

USDA -CSREES Annual Report FY October 1, 1999 - September 30, 2000

Overview

The Southern University Cooperative Extension Program's (SUCEP) goal is that diverse audiences, those who have limited social and economic resources, to improve their access to positive opportunities through outreach education. The objective is to help small-scale farmers and ranchers develop and/or maintain viable farming operations that are in harmony with the environment, help communities build capacity to enhance the growth and development of business and industrial sectors, and improve the quality of life of families and youth throughout the state. Southern University accomplishes its goals by conducting outreach and educational programs that positively impact the targeted clientele.

Noted Accomplishments for SUCEP include:

- Through a collaborative effort with Heifer Project International, five small livestock associations were developed and 12 were enhanced by adopting management skills to better serve their membership. Two of the existing associations obtained a \$6,000 grant through these efforts.
- As a result of outreach efforts in nutrition, 300 of the 1,200 participants discovered that they were eligible for food stamp benefits.
- Twenty- three different entities participated in the Health Consortium, hosted by SUCEP to develop two food safety training proposals that resulted in awards totaling \$90,000.00. The two training proposal were: ***“The Circle of Food Safety for Children, Families, and Communities”*** and ***“From the Field to the Table.”***
- Of the 120 clientele participating in Family First: Nutrition Education Wellness System, 80% now use a shopping list, 45% have their children assist with food preparation and making healthy food choices and 25% utilize alternate seasonings and herbs to enhance flavor instead of salt and fat
- The outreach efforts for the Faith-based initiative has benefitted more than 2,500 individuals and families. This is estimated to be 15 % of the faith-based leadership in the state of Louisiana..
- Approximately 8,000 contacts were made with youth participating in the after -school program that provided hands-on activities in science, math, reading and character education..
- The program successfully reached more than 1,800 producers, gardeners, landowners, and others with a diversity of information concerning sustainable agriculture. There has been

numerous success but a notable accomplishment allowed 10 producers started and/or improved their pastured-poultry operation. Four of these producers also established a direct market for their birds, thus selling them at \$3.00 to \$5.00 each, well above market price.

Goal 1

Overview

SUCEP's agriculture program targets small, socially disadvantaged and minority farmers. This is a diverse group of farmers who produce an array of agricultural enterprises to include traditional agronomic crops, vegetables and livestock. SUCEP's goal is to help these farmers develop and maintain viable farming operations.

During the past decade, Louisiana Summary of Agriculture and Natural Resources reported that there were 450 small commercial vegetable farms with an average of six acres per farm in the seven parishes where the 1890 agriculture program operates. These farms average \$6,000, annually from vegetable production. The number of commercial vegetable growers has increased slightly and is expected to continue to increase. This increase is due, in part, to depressed market conditions for agronomic crops and increased demand for fresh vegetables. Major problems preventing vegetable producers from achieving the desired outcomes are: lack of understanding of the market structure and how to access available markets, understanding and managing risk, and following recommended production and cultural practices.

SUCEP is working with low-income families in 18 parishes on home/container gardening and beautification of home environment. Gardens range from one to two pot plants in urban areas to an acre in rural areas. As interest in gardening increases, residents are seeking information on marketing strategies and policies, economic and financial planning, and management.

In addition to the above areas of work, SUCEP has established an educational program targeting sheep, goat and rabbit producers. These producers are experiencing similar production, management and marketing problems encountered by the gardening and vegetable producers.

Key Theme - Small Farm Viability

- b. Much of SUCEP's efforts were devoted to small farm viability. The program is operational in seven parishes in the state. Producers were taught holistic and sustainable farm planning principles and concepts. Producers received information on production and cultural practices, and direct and on-farm marketing strategies. The goal was to help producers increase their share of the dollars received from farm commodities. SUCEP used a variety of educational methods such as farm visits, meetings, workshops, result and method demonstrations, and farm tours.
- c. Impact - Based on university and field agents' reports, SUCEP had more than 16,000 contacts

with farmers, gardeners, and homeowners. SUCEP conducted over 2,500 one-on-one farm visits, 40 workshops, 20 result demonstrations, method demonstrations, circular letters, newspaper articles, radio and television contacts. Overall evaluation of the quality and value of production meetings and demonstrations by participants was 3.5 on a 5-point scale. Post observations and discussions by field faculty with participants indicate that producers are evaluating and/or planning to make changes in their operations as a result of participation in these educational activities. It is important to recognize that many farmers in Louisiana suffered from a severe drought during the crop-year. Thus, limiting the ability to follow through on the adoption of some recommended best practices.

- d. Source of Funds - Smith-Lever, Section 1444
- e. Scope of Impact - The total cost for the program including salaries, fringe benefits, travel, and administration is approximately \$100,000 to benefit the citizens of Louisiana.

Key Theme - Adding Value to New and Old Agricultural Products

- a. SUCEP's goal was first to help producers become effective managers with the enterprises they currently produce. A second goal was to help find new enterprises to give these producers a comparative advantage either due to scale of production and/or marketing strategies. Target enterprises included meat goats, pastured-poultry, and vegetables. Producers were helped with developing associations, farmers' markets, and on-farm markets. SUCEP also helped small farmers develop marketing strategies for valued-added products such as jellies, packaged vegetables, customers slaughtering, etc.
- b. Impact - More than 250 vegetable producers increased their awareness and adopted one or more valued-added approaches or practices such as developing direct, regional, and terminal marketing channels. SUCEP was successful in helping small vegetable farmers expand the volume of produce handled by increasing the number of participating farmers and the amount of vegetables each farmer supplied to the local farmers' markets. The markets increased the number of producers participating and days in which the markets were open. Through a collaborative effort with Heifer Project International, five small livestock associations were developed and 12 were enhanced by adopting management skills to better serve their membership. Two of the existing associations obtained a \$6,000 grant through these efforts. SUCEP serves as the lead entity providing educational and technical assistance for the Louisiana Meat Goat Association. The 120 members of the association were provided with training on best production practices. Approximately 50 goat producers received direct on-the-farm assistance with best practices. The SUCEP goat specialist continued to write a bimonthly news article for the association's newsletter.
- c. Source of Funds - Smith-Lever Act Funds under Section 1444

- d. Scope of Impact - SUCEP, in collaboration with the Southern University Agricultural Research Program, Louisiana Department of Agriculture, Louisiana State University Agricultural Center, and local grassroots farmer organizations, delivered the educational programs to help the small-scale farmers of Louisiana. The total cost for the program including salaries, fringe benefits, travel, and administration was approximately \$100,000.

Goal 2

Overview

According to *Food and Hunger Statistics 1997*, 35.6 million people or 13.3% of the US population live in poverty. In Louisiana, the number of people living in poverty was 873,000 or 20.5% of the population. Louisiana ranks among the five states with higher percentages of the population experiencing or living in poverty. The poverty rate for young children remains far higher than any other age group. It is double that of adults ages 18-64 and elderly ages 65 and over. Nearly 10 million young children live in low-income families. Louisiana also has 15.6% of total households that are food insecure. The food stamp program continues to have a steady decline in recipients due to new welfare reform regulations and low unemployment. Despite the steady decline (271,750 recipients in FY 94/95 compared to 182,233 recipients FY 99/00), food pantries across the state have had a 20% increase in the number of families coming to their pantry for food, in particular among the elderly.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) suggested that foodborne illnesses account for more than \$17 billion annually in health care, time lost at work, lost business and rising cost in legal action. Alarming stories about foodborne illnesses, and several outbreaks of pathogens found in meat, poultry, and egg production sites, highlight concern regarding food safety. Each year, there are more than 6.5 million cases of foodborne illnesses.

In Louisiana, most of the reported cases of food borne illnesses were caused by Salmonella, Shigella, Campylobacter, and Hepatitis A. It is suspected that numerous cases go unreported due to people mistaking these illnesses with "stomach flu." The most vulnerable populations to foodborne illnesses are young children, pregnant women, the elderly, chronically ill and limited resource families. Educational programs designed to make families and individuals aware of simple tasks such as temperature control, storage, preparing and cooking foods, and personal hygiene would lower the number of people exposed to foodborne illness. Providing such education to hard to reach audiences defined by socioeconomic, ethnic background, and language barriers, are needed programs.

Key Theme: Food Accessibility and Affordability

- a. The Families First Nutritional Education & Wellness System (FF-NEWS) program main objective is to work with limited resource audiences that are receiving or eligible for food

stamps. Targeting eligible food stamp recipients through Food for Families/Seniors and Commodity Supplemental Food Distribution Sites, information was given on various topics ranging from methods to better utilize foods through recipes, general nutrition information, and food stamp promotional brochures. Literature was given to 11 SUCEP agents including five targeted parishes with part-time paraprofessional Nutrition Program Assistants.

- b. Impact - Home Economist and Nutrition Program Assistants in 11 parishes through recipe/fact sheets and food stamp promotional brochures reached 1,200 food stamp eligible recipients. Approximately 50% of clientele had tried the recipe at least once since the last visit to the supplemental food program. As a result of outreach efforts, one-fourth of participants discovered they were eligible for food stamp benefits.
- c. Source of funding: Smith-Lever Act 1444; USDA-FNS through the Louisiana Department of Social Services- Office of Family Support Food Stamp Program
- d. Scope of Impact - State-wide. The total cost for the program including salaries, fringe benefits, travel, and administration is approximately \$100,000 to benefit the citizens of Louisiana.

Key Theme–Food Safety

- a. SUCEP’s Family and Consumer Science and agriculture agents developed programs and disseminated food safety information to at-risk and hard-to-reach audiences. Agents and volunteer leaders attended training sessions to discuss program planning ideas, implementation strategies, and to increase their awareness of food safety. Southern University College of Agriculture and Family and Consumer Science and a USDA liaison were instrumental in providing food safety updates and information on various food safety aspects of organic gardening. Louisiana State University and the State Department of Sanitation discussed pathogens and safety precautions that families could practice to reduce the danger of foodborne illnesses. As a result of training, agents provided information to producers, local food service establishments, child care facilities and families in communities statewide. Programs delivered in agriculture were coupled with other commodity programs to reemphasize the importance of observing food safety practices field during planting, harvesting, storing and distributing of produce. These programs were presented to commercial growers and vegetable producers with small acreage. Family and Consumer Science Agents presented best practices on food preparation and safety, methods of storing and handling foods; food safety for outdoor cooking, using safe food practices when preserving fruits and vegetables, and keeping foods safe for occasions.
- b. Impact - More than 4,800 farmers, homemakers, youth groups, families, and advisory groups statewide attended sessions. Evaluations of programs indicated that participants gained knowledge on keeping foods safe for special occasions, storing, handling and preparing foods,

using safe food handling practices when preserving fruit and vegetables, and reducing the spread of pathogens through safe production methods.

- c. Source of Federal Funds–Smith Lever and USDA
- d. Scope of Impact - State-wide. The total cost for the program including salaries, fringe benefits, travel, and administration is approximately \$100,000 to benefit the citizens of Louisiana

Goal 3

Overview

Diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and cancer ranks in the top 10 chronic diseases that plague Americans. In Louisiana, diabetes mortality rates are the highest in the nation and cardiovascular disease and cancer ranks ninth and fourth respectively. Research has proven that there is a direct correlation between chronic disease prevention, dietary intake and behavior. Louisiana reported that less than 30% of all adults eat fewer than five servings of fruits and vegetables a day and 35% of women and 29% of men reported no leisure-time physical activity. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and National Center for Health Statistics, reported limited-resource families (income less than \$10,000) have higher percentages of poor health status. SUCEP and five other 1890 universities formed a consortium to help limited resource families improve dietary and health behaviors through intensive nutrition education.

One of the goals is to reduce health-risk factors through non-formal educational programs which will improve dietary habits and physical exercise. This goal is being implemented through existing programs throughout the 1890 targeted parishes. Also, healthy community advisory councils were established in seven of the 18 parishes. These councils seek to build coalitions which will help foster and improve the quality of life of individuals, families and communities statewide.

Key Theme: Human Nutrition (FF-NEWS)

- a. SUCEP Home Economists, Home Economist Aides, and five part-time Nutrition Program Assistants in 11 parishes, conducted the FF-NEWS program by providing nutrition information to persons receiving or eligible to receive food stamps. FF-NEWS is a nutrition intervention program designed to help with selection and preparation of meals consistent with cultural traditions while improving overall health. The FF-NEWS program has a curriculum that is divided into four modules totaling 56 lessons. The four modules are: Nutrition and Food Preferences, Health Status, Food Management Skills, and Food Quality and Safety. FF-NEWS has collaborated with various community programs including, Head Start, Urban Restoration Economic Corporation, Substance Abuse Rehabilitation Housing Facilities, Battered Women Shelters, Transitional/Homeless Family Centers, GED classes, YWCA,

Council on Aging, local faith-based community organizations/churches, Food for Families/Seniors, and Commodity Food Supplemental distribution sites.

- b. Impact - More than 43,764 people have been reached through outreach efforts that include group or individual series of lessons and presentations. Preliminary data of 120 participants that have had a completed series of lessons, 60% stated that they used supplemental foods from WIC, Food for Families/Seniors, and Commodities more efficiently by utilizing recipes provided by the program. Of the 120 clientele, 80% now use a shopping list, 45% have their children assist them in food preparation and making healthy food choices and 25% utilize alternate seasonings and herbs to enhance flavor instead of salt and fat. Most of the participants indicated that they no longer leave soiled dishes in the sink overnight, have purchased appropriate food storage containers and follow suggested and approved storage practices. Late FY 2000, FF-NEWS placed nutrition information in five community papers/magazines in targeted FF-NEWS parishes. Approximately 18,000 limited resource families were reached (about 40% of total readers of community paper).
- c. Source of Funds - Smith-Lever Act 1444; USDA-FNS through the Louisiana Department of Social Services- Office of Family Support Food Stamp Program
- d. Scope of Impact - State-wide / Multi State
 - University of Arkansas- at Pine Bluff
 - Prairie View A&M University
 - Langston University
 - South Carolina State University
 - Lincoln University

The total cost for the program including salaries, fringe benefits, travel, and administration is approximately \$100,000 to benefit the citizens of Louisiana

Key Theme - Human Health

- a. SUCEP professionals established the Teen Outreach Program (TOP) in several of its parishes. The goal of TOP is to foster positive development in youth by decreasing the number of teen pregnancies, school failures, suspensions and drop-outs among the program's participants. Participants are taught mentoring, self-esteem, human sexuality and abstinence. Outreach educational efforts consisted of teen summits, volunteerism, and leadership activities. Program participants also traveled to different states to view various cultures and take part in educational tours.
- b. Impact - SUCEP staff trained more than 60 adult leaders/facilitators for the program. Each leader then works with a group of at least six teens. For FY 2000, the TOP program worked with over 200 teens with 130 teens participating at a significant level. SUCEP working cooperatively with the Southern University Center for Wellness and local nonprofit

organizations, has experienced 100% success with TOP. Of the 130 active teens, there has not been a teen pregnancy, school failure, suspension or drop-out. Additionally, TOP works to ensure that teens are exposed to other learning experiences such as business leaders, professionals and cultural enrichment.

- c. Source of Federal Funds - Smith - Lever Act Funds under Section 14:44 & supplemented by a grant through the Rapids Foundation
- d. Scope of Impact - Target Parishes. The total cost for the program including salaries, fringe benefits, travel, and administration is approximately \$50,000 to benefit the citizens of Louisiana

Key Theme - Health Care

- a. SUCEP initiated the formation of a Health Consortium. The mission of the Health Consortium is to promote collaborative efforts between Southern University health-related programs and local, state and federal public health agencies by merging resources to improve the health and quality of life of individuals, families and communities throughout the state of Louisiana. The Consortium membership consists of faculty, staff and other community professionals in the health and preventive wellness discipline.
- b. Impact - Twenty- three different entities participate in the Health Consortium to develop two food safety training proposal that resulted in awards totaling \$90,000.00. The two training proposal were: *“The Circle of Food Safety for Children, Families, and Communities”* and *“From the Field to the Table.”* The Circle of Food Safety grant focuses on preschool through third grade students in East Baton Rouge Parish. It is a train-the-trainer model which utilizes teachers in classroom settings to impart food safety workshops and incorporates 60 minutes of food safety information into their existing health or science curriculum each week. The Field to the Table grant is intended to provide in-service training for professionals, paraprofessionals and volunteers in food safety and quality. Both training proposal focus on the Fight BAC! Education Campaign that place emphasis on keeping food safe from bacteria..
- c. Source of Federal Funds - Smith-Lever Act Funds under Section 1444
- d. Scope of Impact - Target Parishes. The total cost for the program including salaries, fringe benefits, travel, and administration is approximately \$75,000 to benefit the citizens of Louisiana.

Goal 4

Overview

The SUCEP sustainable agriculture program is concentrated in seven parishes where there are extension field agents with agriculture responsibilities. Based on a survey conducted by the agents, there were approximately 600 small scale farmers growing primarily agronomic and vegetable crops, and some livestock. The targeted small farmers tend to have low yields and crops of substandard quality because they are not following the latest recommended production and cultural practices. The sustainable agriculture program is designed to help farmers become better prepared to deal with new environmental and conservation policies and regulations. These programs focus on pesticide usage and land management issues. The program also has an objective to identify those agricultural enterprises that lend themselves to sustainable and organic methods of production, as well as, command premium price at the market. Much of the sustainable agriculture work was performed in partnership with USDA, Natural Resource and Conservation Service EQIP Program and the Southern Sustainable Agricultural Research and Educational program.

Key Theme - Sustainable Agriculture

- b. The SUCEP agents in collaboration with the Southern University agricultural scientists are developing best management practices that minimize the use of commercial fertilizers and pesticides. The program also focuses on helping farmers who successfully produce enterprises (crops and livestock) using sustainable and organic practices to establish market outlets to include farmers' markets, roadside stands, and on-farm markets.
- c. Impact - More than 30 agricultural educators (extension agents, USDA personnel and farm leaders) gained knowledge on the concepts and principles of sustainable agriculture. The program successfully reached more than 1,800 producers, gardeners, landowners, and others with sustainable agriculture. These education efforts resulted in the following:
 - 10 producers started or improved a pastured-poultry operation. Four of these producers also established a direct market for their birds, thus selling them at \$3.00 to \$5.00 each, well above market price.
 - 45 beef cattle producers adopted soil and pasture management practices.
 - 30 vegetable producers adopted sustainable marketing practices through participation in their local farmers' markets.
 - 44 limited resource farmers and/or landowners gained knowledge on the EQIP program and the benefits to the environment.
 - 115 producers and homeowners gained knowledge in the safe use of pesticides.
 - 90 producers attended a production meeting gaining knowledge in environmental law.
- d. Source of Funds - Smith-lever- Section 1444, and grants for SARE and USDA, NRCS. The total cost of the program including salaries, fringe benefits travel, and administration is approximately \$175,000.

e. Scope of Impact - Louisiana

Goal 5

Overview

Based on 1990 census, 1,227,269 (29.1%) residents in Louisiana were less than 18 years of age. Approximately 15% of teenagers in Louisiana drop out of school while the total percent for the United States is less than 10%. Youth development research indicates the need for character and quality education, parental involvement, and civic and citizenship education to help ensure the long-term positive development of youth. Through SUCEP's educational program, strategies have been developed to help and support academic learning by all members of the family.

The citizens of Louisiana continue to suffer economically and socially because of earlier dependency on a depressed petroleum and agriculture industries. Louisiana is ranked among the top ten states for poverty and low literacy and this factor tend to yield a less education population that is not prepared for the opportunities of mainstream America. The economic and community program works with faith-based organization and other social and civil organizations to explore and develop enterprise that will foster long term economic viability.

Key Theme - Youth Development (Youth Educational Support After School Program)

- a. Youth Educational Support (YES) is an organized after-school program that incorporates education and fun in scholastic activities, expands the role of the parent/guardian with academic learning and builds support, self-esteem and confidence through completion of tasks and projects. During FY 2000, the emphasis was on parents' role as their child's teacher and the importance of using the home and surrounding environments as resource to teach. *All Parents are Teachers* was a workshop conducted in 11 parishes in the state. The workshop provided information on six principles: *Setting standards and expectations*, *Structure* with regular routines, *Providing opportunities* to learn outside of the classroom, *Support* children in activities, *Build relationships* by giving positive reinforcement for a job well done, and be a *Role model* for your children by being an active learner even through adulthood.
- b. Impact: Approximately 8,000 contacts were made with youth participating in the after -school program that provided hands-on activities in science, math, reading and character education. Through YES, 300 children were active in the program. In the workshops conducted within the 11 parishes, 50% of parents/guardians participated. There was 100% follow-up with parents to determine if additional resources were needed to help them become better "teachers" to their children. Approximately six additional workshops were conducted by extension agents for parents as well as public school and head start teachers.

- c. Source of Funds - Smith - Lever Act Funds under Section 1444
- d. Scope of Impact - State-wide. The total cost for the program including salaries, fringe benefits, travel, and administration is approximately \$100,000 to benefit the citizens of Louisiana

Key Theme - Youth Development (Livestock and Poultry Show)

- a. SUCEP Livestock and Poultry Show is a comprehensive program to help youth develop leadership and character skills. The Youth Rabbit Show also provides an opportunity to enhance those skills. In preparation for the both show, youth work with the livestock (beef breeding, dairy, sheep, swine) and the rabbit concerning proper nutrition and grooming. During the shows, youth are required to exhibit their animal and the youth is also judged showmanship, control of the animal and appearance. The animal is judged for quality and overall appearance according to industry standards. Youth are also provided with the opportunity to sell their animal at an open auction; thus, learning economic and financial management practices. Corporate sponsors of the show are: Heifer Project International, Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation, Louisiana Federal Land Bank Association, Louisiana Feed and Supply Company and Lone Star Feeds.
- b. Impact - More than 250 youth participated in the SUCEP Livestock and Poultry Show. Approximately 75% of youth exhibits leadership skills relative to showmanship of their animal. Six hundred youth exhibited at the Southern University State and National Rabbit Show. During FY 2000, two seminars were held to assist producers with production and management and marketing practices.
- c. Source of Federal Funds-Smith-Lever 1444
- d. Scope of Impact - State-wide. The total cost for the program including salaries, fringe benefits, travel, and administration is approximately \$75,547 to benefit the citizens of Louisiana

Key Theme – Community Development (Faith-Based Development)

- a. SUCEP assisted faith-based leaders by developing a statewide Faith Based Development Initiative that focused on housing development, economic development and health care. The Faith-Based initiative consists of two program components, which include a faith-based conference and technical assistance. The annual faith-based conference is a three-day event with more than 14 workshops and conferences; several noted speakers and public and private vendors from the federal, state and local level along with several national nonprofit service providers who assist the faith-based community. The second component is technical assistance (TA) where by SUCEP specialists and agents who assist the faith-based community with organizational development, strategic planning, and project selections. Collaborators involved in

the project are the Federal Reserve Bank, FDIC, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Louisiana Department of Economic Development, Louisiana Department of Health and Hospital and the United Comptroller of the Currency, various banks and several national nonprofit organizations.

- b. Impact - More than 2,500 people have benefitted from these meetings, which is about 15 % of the faith-based leadership in the state. Overall evaluation concluded that about 75% of the faith-based community who participated in the project supports community economic development and have a strong desire to collaborate with service providers. Close to 60% of those surveyed after the meetings indicated they had implemented changes or were planning changes in their operations as a result of the outreach efforts and individual contacts. The city of Baton Rouge has created a faith-based task force to assist faith-based organizations with accessing federal HOME funds. Several citywide groups in New Orleans, Shreveport, and Alexandria have formed faith-based collaborations as a results of the outreach efforts.
- c. Source of Federal Funds-Smith-Lever 1444
- d. Scope of Impact - State-wide. The total cost for the program including salaries, fringe benefits, travel, and administration is approximately \$50,000 to benefit the citizens of Louisiana

Key Theme – Community Development (Community Based Development Organizations)
Initiative (CBDOs)

- a. SUCEP has developed a state technical assistance project that concentrates on how best to assist community based development organizations (CBDOs) in better ways to serve their communities. The project consists of meetings, individual contacts, site visits to successful CBDOs and evaluative techniques. These programs were presented at the annual statewide community development conference aimed at nonprofit organizations that were involved in housing, economic and human capital development. SUCEP has collaborated with various statewide organizations such as the Louisiana Association of Community Economic Development, Louisiana Association of Nonprofit Organizations, Louisiana Department of Economic Development and Freddie Mae and Fannie Mae Foundation to provide the most efficient and effective training.
- b. Impact - More than 3,500 people have participated in the outreach efforts, which is about 40% of the community development practitioners in the state. The meeting has lead to several bills being introduced in the State legislature. One bill focused on the creation of a state fund to assist CBDOs with pre-development costs and organizational development. The other bill was concerned with predatory lending to reduce the amount of interest that can be charged to individuals at businesses such as rent-to-own outlets, pawn shops, and cash checking outlets. Over 15 CBDOs have been created as a result of the outreach efforts. More than 20% of CBDOs have utilized the resource material presented in the outreach efforts.

- c. Source of Federal Funds-Smith-Lever 1444
- d. Scope of Impact - State-wide. The total cost for the program including salaries, fringe benefits, travel, and administration is approximately \$25,000 to benefit the citizens of Louisiana

Key Theme – Promoting Business Programs(Center for Rural and Small Business Development)

- a. SUCEP’s staff for the Center for Rural and Small Development has assisted in the creation and sustainability of small business development in the state. The outreach efforts took place with workshops, seminars, and one-on-one business consultations. Small business owners and potential owners were assisted in business plans, strategic planning, credit rating and loan packaging. Collaborators were the U.S. Department of Small Business Administration (SBA), Small Business Development Centers and local chambers of commerce.
- b. Impact - More than 1,900 potential and small business clients were served. More than 20% of the business owners were referred to loan officers for loan packaging. Over one-half of the businesses surveyed responded that they had learned new techniques and practices to operate their business more effective and efficient. The outreach efforts have lead to over 25 business start ups, 35 small businesses expansions and approximately 45 new jobs created.
- c. Source of Federal Funds-Smith-Lever 1444
- d. Scope of Impact - State-wide. The total cost for the program including salaries, fringe benefits, travel, and administration is approximately \$25,000 to benefit the citizens of Louisiana

STAKEHOLDER INPUT

The Southern University Cooperative Extension Program (SUCEP) has always had input from targeted stakeholders. The input has helped SUCEP design educational programs that address needs of the clientele; thus, specific programming efforts will assist the clientele relative to enhancing their quality of life. SUCEP works with parish advisory committees, livestock producers, faith-based organizations, economic and community development organizations, nutrition and health associations, and other entities to secure information to modify and/or develop educational programs.

The LSU Cooperative Extension Service initiated and conducted a strategic planning process in each parish of Louisiana during the 1999-2000 fiscal year. The 1890 county staff and stakeholders participated in the process. Forums were conducted in each parish, and those parishes with 1890 extension staff not only invited participants, but also attended as well as

served as facilitators of some parishes. The representation was broad-based, inclusive of gender, race, and ethnicity. Issues and concerns relative to the 1890 program were identified. Those concerns included economic development, education, environment, youth development, family support and structure, crime and other social issues. From this process, SUCEP has begun to amend its educational programs to ensure relevancy and timeliness.

PROGRAM REVIEW PROCESS

Evaluation of multi-state activities

There are no multi-institutional or multi-state programs supported by federal funds, Section 1444 at this time.

Merit Review Process

A basic assessment of programs is conducted by the field staff and university specialists to determine the usefulness of the information. A merit review process committee is in the process of being appointed.