

COMMUNITY CROPS

Community CROPS (Combining Resources, Opportunities, and People for Sustainability) helps families grow food for themselves and the community. According to website information, Community CROPS was started with one community garden in 2003, and has grown into an organization with 14 community garden sites, a training farm, a successful Community Supported Agriculture program, its own Community CROPS Farmers' Market, a regular stand at the Old Cheney Road Farmers' Market, and more.



Community CROPS has received several modest Agricultural Innovation and Value – Added Agriculture grants to assist with their equipment needs, educational efforts, a farm incubator, and market development . In 2006 , more than 100 people participated in a CROPS program to learn to grow their own food and/or grow produce for local markets. More than 150 people participated in the same program in 2007.

In 2008, the subscription vegetable box program doubled its 2007 receipts allowing many moderate- and low-income families to earn additional income. In response to the requests for ethnic crops, the program expanded to include training on production of poultry and unique crops. These new crops are adding to the interest at farmers ' markets.

A current grant emphasizes education with participants working with a farm manager on cost/benefit analysis, seed starting, and other management skills. Eight week training opportunities included sessions on cash flow, marketing, business planning, and soil structure. A workshop on the basics of selling at a farmers ' market was open to the public and well-attended prompting plans for future educational opportunities.

Visit www.communitycrops.org to learn more about their program or contact the Nebraska Rural Development Commission, Linda.Fettig@nebraska.gov 308-380-4966

