustainable farmers through its Farm Incubator Program, and provide local organic food for public school cafeterias through its Farm to Cafeteria Program.

The Seed Saving program would be a continuation and tribute to the agricultural history on a smaller portion of this acreage. By teaching the skills set of saving certified organic, open pollinated, Genetically Modified Organism (GMO)-free seeds, BEF will be contributing to a global effort to preserve our natural genetic biodiversity through an apprenticeship program aimed at new and beginning farmers.

Brickyard Educational Farm plans to expand the current Farm to School field trip program to three acres in order to help fulfill the Montgomery County Public School (MCPS) system's Environmental Standards and the Jane Lawton Farm to School Act.

The proposed Farm Incubator Program, similar to a business incubator program, is be designed to support new and beginning farmers to start up their own successful farming operation by helping to alleviate some of the major obstacles beginning farmers face by sub-leasing them a plot of land at an affordable rate, and giving them access to shared resources.

The proposed BEF Farm to Cafeteria Program is an effort to grow food for MCPS schools that is local, organic and affordable. However, the extent of this fourth and final program depends on the ability of MCPS to receive local farm produce at competitive prices. The beginning farmers in the farm incubator program will be required to sell a percentage of their produce back to the school system.

Studies have shown the benefits of farm-based education include improved focus and success in other academic subjects, collaboration skills, and self-empowerment¹. Brickyard Educational farm will be a multi-functional agricultural education center that bolsters our nation's seed stock and food security, serves school children through school lunches and farm-based education opportunities, and grows the next generation of sustainable farmers. This vision would help build Montgomery County's local food and business economy while simultaneously improving the health and academic achievement of students.

Mission Statement:

Brickyard Educational Farm's mission is to provide hands-on learning experiences that connect people and students with the land, food, water and biodiversity that sustain them.

Vision Statement:

Through our work, we will grow local fresh food for school cafeterias, train the next generation of beginning farmers, pass on the valuable knowledge and skills of seed saving and provide farm-based education for our youth. This economically self sustaining, farm-based environmental educational center would be an integrated model for every school system in the nation to help build a vibrant food economy, healthy communities, and teach our youth about organic food and farming.

Year-to-Year Timeline and Implementation Plan: (see chart below)

¹ "The Benefits of Farm to School." *National Farm to School Network*. n. page. Print. <http://www.farmtoschool.org/files/publications_514.pdf>.

Year One

- Submit and negotiate a 3-year BEF lease proposal to the MCPS board of Education (with option for renewal upon evaluation).

- Fundraise to cover start up costs (\$150,000-\$350,000)

- Possibility of carrying out limited BEF Programming*:

- Farm to School (1 acre)
- Seed Saving (7 acres)
- Farm Incubator programming (3 acres)

-Remaining 9 acres will lay fallow in a regenerative cover crop.

Hire*:

- Hourly accountant and PT administrator
- FTE Project Director
- Farm to School Coordinator
- PTE incubator coordinator

*Numbers dependent on lease aquisition time, and amount of funds raised.



Year Two

- Continue fundraising efforts to sustain and expand programming. (Apply for salary funding from school board).

- Expand BEF programming:

- Farm to School (2 acres, and serve 2,500 students)
- Seed Saving Apprenticeship (7 acres)
- Farm Incubator program (6 acres with three incubator farmers)

-15,000 pounds of food sold School Cafeterias

Hire Additional:

- PT Farm to Cafeteria Coordinator part time
- Employ the Farm Incubator Coordinator FT.
- PT fundraiser

Year Three

- Apply for renewal lease

- Fundraise to expand programming:

- Farm to School (3-acres serving 3,500 students)
- Seed Saving with possibility of taking on a second apprentice (7-acres)
- Farm Incubator program (10 acres)

-35,000 pounds of food sold to School Cafeterias

Hire Additional:

- Full time partial funding from School Board.

Background

Brickyard Educational Farm, launched in January 2012, is a pilot project of the Chesapeake Institute for Local and Sustainable Food and Agriculture (CILSFA). CILSFA is a nonprofit organization that seeks to promote environmental and agricultural educational projects that improve the health of Chesapeake Bay watersheds.

Since January of 2012, more than 600 children have visited the garden through on-farm field trips and more than 1,000 have received in-class presentations and lessons in sustainable farming, food systems, food economy, and seed saving. A wide range of groups including public and private schools and camps, homeschooling collectives, civic and religious organizations, and youth groups has tested brickyard Educational Farm's curriculum, reviewed by a Teacher Advisory Committee.

Previously, the farmland had been an organic seed saving operation for 32 years. To tie in our educational programming to this larger working farm's legacy, we have incorporated seed saving and food security as a key component into our curriculum.

Fueled by the growing movement of youth interested in sustainable farming as a career and the reality that the average age of farmers in the United States today is 57, farm incubator programs are critical to the future of sustainable agriculture. To follow in the example of this national trend, and help address the need for promoting more new, small, sustainable farms of the future, Montgomery Countryside Alliance has been working with County Executive Isiah Leggett to launch the New Farmer Incubator Pilot Program in Montgomery County. Brickyard Educational Farm would dovetail nicely with this exemplary program by providing ten acres as a host site to lease to beginning farmers close to a major urban center.

The produce from the proposed farm incubator program at Brickyard Educational Farm would be sold to school cafeterias. With record high rates of childhood obesity and diabetes, there has been a national push for these kinds of farm-to-cafeteria programs in order to supply our children with fresh healthy food.

Currently, Brickyard Educational Farm has already realized several components of its vision, and plans to achieve the rest in the next two to three years

Projects/services: (Core programs are denoted with a *)

Farm to school*

Objective: Educate children about food systems, the origins of their food and how it is grown.

According to the Outdoor Education Coordinator Currently, the demand for farm-to-school field trips for children and youth in Montgomery County is high and growing rapidly. Brickyard Educational Farm would be the second educational farm in Montgomery County, and would

help to fulfill a need for farm-based, outdoor and environmental education. The unique advantages of Brickyard Educational Farm include its geographic location, size, access to existing amenities and infrastructure, rich fertile organic soil, and the fact that it is located on public school board land. There are 67 Montgomery County public schools, and three special schools within a ten-mile radius of the suburban site. Located on the urban fringe of our nation's capital, Brickyard Educational Farm would help fulfill the need for outdoor, environmental and farm-based educational as demonstrated by the newly mandated Maryland Environmental Literacy Standards brought about by the No Child Left Inside initiative, as well as the Jane Lawton Farm-to-School Act. At a time when one in three children in the United States are obese, along with the rise of type two diabetes, the need for connecting the next generation with sustainable, healthy food is more urgent than ever before.

Program Description: Brickyard Educational Farm (BEF) hopes to partner with the Maryland Farm to School program by serving public and private Maryland Schools. Grade levels to be served range from K-8, depending on the local schools' needs. Having identified a need for environmental and outdoor education in all grades besides 6th grade in Montgomery County Public Schools, BEF's curriculum will be developed to fill that gap. Curriculum will be based on the Maryland Academic Standards, as well as the Maryland State Environmental Literacy standards.

Visiting students will get a short introductory tour of the working farm and discuss topics such as the local food systems, organic and sustainable farming practices, the environmental impacts of farming, seed saving, and food security. They will then break into smaller groups and rotate through core stations (for 15-20 minutes each), which include a hands-on daily work station, a science station, and an animal station. Through the daily work station, every child that visits Brickyard Educational Farm will have the opportunity to plant, weed, mulch, or harvest at least one crop. The science station would include topics such as composting, the water and energy cycles, and plant and bug identification. The animal station will be a visit to the chicken coop or goat pen where students will learn about the roles of animals on the farm. Supplemental interdisciplinary station options cover topics in conservation and the environment, language arts, math, art, and cooking.

Goals: The Farm Field trip season would run from March to November, annually serving a maximum of 6,000 kids in grades K-8.

Seed Saving*

Objective: To preserve the genetic biodiversity of corn and soybean heirloom varieties thereby protecting our national food security, and ensuring food sustainability.

Goal: Preserving genetic biodiversity of corn and soy while simultaneously passing on the skills of seed saving for future generations.

Description: Continue saving heirloom, organic, non-Genetically Modified seeds by employing a

seed saving expert of corn and soy. This would bolster our national food security by preserving the genetic seed diversity in our national gene pool. Seed saving is a core component of our farm to school program. The selected seed saving expert must also be willing to take on and train apprentices with the skills and knowledge of seed breeding and seed saving.

Farmer Incubator*

Objective: Mentor the next generation of farmers to run their own operation. Cultivate and distribute organic produce to school cafeterias.

Goals: Provide three experienced, landless farmers with ten acres of land to manage and grow food for area school cafeterias.

Description: Brickyard Educational Farm hopes to partner with a local nonprofit in a united, countywide initiative to help beginning farmers launch their own operations. Brickyard Educational Farm will appropriate nine acres for young farmers to grow organic food that would then be distributed to school cafeterias. Each farmer will be responsible for the cultivation of three acres and we estimate that over 95,000 pounds of fresh organic produce could be grown for Montgomery County Schools off of the combined nine acres. Meanwhile, visiting students, apprentices, and interns will have the opportunity to observe and assist with a production-oriented operation. The farm incubator recipients would have access to affordable land, mentors, shared equipment, a supportive community, workshops and a built-in market.

Farm incubator applicants have the option to apply for $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$, 1, 2 and 3 acre plots. A completed business plan, and resume must be submitted in order for applications to be reviewed with a crop plan geared toward supplying school cafeterias. The ideal applicant would have at least three years of growing experience, and a commitment to improving the quality of food at local schools.

Shared equipment will be rented out hourly, as determined by the communal sign up calendar on a first come first serve basis. An extensive complimentary tractor safety course and test is mandatory prior to operating equipment. Additionally, farm incubatees will sign a waiver absolving BEF from all legal liabilities.

Classes, resources and workshops BEF will provide to farmer incubators, and farmer incubator applicants include business planning, tractor safety, tractor maintenance and basic repairs taught by the farm manager, and growing and marketing for schools. The farm manager will conduct a weekly field walk and give feedback, and advice to each plot.

Land Link

Objective: To help beginning farmers find affordable land to start their own farming operations.

Goal: Provide a land link for all willing graduates of the Incubator Program. Permanently place three farmers every three years.

Description: When graduates complete the multiple-year farm incubator program, Brickyard Educational Farm, in partnership with local land link agencies, will place them with retiring farmers on existing farmland. With the average age of farmer being 57, and land access as the number one obstacle to beginning farmers, land link organizations offer an obvious solution to real and urgent problems.

Farm to Cafeteria*

Objective: To improve the health of Montgomery County Children by adding local organic produce into school lunch menus.

Goals: This program will produce over 95,000 pounds of local organic produce for Montgomery County Schools annually.

The lessons about health and nutrition that are taught on the farm will come full circle when students can consume the food that they are learning about on a daily basis. Therefore, Brickyard Educational Farm will hire a Farm to Cafeteria Coordinator to work with willing public schools and help them re-open their kitchens for the preparation and cooking of fresh produce. Produce that is grown in the Incubator program will be sold to participating school cafeterias.

Gleaning

Objective: Provide local organic produce to food insecure populations via donations and reduced price marketing.

Goals: Provide 5,000 pounds of seconds produce annually to organizations and institutions in need.

Description: Brickyard Educational Farm will fulfill this objective, and help combat the on-farm food waste dilemma in this country by gleaning and selling to seconds markets. Brickyard Educational Farm hopes to work with local agencies such as the Food Security Network, Soup Kitchens and public school cafeterias to make food accessible to underserved communities throughout Maryland. We will achieve this by mandating our farmers to harvest into two separate bins, one for firsts, and one for seconds to donate or sell at reduced rates to food inaccessible populations. Gleaning is the process of picking what is left over from the main harvest. Seconds are vegetables that are aesthetically inferior to firsts, but are just as nutritious and flavorful.

Market Demands

While MCPS has one of the most outstanding in a presentation to environmental education providers, the current MCPS Outdoor Environmental Education Programs (OEEP) supervisor said the only grade level with systemic environmental education is Grade 6. There is a

weeklong, outdoor educational field trip in which all Montgomery County public school 6th graders participate that fulfill the Governor's partnership, which encourages an outdoor experience every year for every student. Brickyard Educational Farm will help fill the remaining gaps in outdoor education by continuing to develop curricula aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards for the elementary school grade levels.

According to the Department of Agriculture, recent research has established that "kids are more likely to eat fruits and vegetables, especially unfamiliar items, if they participate in fun educational activities featuring these foods." This understanding is linked with a rise in the number of farm to school programs, and educational farms across the country.

Competitive Analysis

There are about a dozen other educational farms in the Maryland, Virginia, and DC region alone, while there is only one other in Montgomery County. Red Wiggler, founded in 1996 and located in Germantown, MD is now formalizing their education curricula for school students. There are not, however, any educational farms besides BEF that teach about the skills and knowledge of seed saving. Nor are there any other local farms with programs specifically designed to grow food for public school cafeterias. Because of the subsidized land lease rates, farmer incubators will be able to afford selling a percentage of their crops at a wholesale value, competitive with the school board budget.

Additionally, the Brickyard Road location is ideal for hosting new and beginning farmers, potentially through the existing Montgomery County New Farmer Incubator Pilot Program. This Montgomery County Incubator Pilot Program was launched in the early fall of 2012 by the Honorable County Executive Isiah Leggett in partnership with Montgomery Countryside Alliance (MCA), and other Montgomery County nonprofits. According to Caroline Taylor, the MCA Executive Director, there is currently only enough land base to match 19% of applicants (6 positions available for 31 applicants). This signals a growing demand great demand for such programs, and the need for additional land dedicated to such programs. Brickyard Educational Farm has the ability to expand the current Montgomery County Farm Incubator Pilot by 50% by placing three farm incubators on the site. The geographic location of the Brickyard Rd site would allow urban dwellers to apply for the BEF Incubator Pilot Program as it would be an easy commute from MD, DC and VA urban centers.

Marketing and Outreach:

Outreach strategy

Brickyard Educational Farm will use the internet as one of its major outreach tools, as well as targeted outreach to schools, camps and civic organizations. Press releases are sent out to notify the public through other forms of media of upcoming events or big news on the farm. Through the BEF website, project updates, program and position advertisements, and upcoming events can be made available to the public. BEF also utilizes social media through

Facebook and Twitter to engage the public. Lastly, BEF manages a Tumblr blog to for more detailed farm updates.

Farm Incubator:

BEF will hire a Farm to Cafeteria Coordinator to aid with the delivery and sale of farm produce. To encourage applicants for the Farmer Incubator program BEF will post available positions online through goodfoodjobs, comfoodjobs, idealist, ATTRA in addition to national farm incubator list serves.

Farm to School:

The goal is to build up repeating groups by developing long-term relationships with schools. BEF will reach out to enthusiastic teachers, public and private schools, camps, homeschooling collectives, civic organizations, universities and youth groups by cold calling, word of mouth, networking, going to conferences, advertising online on Facebook, websites, twitter and food and farming related pages.

Seed Saving:

Seed Saving Apprentices and mentors will be reached to through connections at farming conferences such as Future Harvest CASA, The Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Food and Agriculture, the Farm Bureau, and the Maryland Organic Food and Farming Association. Online media sites such as listed in the Farm Incubator section will also be explored to target Seed Saving Apprentice Applicants.

Farm to Cafeteria:

Brickyard Educational Farm will foster a working and mutually beneficial relationship with the food services department of Montgomery County Public Schools, Superintendent Joshua Starr and the Montgomery County School board in order to serve more local food in school cafeterias.

Sales Procedures and Profit Destinations

Farm to School:

Teachers or prospective program participants fill out our online form to request a farm field trip or visit. Confirmation occurs over the phone with Education Coordinator. Payment is received at time of service. BEF has cancellation fee of \$50 if less than 1 weeks' notice; rain dates are provided at the time of confirmation. Scholarships applications are available upon request. Eligibility for scholarships for school groups is determined by the percentage of students who are in the Free & Reduced Lunch Program.

With \$3 per student and a projected and having the potential to serve up to 4,000 students annually, income from programming will be reinvested into the farm to school program to help cover salaries.

Farm Incubator:

The farm incubatees will sign a sub-lease contract with BEF, and sell directly to school cafeterias at fixed wholesale prices. A hired farm to cafeteria liaison will aid with the marketing and transporting of produce to local schools. The farm incubators will receive 100% of the profits from the schools. Any leftover produce the schools cannot take can be marketed as the farm incubator sees fit. After initial harvest, non-profit organization volunteers may glean leftover produce from fields for food banks and food shelters at no cost.

The farmer incubators will have a built in market for their products through the Montgomery County Public School cafeterias and those profits will go towards their personal salaries and farm expenses.

Seed Saving:

Seeds will be saved for the use of Brickyard Educational Farm, and for next year's planting. Any excess seeds can be sold to seed banks, or seed companies, with profits being reinvested in BEF.

Farm to Cafeteria:

The Farm to Cafeteria Coordinator will be the liaison and marketer between the school system and the farm incubators to help sell all the produce. They will also be responsible for delivering produce to schools. Left over produce in fields may be gleaned by volunteers from partnering nonprofits at no cost. All revenue from produce will return to the farm incubator sub-leaser.

Structure of Operations

Brickyard Educational Farm is a project of CILSFA, a non-profit that is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors and Executive Director. Other governing committees include the Teacher Advisory Committee, which is made up of current and retired teachers who review and advise the Farm to School curriculum.

Brickyard Educational Farm Organizational Structure:

Because Brickyard Educational Farm is a project of CILSFA, its Board of Directors will hire Brickyard Educational Farm's Project Director, and will help make future hiring decisions. Currently there is one full time education director, and four part time interns working for BEF. Future hires will include program managers for the Farm to School, Farm to Cafeteria and Farm Incubator programs in addition to a full time administrative specialist, accountant, and potentially a fundraiser.

Human Resources Plan

Philosophy:

At Brickyard Educational Farm, we believe that professional growth is essential to the key

mission of our organization. Both productivity and creativity are valued and fostered by maintaining a collaborative working environment. Employees will be able to use Google Apps as a free, online productivity tool, which allows them to easily interface and collaborate using several different features simultaneously, including email, calendars, task lists, essential documents and spreadsheets, chat and our website.

Included in the BEF budget are opportunities for salaried employees for professional development workshops, seminars and conferences. Additionally, we plan to hold our own professional development trainings for farm-based and environmental education on site.

Brickyard Educational Farm Human Resources Commitments:

-To promote operational efficiency, BEF will hold end of the week staff meetings to reflect on the week as a group, as well as to note achievements and areas to improve upon.

-To maintain positive interpersonal communications. BEF will hold an annual mandatory nonviolent communication (NVC) training workshop for all employees. This training is included in the budget of BEF.

-Bi-weekly NVC check-ins will allow a space to work through interpersonal communications issues, translating into a more productive, efficient and cohesive working team.

Recruitment and Hiring Procedures:

Brickyard Educational Farm will advertise job listings online through its website, other media sites, environmental and food job sites such as idealist.org, comfoodjobs, realfoodjobs, friend organization list serves, Twitter, Facebook and blog posts.

CILSFA board of directors will read all resumes and choose the top six candidates to interview for the Program Director position. The decision on who to hire will be reached by majority vote. All other positions will be hired by the Program Director with advice from the board.

Compensation:

The Administrative Specialist will be responsible for bi-weekly payroll and monthly benefit compensation checks for full-time, salaried employees via an online payroll system. The Brickyard Educational Farm payroll and benefit package will follow applicable state and federal laws, and equal opportunity employment statement.

Brickyard Educational Farm does not discriminate based on age, gender, sex, race, ethnicity or physical capabilities.

Health Benefits:

By the second year of employments BEF plans to offer 50% of full time salaried staff health

insurance if the employee buys into the BEF groups insurance plan. The percentage of the premium offered to third year employees will depend up the total cost of the health insurance as well as the success of programming and fundraising efforts.

If BEF fundraises beyond its second and third year goals, extra funds will be allocated towards health insurance benefits and employee bonuses

Leave time:

Full-time salaried employees will receive 4 weeks of paid vacation time from Mid December-Mid January, with two additional weeks of flexible leave time. Employees will have the option when to use that flexible leave time as sick or vacation leave. Brickyard Educational Farm will not compensate employees for unused sick, vacation, or leave time. Brickyard Educational Farm will uphold the Federal Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Under this act, employees will be allowed up to 12 weeks unpaid leave time in case of personal emergency, or accident to one's spouse, parent or child. Employees will not be asked to work during major holidays.

Job Descriptions

Interns- *for farm to school and seed saving programs:*

In the Farm to School Program there will be four part time farm based educator, and four part time education garden maintenance internship opportunities available. Therefore, interested interns will apply to which track they choose, while also have the option of applying as a full time intern helping with the growing of the garden as well as with the educational programming.

Interns will be asked to work inside one day a month to help out with administrative work to help cover admin costs, as well as to understand how non-profits are managed, organized, and structured.

Interns will have help write and sign an individualized contract with their own personal and educational goals they would like to achieve, as well as an acknowledgement that they are not getting paid. Interns may apply through an educational institution to get academic credit toward a degree.

Accountant:

BEF will hire a highly skilled accountant, and pay hourly to do 5-10 hours of work each month. The accountant will work closely with the part time administrator in order for the paperwork, books, taxes, files, and payroll to be carried out for the business.

Administrative Specialist:

The administrator, under the direction of the accountant, will be responsible for bi-weekly payroll and monthly benefit compensation checks for full-time, salaried employees via an online payroll system. The administrator will file and carry out all work the accountant sets aside. The administrator will help oversee, and work directly with interns one day out of the month.

Board of Directors:

Because Brickyard Educational Farm is a project of the nonprofit Chesapeake Institute for Local and Sustainable Food and Agriculture, BEF is operating under CILSFA's volunteer board of directors.

The role of the board of directors is to oversee and hire the executive director of the CILSFA, as well as provide support, networking, fundraising, expertise and advice for the improvement of CILSFA and BEF. Board members will attend twice a year meetings to update, reflect and improve on the past season.

Project Director:

The project director of BEF will oversee all four programs that are occurring simultaneously on the 20-acre tract. The main objective/purpose of the director is to make sure all four programs managed under the BEF umbrella work together as a supportive, cohesive and symbiotic unit. Facilitating the sharing of employees, interns, resources, equipment, tools, funding and land between the programs will be another primary objective of the project director.

Additionally, the project director's role will be as a liaison between the staff the board of directors as well as the facilitator of weekly program head staff meetings.

Responsibilities also include an annual fundraising pitch, as well as a release of a monthly newsletter/e-mail update to supporters and present and past participants,

Decisions such as hiring, salaries increases, and other growth area decisions will be made not solely by the director, but also with the board of directors and current staff employees. The director, however, does work closely with the accountant and fundraising team effort to ensure a balanced and economically smart and sustainable organization.

Customer Service Strategy and Plan:

BEF will make the satisfaction of program participants and consumers a priority. Feedback forms will be distributed after programs, which will allow an opportunity for anonymous complaints. All complaints are directed to BEF's Project Director who will evaluate their merit

and take corrective action. In order to prevent dissatisfaction, BEF will provide rain dates for all outdoor programs and make sure that our cancellation policy is very clear when signing up for events.

Evaluation and Assessment

Monitoring and evaluation strategy

BEF seeks to continuously improve its operations and programs through feedback from employees, partners, program participants, teachers, and field trip attendees and school cafeteria customers. Evaluation and feedback forms are given out after programs and returned by mail. We use these forms to gauge the quality and effectiveness of our programs. We also ask that interns, apprentices, and employees leaving BEF fill out an evaluation and take part in an exit interview. We have monthly meetings for farm educators to reflect and discuss successes and failures in the program. An annual performance review is produced and discussed that includes professional development goals. Finally, an annual report is conducted at the end of each year to evaluate project goals set at the beginning of the year.

Conclusion

Brickyard Educational Farm will be addressing some of the most pressing issues of our time. Childhood obesity has tripled in the last generation, now affecting 17% of all children and adolescents in the United States². Half of our nation's farmers will be retiring in the next decade. Seeds are vital to the growth of all crops and to national food security, yet the art of saving them is being lost. The time for sustainable farmer training programs is now with the average age of farmers being 57, and organic agriculture being the only growing sector of agriculture in the United States today. Newly mandated Environmental Literacy standards and the Every Student Every Year (ESEY) goal demonstrate that Maryland recognizes that fostering a sense of connection to the land improves children's environmental ethic. We will improve children's eating ethic and their academic achievement. This agro-educational center would be a model for outdoor, environmental and agricultural education as there are no other programs in the United States that synthesize food production, food economy, food security, and food education. Brickyard Educational Farm realizes that it takes complex and integrated solutions to address complex, real life issues such as these.

*Finances section and budget spreadsheets coming soon!

² <http://www.letsmove.gov/learn-facts/epidemic-childhood-obesity>. *America's Move to Raise a Healthier Generation of Kids*.