THE carrot PROJECT

Measuring Profitability & Success

SARE PROJECT 11-310

Dorothy Suput, The Carrot Project (Boston, MA)

Increased confidence in financial management skills is critical to farmers' success

Overview

The Carrot Project, and its partners, worked for 2 years with 23 farmers to provide business and financial management technical assistance and/or financing.

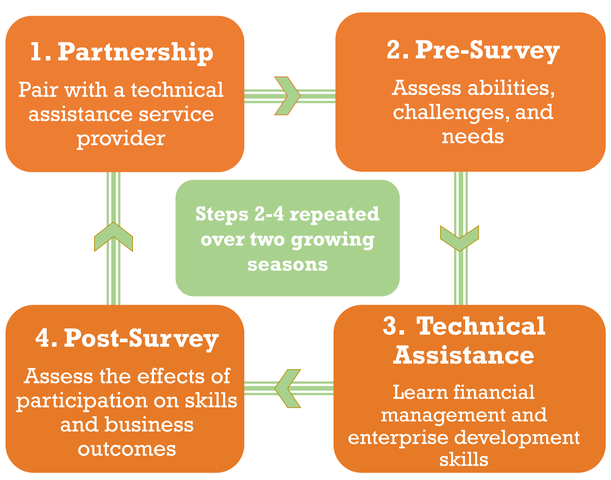
We focused on enterprise development to improve net farm income and help farmers reach their business goals.

Barriers to Success

Many beginning farmers have a limited understanding of how record keeping, financial management, and the role of financing contribute to their long-term economic viability.

This limits their abilities to face business challenges and take advantage of opportunities that allow them to grow and thrive.

Method (2012-2015)



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Farmers who worked with business advisors for two years gained:

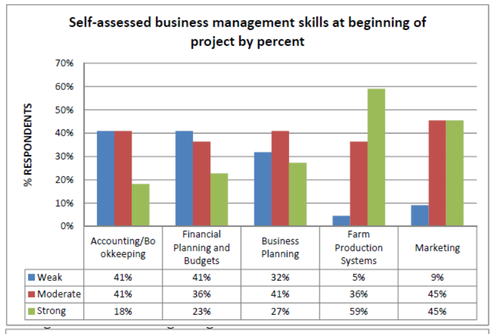
Photos Two Farmers Farm, Kelsey Harrington
Bella Farm (left), Rachel Schattman
Villageside Farm (below), Lily Piel

INCREASED SKILLS and CONFIDENCE:

- Gaining a dynamic understanding of their own financial position
- Ability to implement planning and management tools

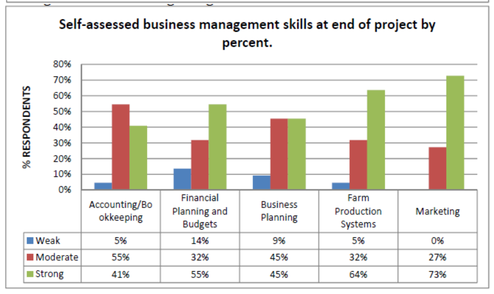
How would you describe your skills as a business manager in the following categories?

PRE



	Accounting/Bookkeeping	Financial Planning and Budgets	Business Planning	Farm Production Systems	Marketing
Weak	41%	41%	32%	5%	9%
Moderate	41%	36%	41%	36%	45%
Strong	18%	23%	27%	59%	45%

POST

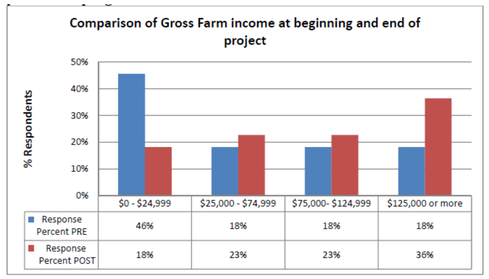


	Accounting/Bookkeeping	Financial Planning and Budgets	Business Planning	Farm Production Systems	Marketing
Weak	5%	14%	9%	5%	0%
Moderate	55%	32%	45%	32%	27%
Strong	41%	55%	45%	64%	73%

IMPROVED OUTCOMES:

- Increased net income
- Ready to use financing
- Increased awareness of the usefulness of business advising and consulting

Comparison of gross farm income at beginning and end of project



	$0 - $24,999	$25,000 - $74,999	$75,000- $124,999	$125,000 or more
Response Percent PRE	46%	18%	18%	18%
Response Percent POST	18%	23%	23%	36%

52% average increase in net income across all farms

- Average: $7,056

142% average increase in net farm income for 55% of participants

- Average: $21,754

39% of participants received a loan

- Average: $28,000 per farm.

Full Report and Other Resources

- https://projects.sare.org/sare_project/one15-248
- http://thecarrotproject.org/programs/reports

Collaborators

Julia Shanks Food Consulting

Bella Farm

North 30 Company

THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT EXTENSION

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